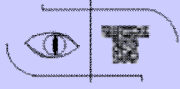


SPT newsletter

Volume 33, Number 3 (autumn 2009)

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1. President's Column

Dear SPT members,

It was a great pleasure to see so many of you during SPT 2009 at the University of Twente. We had over 250 conference participants, making it one of the largest SPT conferences in history. It was wonderful to hear from so many of you that you loved the conference and the interactions it provided. I think that the keynotes by Nick Bostrom, Andrew Feenberg and Jean-Pierre Dupuy, as well as many of the other talks, will be sticking in our memories for a long time. Please note that if you want an electronic copy of the proceedings, you can download it from the conference website at <http://www.utwente.nl/ceptes/spt2009/programme/proceedings.pdf>.

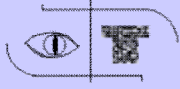
SPT 2009 also included a changing of the guard for the SPT presidency. Diane Michaelfelder stepped down as president, and I just want to repeat the words of thanks that I directed at her at the SPT 2009 closing. Diane has been an outstanding president, who has strengthened the organization in many ways during her tenure. Just before leaving, she managed to secure a conference venue for SPT 2011, which will take place at the University of North Texas (Dallas and Denton). The dates will most likely be May 11 to 22. She also secured a new publisher for *Techne*, the Philosophy Documentation Centre, a renowned publisher of philosophy journals, whose catalogue includes journals like the *Journal of Philosophy and Environmental Ethics*. We have signed a five-year contract with them which we can extend if we find that the agreement works well for us.

As incoming president, I will work hard to further strengthen the organization and engage in new pursuits that are of interest to it. As my first act, I have motioned the board to approve a liaison of SPT with the Forum on Philosophy, Engineering, and TEchnology (FPET). FPET is a new platform that brings together scholars from SPT and from IEEE SSIT, the Society on Social Implications of Technology (SSIT) of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. SSIT is a large organization that has about 2000 members worldwide, and is eager to collaborate with SPT. The new FPET website can be found at <http://philengtech.org/>. FPET sponsors a series of forums or conferences, and the next one will take place at the Colorado School of Mines on 9-10 May 2010. Please see the CFP at the website. SPT members will receive a discount on the registration fee.

This is what I wanted to share with you today. I look forward to further conversations with you and to your contributions to the newsletter.

Sincerely,

Philip Brey
SPT President



2. SPT Board Meeting News

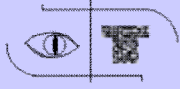
The SPT Board of Directors met twice during our recent conference in Enschede. Our meetings were very productive. The most important outcome of our conversations was a decision to enter into a five-year contract with the Philosophy Documentation Center through which the Center would become the publisher for *Techné*. The need to find a publisher for *Techné* has been a priority for the Board for some time, and this decision marked the conclusion of many hours of work to find a publisher who would actively market the journal to university libraries in the US and abroad and so raise the journal's visibility. All SPT members will have searchable access to current and past issues of *Techné* as a benefit of SPT membership. For more information about this change from *Techné's* chief editor Joe Pitt in this newsletter.

In keeping with the tradition at our biennial meetings for board members to act on proposals to host the following SPT meeting, we considered a proposal from the University of North Texas (UNT) to host the 17th SPT meeting in 2011. We agreed to accept this proposal, pending clarification of the dates for the conference and transportation arrangements to/from the UNT campus and area hotels.

The board discussed our informal but long-standing affiliation with the American Philosophical Association. We will continue with planning for a session in conjunction with the APA's Pacific Division meeting in San Francisco next Spring, but will suspend planning for future APA sessions. Instead, we will experiment with putting together SPT sessions in conjunction with annual meetings of the Society for the Social Studies of Science (4S) and see if attendance at these sessions more resembles the attendance at sessions of SPT 2009 than at APA meetings.

We agreed to recommend to SPT members two changes to the SPT constitution. One change would allow for SPT to hold elections electronically, rather than conducting them through the mail by means of a paper ballot. Moving to electronic elections, through the use of SurveyMonkey or similar means, will be cost-effective, as it now costs several hundred dollars to mail out paper ballots. The second change would allow the board to fill a vacancy without having to call a special election if a board member resigns before his or her term is completed. Our democratic governance structure stipulates that all changes to our constitution must be approved by the members of the society, so a vote will be taken on these proposed changes in conjunction with the next election.

Lastly, a Nominations Committee, consisting of Diane Michelfelder, John Sullins, Sven Ove Hansson, and Inma de Melo-Martin, was formed to facilitate the upcoming elections of board members and SPT president-elect. See the Call for Nominations in this newsletter.



