Society for Philosophy and Technology

SPT Newsletter
Volume 29, Number 1 – Winter 2005

Contents

Letter from the President

It has been a cold and snowy winter in East Lansing, my first full Michigan winter since joining the faculty at Michigan State University. I'm on Spring Break as I write this, enjoying warm weather and sunshine that I don't expect to see at home for another six weeks. Thoughts are turning to summer in Delft, where the conference is shaping up to be one of SPT's largest and most exciting. Many more papers were submitted than could possibly be accepted, and I am told that many interesting papers could simply not be accommodated on the program. I hope that those who submitted papers that could not be squeezed into the format designed by the program committee will be able to participate in the meeting as commentators, session chairs or participants.

The high level of interest in our European meetings, combined with fading attendance in the U.S. (see the article on the 2003 meeting elsewhere in the newsletter), raises a number of issues for the future of SPT. While interest in philosophical issues associated with technology is growing worldwide, so far SPT has not become a forum in which United States academics choose to circulate their work. Organizations such as the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities (ASBH), the Association forPractical and Professional Ethics (APPE) and the International Society for Ethics and Information Technology (INSEIT) have extensive programming on technological topics, and the American Philosophical Association (APA) held a successful special meeting on technology in November of 2004. SPT must either find a way to attract some of the scholars presenting at these meetings to the 2007 conference (wherever it is), or should shift its attention and devote its efforts to building membership from outside the United States.

Of course these are not mutually exclusive options. One possibility would for SPT to become more active in co-sponsoring sessions at these other venues. The International Society for Environmental sponsored a successful mini-conference following the APPE meeting in San Antonio, TX in February 2005. I would encourage members who participate in other organizations where SPT might co-sponsor a meeting or hold a special sessions to propose this to the board, and to take responsibility for organizing this kind of event as a way to broaden our visibility and help re-establish our identity in North America.

Meanwhile, let's enjoy our popularity in Europe and continue to build our international membership. I will be turning the Presidency over to Peter Kroes in July, and Peter will be in an excellent position to do this. I hope to see everyone there.

Paul B. Thompson

SPT 2005 Conference

The 2005 SPT conference at Delft University of Technology

The process of organising the upcoming SPT conference at Delft has by now entered its next phase. We concluded the process of reviewing the submitted contributions, informed authors about the decisions of the programme committee, and can now start with composing the programme of the conference.

It can be confessed that the reviewing process was not a fully rewarding one. We received a number of abstracts that was substantial higher than what we were expecting on the basis of the last two SPT conferences. In itself this may be taken as a positive sign: our field is growing. But it also forced us to assess the contributions more critically. We did upscale the conference and dropped one plenary lecture to accommodate more contributed papers, but had in the end to reject half of the 200 submissions we received. I am well aware that this meant that abstracts have been rejected that otherwise would have been accepted.

As organisers we can now focus on registering all contributors and participants. Please note that accommodation in Delft is available but may become more difficult to find as the tourist season of summer comes closer. A skeleton programme of the conference will soon be available at www.sptdelft2005.tbm.tudelft.nl. We hope we can offer you an interesting philosophy and technology event.

Pieter Vermaas

News from the APA Divisions

SPT Sessions at the American Philosophical Association Central Division

SPT will sponsor two sessions at the annual meeting of the American Philosophical Association's Central Division, April 28-30, 2005. The meeting will be held in Chicago at the Palmer House Hotel. Check the APA website at www.apa.org for further information on the meeting, including registration.

The first session will be a joint panel session on factory farms co-sponsored by the International Society for Environmental Ethics, GIII-7, Thursday, April 28, 7:30 PM-10:30 PM. Panel Discussion: Factory Farms. The panelists are:

- Gary Comstock, North Carolina State University
- Candice Croney, Oregon State University
- Lyne Letourneau, Université Laval, Sainte-Foy (Quebec)
- Erin McKenna, Pacific Lutheran University
- Ben A. Minteer, Arizona State University
- Peter Sandøe, Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University (Denmark)

Panelists will focus on the following questions:

- What is "factory farming"? Is it best defined as a certain technological approach to livestock production, are social characteristics (such as the ownership structure or mentality of operators) more definitive, or should other dimensions or factors be stressed?
- What is the ethical/political significance of factory farming as it relates to farm animals?
- What is the ethical/political significance of factory farming as it relates to the environment?

- What is the ethical/political significance of factory farming as a form of agriculture?

The second SPT session will be GIV-10 Friday, April 29, 7:00 PM-10:00 PM, and will include three papers with commentary.

1. Paper: "Robots, Possession and Anticipation," Colin Schmidt, University of LeMans; Commentary by D. Micah Hester, University of Arkansas Medical College

2. Paper: "Technology and Political Responsibility," Stephen Esquith, Michigan State University; Commentary by Janet Woerner, Illinois Institute of Technology

3. Paper: "Power, Care, and the Meaning of the Modern World: Models of Technological Consciousness From 'Ideology' to 'Ge-Stell' to 'The Panoptic'," Timothy Yetman, Purdue University; Commentary by Gary Aylesworth, Eastern Illinois University.

From the Executive Board

Executive Board Action on the 2003 Meeting in Park City, Utah

The SPT Board was unable to conduct its normal meeting at the Eastern Division meeting of the American Philosophical Association in Boston due to schedule conflicts and weather delays that prevented

most members of the board from participating. Following an e-mail discussion, the board has authorized Treasurer Diane Michaelfelder to work with Utah State University to resolve the debt incurred with the 2003 meeting. SPT currently owes the conference services office at Utah State

University a balance of $3380.15 for the 2003 meeting. The current SPT balance is $4,536.15 less an invoice from the Philosophy Documentation Service for $1,394.03, which is for billing and membership development services. The board has advised Diane to pay the PDS bill and apply the balance of approximately $3000 to the outstanding conference services bill, hopefully negotiating a forgiveness of the remaining balance from Utah State.

Why do we owe Utah State $3380.15? The 2003 meeting incurred significant losses due to much lower attendance than expected. While the 2001 meeting in Aberdeen had an attendance of over 200, the 2003 meeting had approximately 90 participants. What is more, approximately 20% of the attendees were from Utah or for other reasons did not occupy rooms in the hotel. We did not fill our room quota, resulting in significant charges for room and equipment rentals, etc. In addition, there was a contract with Utah State Conference Services which provided assistance in collecting registration fees, paying bills and assisting with local arrangements on a fee for service basis. The outstanding bill represents the amount owed after 100% of the funds collected for registration fees have been applied to hotel charges (including meals) and the conference services office fees for services rendered.

Why has it taken so long for all this to play out? The main issue has been that the original contract was between the philosophy department at Utah State and the conference services office. The contract was signed by our treasurer, who was also then head of the department at Utah State but has since left that position for a job at another university. There was apparently some confusion at USU as to who would be accountable for the balance. SPT President Paul Thompson received a letter in December, 2004 from Charlie Hunemann, current head of philosophy at Utah State requesting that we pay the balance on the bill. As noted above, the board has authorized Diane Michaelfelder to apply existing funds to the balance, but to negotiate a partial forgiveness of the debt on the ground that the high participation of Utah residents provides a rationale for Utah State to participate in the funding of the conference.

What are the lessons for the future? The experience suggests that SPT should not expect high attendance U.S. meetings, especially if they are not in urban centers that will attract a high European participation. Second, SPT should not enter contracts where local arrangements are being provided on a fee for service basis. Ideally, host institutions in the future will be able to offer financial support for meetings.

Job Openings

Full professorship in Ethics and Technology, in particular in ICT and the knowledge society
Delft University of Technology, Faculty of Technology, Policy and Management, Section of Philosophy,

The Philosophy Section
The Philosophy section contributes to the professional and academic education of future engineers and conducts research into philosophical problems related to modern technology and its social implications. It provides service teaching on foundational and normative issues for all engineering programs at the Delft University of Technology (DUT). The main topics of these courses are ethics and engineering, philosophy of science and technology, and argumentation and critical thinking. The Philosophy section has specifically been entrusted the task of developing and introducing mandatory courses in ethics and engineering in all the university's engineering programs by the board of directors of the university. Through its research the Philosophy section aims to contribute to ongoing debates about the nature of modern technology and its role in society. Its research program focuses on foundational and methodological problems with respect to technology, e.g. the nature of technical artefacts and technological systems as socio-technical systems, and ethical problems in the design, development and implementation of technology, more specifically ethical problems related to technological risks. For more information about the section Philosophy, see www.fil.tbm.tudelft.nl. Given the increasing impact of modern ICT on society as a whole, and the emphasis of national and EU wide governmental programmes on creating a dynamic knowledge society, the section Philosophy wants to enforce its research and education programmes in ethics and ICT.