3. Call for Nominations for SPT Board and President-Elect

DEADLINE: 31 October 2009

Attention, all SPT members!! Have you ever considered running for the SPT Board or for President-elect? With three vacant positions to be filled on the Board, plus the position of President-elect, now is a great opportunity to become more actively involved in the society.

The Nominations Committee invites you to nominate yourself or another SPT member for one of these positions. Members of the SPT board serve for a term of four years. The President-elect will serve in this capacity until the next SPT meeting.

To make a nomination, please send the name and e-mail address of the individual you are nominating to one of the members of the Nominations Committee.

We anticipate the election ballot will be mailed out along with the dues notices in November. To allow time to prepare the ballot, kindly send in your nomination no later than 25 October 2009.

Collegially yours,

Diane Michelfelder (michelfelder@macalester.edu)

Sven Ove Hansson (soh@kth.se)

Inma de Melo-Martín (imd2001@med.cornell.edu)

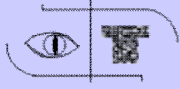
John Sullins (sullins@sonoma.edu)

4. Conferences, Workshops, and Lectures

fPET-2010

The 2010 Forum on Philosophy, Engineering & Technology (fPET-2010) will be held as a one-day intensive event on 9-10 May 2010 (Sunday Evening-Monday) at the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, CO. The event is an outgrowth of the successful 2007 (TUDelft) and 2008 (Royal Academy of Engineering, London) Workshops on Philosophy and Engineering (WPE) and fPET-2010 represents the first time that this group of philosophers and reflective engineers will gather in North America to exchange ideas.

The fPET-2010 call for papers is available at the URL ([here](#)) or on the fPET website (www.philengtech.org). The deadline for submission of 500-750 word abstracts is 28



December 2009 (Monday), and authors may choose from one of three tracks depending upon whether they would like their papers to be reviewed by philosophers, engineers, or both. The abstracts will be published online and in a printed volume to be distributed at the Forum, and selected papers will be gathered for a volume with a major publisher to be assembled after the Forum. Those abstracts selected for presentation at fPET-2010 will be scheduled for 30-minute talks.

More information is available at the Forum website (www.philengtech.org), on Twitter @philengtech (www.twitter.com/philengtech), or by contacting Forum co-chairs Diane Michelfelder (michelfelder@macalester.edu), Dave Goldberg (deg@illinois.edu), or local arrangements chair Carl Mitcham (cmitcham@mines.edu).

International Workshop on Scientific Cultures and Technological Alternatives

The International Workshop on Scientific Cultures and Technological Alternatives (EICCAT) will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina on October 8th and 9th. The event is organized by the National University of Quilmes and the Observatory on Technological New and Alternative Practices (ONPAT). The venue will be at the National Ministry for Science, Technology and Innovation. Key speakers include Andrew Feenberg (Simon Fraser University) and Hugh Lacey (Swarthmore College), among other European and Latin American scholars.

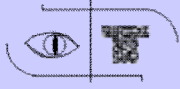
On the 50th anniversary of C.P. Snow's conference on the *Two Cultures*, this workshop aims to discuss the relationship between science, technology and democracy and the role of the humanities and the scientific and technical disciplines at this crossroads.

More information available in Spanish at the workshop homepage <http://www.eiccat.com.ar> and the ONPAT's social network: <http://redonpat.ning.com>

Encuentro internacional sobre culturas científicas y alternativas tecnológicas

Entre el 8 y el 9 de octubre se llevará a cabo el I Encuentro Internacional Culturas Científicas y Alternativas Tecnológicas. El encuentro tendrá lugar en el Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación Productiva de Argentina, y será organizado por el Observatorio de Nuevas Prácticas y Alternativas Tecnológicas (ONPAT). Entre los panelistas habrá participantes destacados como Andrew Feenberg (Simon Fraser University) y Hugh Lacey (Swarthmore College).

El objetivo general del evento gira alrededor de la construcción colectiva de herramientas de análisis y modelos de decisión que brinden alternativas, tanto teóricas como políticas, a los esquemas actuales de investigación, producción y consumo. Se espera con ello contribuir a la discusión más general sobre la relación entre tecnología y democracia. De modo específico, buscando una mayor transversalidad en la discusión, el encuentro asume el desafío de superar las barreras impuestas por las diferentes "culturas científicas" llevando esta reflexión al



diálogo conjunto con quienes se encuentran en la actualidad desarrollando tecnología innovadora.