The vacant position
This full-professorship is to contribute to the consolidation, expansion and institutional entrenchment of ethics research and teaching in Delft. The title of the chair will be: Ethics and Technology, in particular ICT and the knowledge society. The person who holds this chair will have expertise in ethical problems about the design, development and implementation of new technologies, in particular technological innovations in ICT. Special attention will be given to the value sensitive design approach and to the development of methods for incorporating norms and values in designs. The chair holder will be responsible for all activities in engineering and ethics within the section of Philosophy. This includes a substantial number of mandatory

courses in ethics for most of the engineering programs at the DUT. As regards research, the chair holder will be expected to set up research in the field of value sensitive design, in particular in the field of ICT (in close cooperation with the ICT section of TPM and with research groups at other engineering departments). This research will be part of the Reflection on Technology research programme, which is one of the five research programmes of the faculty of TPM (for more information about the faculty TPM, see www.tbm.tudelft.nl). Furthermore, the chair holder will be expected to play a prominent role in the Delft Platform for Ethics and Technology. For a more extensive description of the profile of the chair, see www.fil.tbm.tudelft.nl, under vacancies.

Tasks and responsibilities

Teaching:
- Responsibility for the existing university wide service teaching in ethics and technology.
- Introduction of mandatory courses in ethics and technology in engineering programmes at the DUT that still lack such a course.
- Teaching of ethics and technology courses (particularly in the field of ICT)
- Development and introduction of courses in value sensitive design
- Responsibility for development of post-initial teaching in the field of ethics and technology.

Research:
- To consolidate the existing research programme in Ethics and Technology and to expand it in the field of ethics and information technology.
- To set up research projects in the field of value sensitive design as part of the TPM research programme Reflection on Technology
- The formation of a Centre for Ethics and Technology (possibly in cooperation with the Philosophy department of Eindhoven University of Technology), which is to become a centre of excellence for research in this field.
- To attract funding by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), the EU KP programme and other third party funding for research in Ethics and Technology.
- Support of the Platform for Ethics and Technology of Delft University of Technology.

Apart from these tasks and responsibilities in the fields of teaching and research, the chair holder is expected to fulfill standard administrative duties.

Selection Criteria
- Candidates should meet the following criteria:
- Expertise in Ethics, Applied Ethics and Ethics of Technology, more in particular in Ethics of Information and Communication Technology.

- The ambition to expand ethics and technology research and teaching in areas that are designated as areas of priority at the DUT.
- Excellent teaching skills
- Outstanding research experience in relevant areas, apparent from PhD and other publications
- The ability to build partnerships with other departments, faculties and other universities, and the ability to build partnerships between public and private sector organizations.
- Commitment and capacity to establish strong networks in the government, public policy arena and (IT) industry in the Netherlands, the EU and beyond.
- Strong networks in the international academic community, apparent from membership of relevant academic research networks, memberships of editorial boards, visiting fellowships etc.
- Experience with attracting external funding for ethics research.
- Experience in managing research/teaching groups and (international) research projects

- Experience in teaching to target groups outside the academic world.

Salary
In accordance with the collective labour agreement (CAO) of the Association of Collaborating Dutch Universities (VSNU) the salary of this position is set in the scale of Professor A, with a maximum of € 6.592 gross a month, based on a fulltime contract and depending on your experience.

Applications
Please send your C.V. and your letter of application, with reference to number 05.004 to Peter Kuip, Head of the Personnel Department, Delft University of Technology, Faculty TPM; Jaffalaan 5, 2628 BX Delft, The Netherlands. Applications should be sent in before March 17, 2005. The selection committee also welcomes suggestions of names of possible candidates (with full addresses, including e-mail addresses). For more information about this vacancy, please contact the chairman of the selection committee, Prof.dr.ir. Peter Kroes, e-mail: p.a.kroes@tbm.tudelft.nl.

Calls for Papers

**TECHNISIERUNG /
ÄSTHETISIERUNG –
TECHNOLOGICAL AND
AESTHETIC (TRANS-)
FORMATIONS OF SOCIETY
Darmstadt Technical University,
October 12 to 14, 2005**

For the past nine years, the interdisciplinary graduate college "Technisierung und Gesellschaft" considered the technological (trans)formation of society. As the last cohort of doctoral students concludes its studies, the final conference widens the perspective and brings past researches to bear on the interplay of technological and aesthetic dimensions of formative processes in contemporary societies.

By foregrounding processes, the international conference goes beyond the iconic turn in science and technology studies. Rather than focus on images, it will explore the work that goes into producing self and society in the image of technology. This work involves constructions of time and space, it negotiates forces of globalization and localization, it construes self and nature as subject and object of technological shaping. This work also produces tensions between and among aesthetic and technological ideals.

There will be panels on:
· Aesthetic Anticipation

· Art, Technosciences, and Social Criticism
· Metaphors in Science and Technology
· The Aesthetic Dimensions of Warfare
· Urban Spaces and Private Quarters

Other topics might include:
· Perception and Technologies of Visualization
· The Justification of the Self as Post-Human Artwork
· Designing Life-Cycles of People and Products
· Modeling between Artefacts and practical Usage
· Vestiges of Nature
· Visions and Visionaries from Science Fiction to Science Fact
· Figurative and the Literal Aspects of Technical Discourses
· Bordercrossings: Technology and the Arts

The conference will be held in English.

Abstracts from a wide variety of disciplines are welcome. These include philosophy, sociology, history, engineering and the natural sciences, art history, linguistics or media studies. Submit 500-word abstracts by April 22, 2005, as a Word or RichText document to: TU Darmstadt, Fachbereich 2 Graduiertenkolleg "Technisierung und Gesellschaft", Karolinenplatz 5 (Fach 1404), 64289 Darmstadt Germany.

E-mail: tagung-graduiertenkolleg@ifs.tu-darmstadt.de

For a more detailed call for papers and a collection of topical theses go to www.ifs.tu-darmstadt.de/ fileadmin/ gradkoll/ Konferenzen/abschluss/main.html

Conferences and Workshops

CEPE 2005: ETHICS OF NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY – Sixth International Conference of Computer Ethics: Philosophical Enquiry, University of Twente, Enschede, The Netherlands, July 17-19, 2005

The CEPE conference series is recognized as one of the premier international events on computer and information ethics attended by delegates from all over the world. Conferences are held about every 24 months, alternating between Europe and the United States. CEPE 2005 is the sixth conference in the series.

Information technology is currently moving well beyond the familiar mainframe, PC and laptop computer paradigms. We are witnessing the mobile revolution, the ubiquitous computing revolution, as well as revolutionary new uses of IT in biomedicine, education, the fight against crime and terrorism, entertainment and other areas. We are anticipating a nanotechnology revolution, as well as a convergence between information technology, biotechnology and nanotechnology. These new developments require ethical reflection, possibly even before their consequences become visible.

The special theme of CEPE2005 is ethics of new information technology. Papers of an ethical or philosophical nature within the following areas are particularly welcomed:
- Virtual and augmented reality and shared virtual environments
- Nanotechnology and nanocomputing
- Ubiquitous computing and ambient intelligence
- Converging technologies (the convergence of nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technology and cognitive science)
- New surveillance technologies and new technologies for security and privacy
- New uses of information technology in biomedicine and bioengineering
- New military applications of IT
- New uses of information technology in education
- New IT solutions to environmental problems
- New communication technologies and mobile computing devices
- New developments in artificial intelligence, artificial agents, embedded systems and artificial life
- Models for the ethical assessment of new and future information technologies

CEPE 2005 will take place in conjunction with the 14th Biennial International Conference of the Society for Philosophy and Technology (SPT), which will be held from July 20-22 at Delft University of Technology, Delft, The Netherlands. Further information can be found on the conference website: cepe2005.utwente.nl.