En la web del encuentro (<http://www.eiccat.com.ar/>) puede acceder al programa y descargar algunas de las presentaciones de los participantes

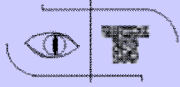
Die fünf Sinne der Wissenschaften

Gemeinsame Jahrestagung der deutschen Gesellschaft für Wissenschafts- und Technikforschung (GWTF) und der Swiss Association for the Studies of Science, Technology, and Society (STS-CH)

am 27./28. November 2009 in Tübingen

Organisation: Regula Valérie Burri, Cornelius Schubert, Jörg Strübing

Der Rolle von Bildern im Erkenntnisprozess ist in den letzten Jahren eine rege Aufmerksamkeit aus verschiedenen Bereichen der Wissenschaftsforschung zu Teil geworden. Während diese Diskussion anhält, rücken zunehmend auch andere sinnliche Erkenntnispraktiken in den Fokus. Welche Rolle akustische, haptische, olfaktorische, gustatorische und auch visuelle Wahrnehmungen in den Wissenschaften spielen, soll im Zentrum dieser Konferenz stehen. Dies kann entlang verschiedener Fragestellungen geschehen. Einerseits können instrumentelle Praktiken dahingehend untersucht werden, in wie weit sie die sinnliche Erfahrung reduzieren, wenn etwa Krankheiten stärker nach Laborbefunden diagnostiziert werden als durch das Fühlen, Riechen, Schmecken oder Sehen. Andererseits können Technologien auch helfen, Daten in neuer Weise sinnlich aufzubereiten, etwa Unhörbares hörbar zu machen oder akustische Phänomene in grafische Darstellungen zu verwandeln. Nicht zuletzt wurden wissenschaftliche Instrumente aus dem Grund entwickelt, die körperliche Begrenzung der menschlichen Wahrnehmung zu überwinden. Eine weitere Fragerichtung ist, in wie weit beispielsweise visuelle oder akustische Repräsentationen geeignet sind, Disziplinengrenzen zu überschreiten, interdisziplinäre Kooperation zu ermöglichen und nicht zuletzt auch die Kommunikation wissenschaftlichen Wissens über die Wissenschaft hinaus zu ermöglichen. Hierzu laden wir sowohl Vorträge ein, die sich aus Perspektive der wissenschaftlichen Praxis mit der Art und Weise der sinnlichen Erkenntnis beschäftigen, als auch Vorträge, die sich aus Perspektive der Wissenschaftsforschung konzeptionell mit den veränderten epistemischen Praktiken auseinandersetzen. Die Probleme der Analyse und der Kommunizierbarkeit visueller und nicht visueller Daten und die Frage nach dem epistemischen Gehalt und der Überzeugungskraft von unterschiedlichen Repräsentationsformen stellen auf der Seite der wissenschaftlichen Praxis neue Anforderungen. Gleichzeitig spiegeln sich diese Spannungen in den Beobachtungen der Wissenschaftsforschung wieder, wenn nicht mehr allein schriftlich und bildlich festgehaltene Diskurse analysiert werden können, sondern die sinnlichen Praktiken in den Laboren in textlich/bildlicher Form gefasst werden müssen. Während die audiovisuellen Möglichkeiten der neuen



Medien zumindest nach der visuellen auch die akustische Vermittlung erleichtern, so sind der Verbreitung von haptischen, olfaktorischen und gustatorischen Wahrnehmungen noch enge Grenzen gesetzt. Inwieweit die neuen bzw. neu entdeckten Erkenntnispraktiken die Theorien der Wissenschaftsforschung herausfordern und inwieweit sich die Praktiken interdisziplinärer Forschung oder die Kommunikation „nach Außen“ durch die Verknüpfung instrumenteller Erkenntnis und sinnlicher Erfahrung verändern, soll in einer interdisziplinären Diskussion empirisch wie theoretisch eingefangen werden.

Vorschläge von max. 1 Seite bitte bis zum 31.05.2009 an cornelius.schubert@tu-berlin.de

CEPHAD 2010 Conference:

The borderland between philosophy and design research

Centre for Philosophy and Design (CEPHAD) solicits contributions to the CEPHAD 2010 conference, to be held at the Danish Design School in Copenhagen, January 27 – 29, 2010. A pre-conference master class for Ph.D. students will be conducted by leading researchers, January 26 – 27.

Deadline for contributions: October 18, 2009.

The purpose of the conference is to stimulate the flow of ideas between research in philosophy and research in design. At an operational level, the conference aims at creating personal and institutional contacts of lasting value for research cooperation across national and discipline borders.