Conference director: Philip Brey, University of Twente, The Netherlands
Conference co-directors: Luciano Floridi, Oxford University, United Kingdom; Frances Grodzinsky, Sacred Heart University, United States; Lucas Introna, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

NANOTECHNOLOGY: ETHICAL AND LEGAL ISSUES – Columbia, South Carolina, 2 – 6 March 2005, Organized by Nanoscience and Technology Studies at the University of South Carolina

Developments in nanotechnology provide the basis for a convergence of the physical and life sciences, including biomedicine, information technology, and cognitive science. Emerging technologies include highly functional molecular systems, alternative manufacturing processes, molecular computing, brain/machine interfaces, tissue engineering, and recombinant genetic alterations of viral, plant, and animal systems. Virtually all areas of human life may be transformed, and these transformations will likely involve both great benefit and great risk.

In this conference we explore the ethical and legal issues raised by nanotechnology and the larger convergence of technologies, including reflections on: toxicity of nanoparticles; environmental sustainability & remediation; human/machine interfaces; human enhancements; convergence of NBIC; privacy and security; legal and ethical theories for nano; government regulation; scientific integrity and liberty; tech transfer, patenting and insurance liability; military use of nanotechnology; nanomedicine; the nano-divide; international and developing world needs

Confirmed speakers include Mihail Roco, Senior Advisor of the National Science Foundation; Vicki Colvin, Director of CBEN at Rice University.

More information: http://nsts.nano.sc.edu

2005 MEPHISTOS CONFERENCE IN THE HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, AND SOCIOLOGY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE – Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island March 5-6, 2005

Mephistos is an international graduate student conference in the History, Philosophy, and Sociology of Science, Technology and Medicine. The purpose of the conference is to stimulate open discussion among graduate students. The graduate community at Brown University, in association with the Committee on Science & Technology Studies, is proud to host the twenty-third annual edition of the event, which will be held on March 5-6, 2005.

More information:
http://www.brown.edu/Students/Mephistos/

TECHNOLOGY. BETWEEN ENTHUSIASM AND RESISTANCE TEER2005 – International Conference, 10-11 May 2005, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

This conference will focus on the social dimensions of technology. The aim of the TEER2005 conference is to create an international forum for scholars of social scientific technology research, contribute to technology research and discuss the terms of technology policy. The program will be organized around keynote lectures and workshops.

During the last couple of decades, the concepts of technology and innovation have been in the centre of the debate on social and economic development. The ability to orientate societies and citizens towards the future is characteristic for emerging new technologies and new technological systems. They provoke thoughts about the promising prospects of certain techno-economic paths, but also about counterproductive forces debilitating the well-being of society. As a consequence, strong emotions are often involved when a new technology is introduced. This is not only because the new technology is unfamiliar to us, but also because it often has important societal effects. It may make promises of creating wealth and prosperity, but it may also challenge societal routines, threaten the prevailing social order, insinuate the need to reallocate resources, accelerate the redistribution of wealth or shake the institutionalised balance of power. Thus, technology often evokes emotions, kindles enthusiasm and raises resistance.

The adoption of technology is often socially and spatially bounded. Learning and the diffusion of knowledge about new technologies and their benefits and/or risks occur in social networks, which usually have their roots in a shared geographical location, institutional context or culture and identity, among others. Technological enthusiasm, for example, is often related to certain actor positions and professional identities. The same holds true for resistance to new technologies. The reasons for and the basis of resistance vary, but

sometimes the resistance is linked to certain counter-identities constructed in both local and virtual communities and social networks.

The aim of the TEER2005 conference is to create an international forum for scholars of social scientific technology research and contribute to technology research and policy. The conference will bring together scholars interested in the social, political, economic and cultural aspects of technology.

The TEER2005 conference is part of the Research Program for Advanced Technology Policy (ProACT). ProACT consists of 33 research projects that are carried out in Finnish universities and research institutions. The program will focus on the socio-economic changes and phenomena that are significant for the continuous renewal of technology policies and societies. The program started at the beginning of 2002 and will last for four years.

For further information, please see: http://proact.ktm.fi/

Keynote speakers:

Professor Steve Woolgar
Director of the Virtual Society? - research programme
Saïd Business School
University of Oxford
http://www.brunel.ac.uk/research/virtsoc/people/woolgar.htm

Dr. Martin Bauer
Senior Lecturer in Social Psychology & Research Methods
BIOS, Research Centre for the study of Bioscience, Biomedicine, Biotechnology and Society
London School of Economics
http://www.lse.ac.uk/people/m.bauer@lse.ac.uk/

Organizers:
Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy, Univ. of Jyväskylä [http://www.jyu.fi/]
Social Capital and Innovations (SPINNO), Univ. of Jyväskylä
Acceptability and Interaction as a Challenge for Technology Projects (BiNTech), Univ. of Jyväskylä & Univ. of Tampere

Organizing committee:
Professor Kaj Ilmonen (Chair), Mikael Seppälä (Conference secretary), Dr. Tapio Litmanen, Dr. Petri Ruuskanen, Dr. Jouko Nätti, Research Fellow Ilkka Kauppinen, Research Fellow Pekka Hokkanen (Univ. of Tampere), Junior Assistant Marja Ylönen,

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Petri Ruuskanen, e-mail: pruuskan@yfi.jyu.fi , p. +358 14 260 2835
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More information:
www.jyu.fi/yhtfil/teer2005

WORKSHOP "IMAGING NANOSPACE – BILDWELTEN DER NANOFORSCHUNG" – Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Forschung, Universität Bielefeld May 11 – 14, 2005

Images and the power of image-making are defining the field of nanoscience and nanotechnology. This is reflected in the founding myths of the field (which is said to have begun with STM and AFM microscope) and its popular representations that feature dramatic molecular landscapes, visionary devices, or the manipulation of molecules. Much of nanoscale research practice revolves around the creation and interpretation of images. The workshop will focus on the specific characteristics of images as visual representations. It considers the whole range of images, from microscopy and simulation to popular culture. Scientists from the fields of STS, art theory and history, cultural studies, communication studies, and history and philosophy of science are invited to contribute. The full call for papers takes the form of an internet-exhibition at the following website: http://www.ifs.tu-darmstadt.de/phil/NanoSpace.

This virtual gallery features 14 families of images. These are supposed to serve as a starting point and common referent for the talks and workshop discussions. The conference language is English, a publication is planned.

The workshop organizers are Prof. Horst Bredekamp (History of Art, HU Berlin), Jochen Hennig (History of Science, HU Berlin), and Prof. Alfred Nordmann (Philosophy, TU Darmstadt). The programming committee also includes Andreas Lösch and Joachim Schummer (Sociology, History and Philosophy of Chemistry, TU Darmstadt), Chris Robinson and Davis Baird (Art, Philosophy, University of South Carolina).

For further information please contact jochen.hennig@staff.hu-berlin.de or nordmann@phil.tu-darmstadt.de

NORMS, REASONING AND KNOWLEDGE IN TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE –, Boxmeer, the Netherlands. June 3-4, 2005. Organized by the *Norms in Knowledge NWO Project,* Section of Philosophy and Ethics of Technology, Technical University of Eindhoven, The Netherlands.

As part of our continuing investigation in the epistemological features of normative claims and their role in technological setting, we present a conference on Norms, Reasoning and Knowledge in Technology. Invited speakers will discuss the relationship between various facets of technological knowledge and reasoning and related norms, with special emphasis on the relationship

between practical reasoning and functional ascriptions.

The conference features a diverse and distinguished panel of speakers interested in the normative aspects of technological knowledge and the relationship between practical reasoning and artifactual knowledge.

Space is limited so we ask that you apply for attendance early. Email NiK-conf@tm.tue.nl and please state your affiliations and interests in philosophy of technology. Please also indicate if you are willing to be a designated respondent during the conference.

Confirmed speakers:
Brown, Mark A., Syracuse University
Hanson, Sven Ova, Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm
Horty, John F., University of Maryland
Hughes, Jesse, Technical University of Eindhoven
Koen, Billy V., University of Texas
Pollock, John, University of Arizona
Vaesen, Krist, Technical University of Eindhoven
Vermaas, Pieter, Technical University of Delft
Walton, Douglas, University of Winnipeg

More information: www.tm.tue.nl/capaciteitsgroep/aw/philosophy/NiK-conf.html

PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING – Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Thursday 25 August - Saturday 27 August, 2005.