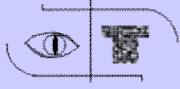
The expected audience includes researchers in design, philosophy or other relevant disciplines, whose work may benefit from or contribute to cross-fertilization between philosophy and design research.

Emphasis will be on exchange of promising ideas, rather than on showcasing finished work. Accordingly, most of the presentations and discussions will take place in small round-table groups of about 10 persons. However, to provide a common background, plenary sessions will feature presentations by invited speakers and subsequent debates.

Invited speakers (confirmed):

• Louis L. Bucciarelli • Nathan Crilly • Soeren Kjoerup • Peter Kroes • Terence Love • Peter-Paul Verbeek • Pieter Vermaas

To learn more about this event, and how you may contribute to it, please consult <http://www.dkds.dk/Forskning/Projekter/CEPHAD/events/Cephad2010>.



5. Recent publications of interest

Raphael Sassower. *Postcapitalism: Moving Beyond Ideology in the America's Economic Crises*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2009.

Rachel P. Maines. *Hedonizing Technologies: Paths to Pleasure in Hobbies and Leisure*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009

Fred Grinnell. *Everyday Practice of Science: Where Intuition and Passion Meet Objectivity and Logic*. Oxford University Press, 2009

Bernard Irrgang. *Der Leib des Menschen. Grundriss einer phänomenologisch-hermeneutischen Anthropologie* (The Body of Humans. Compendium of the Phenomenological-hermeneutical Anthropology). Steiner Verlag, 2009

Bernard Irrgang. *Grundriss der Technikphilosophie. Hermeneutisch-phänomenologische Perspektive*. Verlag Königshausen & Neumann, 2009.

Anthonie Meijers (ed.). *Philosophy of technology and engineering sciences*. Elsevier, 2009.

6. New book series Philosophy of Engineering and Technology

It is a pleasure announcing that Springer has launched a new book series on philosophy of technology. This book series, called Philosophy of Engineering and Technology, is open for proposals for edited volumes and monographs on all topics and all approaches in our field. The series has a team of editors that represents these different approaches and will consider and review proposals on their own disciplinary and interdisciplinary merits.

The first publications in the series may be expected in 2010, and from then on I hope it will produce a steady flow of publications per year.

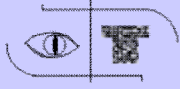
Editor in chief:

Pieter E. Vermaas, Delft University of Technology,

Editors:

David E. Goldberg, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Evan Selinger,
Rochester Institute of Technology

Ibo van de Poel, Delft University of Technology

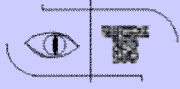


For more information you can contact me or one of the other editors.
Pieter Vermaas, p.e.vermaas@tudelft.nl

<http://www.springer.com/series/8657>

7. All good news

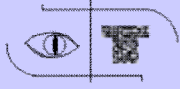
Our treasurer John Sullins has received tenure and promotion at Sonoma State University, and our board member Peter-Paul Verbeek has become full professor at the University of Twente. Congratulations to both of them!



8. Some pictures of SPT 2009

Clockwise: Andrew Feenberg, Philip Brey, Diane Michelfelder and Nick Bostrom





9. Membership and Dues

SPT welcomes as members persons from all countries whose professional interests include philosophically significant considerations of technology. Membership is open to those who have or who are pursuing an advanced degree in philosophy or a related discipline, and to those who work in a technological field. Because of the Society's long-standing commitment to access, dues are purposively kept at a modest amount: \$35US per year for regular memberships and \$15US per year for student memberships. Dues are waived for individuals from developing nations.

To join SPT, to renew your membership, or to change your e-mail address and/or update other contact information, just go to <http://www.pdcnet.org/member-spt.html>

Dues can be paid online by credit card (Visa, Mastercard, or Discover). Arrangements to pay by cheque or money order can also be made by calling the Philosophy Documentation Center at 1-800-444-2419 (toll-free from the US and Canada) or at 1-434-220-3300.

10. SPT Officers

President:

Philip Brey, University of Twente

Secretary-Treasurer:

John Sullins, Sonoma State University

Executive Board:

Peter-Paul Verbeek, University of Twente

Sven Ove Hansson, Royal Institute of Technology

Ann Johnson, University of South Carolina

David Kaplan, University of North Texas

Inmaculada (Inma) de Melo-Martin, Weill Medical College of Cornell University

Diane P. Michelfelder, Macalester College

Techné Editors:

Joseph Pitt, Virginia Tech University

Peter-Paul Verbeek, University of Twente

Pieter Vermaas, Delft University

Newsletter Editor & Webmaster:

Katinka Waelbers, University of Twente