This conference centers around the theme of 'scientific understanding'. The notion of scientific understanding is closely related to that of scientific explanation, but while explanation is widely discussed in philosophy of science, not much work has focused explicitly on understanding. One reason is that traditional philosophers of science have long regarded it as 'merely' a psychological notion, and thereby as philosophically irrelevant. This attitude, however, is slowly disappearing, and interest in the topic of understanding is growing. With this conference we hope to stimulate the development of philosophical research into scientific understanding.

The conference is intended for philosophers of science working on the topic of scientific understanding itself, or on related topics such as explanation, modeling, representation, etc.; and for historians and sociologists of science, cognitive scientists, and others having an interest in philosophical questions regarding scientific understanding. We welcome contributed papers, which will be programmed in parallel sessions (45-60 minute

presentation including discussion). We aim at a varied program, in which philosophical questions about the nature of scientific understanding will be approached in different ways. In addition to contributions of a general philosophical nature, we hope to be able to present studies focused on a wide range of sciences, both natural and social. Although the conference has a philosophical orientation, contributions by historians and sociologists of science, cognitive scientists, and others, are welcome, as long as they are relevant to the general philosophical theme. Possible topics are:

- The relation between explanation and understanding in science
- Understanding and types of scientific explanation (causal, mechanistic, functional, unifying, etc.).
- Is understanding epistemic, pragmatic, or both?
- Models, analogies, and intelligibility
- Cognitive science and scientific understanding
- Is understanding individual or social?
- Understanding in the various sciences: similarities and differences
- Case studies from the practice and history of science

invited speakers
Hasok Chang (University College London)

Peter Lipton (University of Cambridge)
Margaret Morrison (University of Toronto)

organization
Henk W. de Regt, Sabina Leonelli, and Kai Eigner (Faculty of Philosophy, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
Contact: understanding@ph.vu.nl

programme committee
Rachel A. Ankeny (University of Sydney, Australia)
Daniela M. Bailer-Jones (Universität Bonn, Germany)
William Bechtel (University of California at San Diego, USA)
Marcel Boumans (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands)
Jeremy Butterfield (University of Oxford, UK)
Dennis Dieks (Utrecht University, The Netherlands)
Helen E. Longino (University of Minnesota, USA)
James W. McAllister (Leiden University, The Netherlands)
Mary S. Morgan (London School of Economics, UK)
Nancy J. Nersessian (Georgia Institute of Technology, USA)
Hans Radder (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands)
Erik Weber (Ghent University, Belgium)
Andrea Woody (University of Washington, Seattle, USA)

registration information
The registration fee is 100 euros (70 euros for PhD students) when

paid before June 1st, 2005; 150 (100 for PhD students) when paid after June 1st, 2005. The fee includes abstract booklet, welcoming reception on Thursday, coffee/tea and lunch on both Friday and Saturday. Information about modalities of payment and the registration form are available on our website: http://www.ph.vu.nl/~understanding.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND THE PUBLIC – Torun, Poland, September 9-12, 2005; 7th Conference of the European Sociological Association (ESA): Rethinking Inequalities, Research Network Sociology of Science and Technology (SSTNET)

The 7th Conference of the European Sociological Association (ESA) will be hosted by the Institute of Sociology of the Nicholas Copernicus University at Torun. The ESA Research Network for the Sociology of the Arts will meet for the seventh time at this conference.

Changes in society and in science and technology have led to an erosion of traditional institutional boundaries between these spheres. Nowotny, Scott and Gibbons use the term Agora to describe an emerging new public space "where science and society, the market and politics co-mingle." The Agora denotes a space in which knowledge is contextualized. What

is emphasized here for scientific knowledge is not completely different with technical knowledge. Boundaries of science and technology are transgressed by politics, economics and the civil society.

This phenomenon is not completely new. But more than in the past science and technology are evaluated by utilitarian standards and expected to produce novelty and innovation. At the same time, however, the social impact of these innovations is critically assessed. Frequently the evaluation process includes the public communication of the products and results science and technology deliver – their potential risks as well as their benefits. Among these issues are those concerning a redefinition of certainty and uncertainty, the known and the unknown, as well as questions of societal inequality and equality. If (scientific) knowledge is a building block of contemporary (knowledge) societies how can public access and participation in the process of knowledge generation and diffusion be facilitated? Do new technologies such as the Internet mitigate societal divides or do they create new ones.

Generally, the public plays a more decisive role with respect to issues of accountability, responsibility and legitimacy or transparency and democratic control in the process of development of science and

technology. Public communication and understanding of science and technology also encompasses visions, values and ethics conveyed in funding programs, in academic journals and by news journalists.

Conveners:
Luísa Oliveira (DINÂMIA/ISCTE Lisboa, Portugal): luisa.oliveira@iscte.pt
Franc Mali (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia): franc.mali@fdv.uni-lj.si
Aaro Tupasela (University of Helsinki, Finland): aaro.tupasela@helsinki.fi
Raymund Werle (Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies, Köln, Germany): We@mpifg.de

SSTNET website: http://sstnet.iscte.pt/

ESA conference website: www.7thesaconference.umk.pl/

REFRESH! – FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HE HISTORIES OF MEDIA ART, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY –
Banff New Media Institute, Canada September 28 - October 2, 2005

"The technology of the modern media has produced new possibilities of interaction...What is needed is a wider view encompassing the coming rewards in the context of the treasures left us by the past experiences, possessions, and insights." (Rudolf Arnheim, Summer 2000)

Recognizing the increasing significance of media art for our culture, this Conference on the Histories of Media Art will discuss for the first time the history of media art within the interdisciplinary and intercultural contexts of the histories of art. Leonardo/ISAST, the Database for Virtual Art, Banff New Media Institute, and UNESCO DigiArts are collaborating to produce the first international art history conference covering art and new media, art and technology, art-science interaction, and the history of media as pertinent to contemporary art.

media art histories
After photography, film, video, and the little known media art history of the 1960s-80s, today media artists are active in a wide range of digital areas (including interactive, genetic, and telematic art). Even in robotics and nanotechnology, artists design and conduct experiments. This dynamic process has triggered intense discussion about images in the disciplines of art history, media studies, and neighboring cultural disciplines. The Media Art History Project offers a basis for attempting an evolutionary history of the audiovisual media, from the laterna magica to the panorama, phantasmagoria, film, and the virtual art of recent decades. It is an evolution with breaks and detours; however, all its stages are

distinguished by a close relationship between art, science, and technology.

Refresh! will discuss questions of historiography, methodology and the role of institutions of media art. The Conference will contain key debates about the function of inventions, artistic practice in collaborative networks, the prominent role of sound during the last decades and will emphasize the importance of intercultural and pop culture themes in the Histories of Media Art. Readings of new media art histories vary richly depending on cultural contexts. This event calls upon scholarship from a strongly international perspective.

Therefore Refresh! will represent and address the wide array of disciplines involved in the emerging field of Media Art. Beside Art History these include the Histories of Sciences and Technologies , Film-, Sound-, Media-, Visual and Theatre Studies, Architecture, Visual Psychology, just to name a few.

documentation - curating - collection
Although the popularity of media art exhibited at exhibitions and art festivals is growing among the public and increasingly influences theory debates, with few exceptions

museums and galleries have neglected to systematically collect this present-day art, to preserve it and to demand appropriate conservatory measures. Thus, several decades of international media art is in danger of being lost to the history of collecting and to academic disciplines such as art history. This gap will have far-reaching consequences; therefore, the conference will also discuss the documentation, collection, archiving and preservation of media art. What kind of international networks must be created to advance appropriate policies for collection and conservation? What kind of new technologies do we need to optimize research efforts and information exchange?

conference
Held at The Banff Centre, featuring lectures by invited speakers as well as others selected by a jury from a call for papers, the main event will be followed by a two-day summit meeting (October 1-2, 2005) for in-depth dialogues and international project initiation.

conference director & organisation
Oliver GRAU, Director Immersive Art & Database of Virtual Art Humboldt University Berlin
http://virtualart.hu-berlin.de

Membership and Dues

SPT Membership

SPT welcomes as members persons from all countries whose professional interests include philosophically significant considerations of technology. Membership is open to those who have an advanced degree (typically but not necessarily in philosophy), to those who are in a technological field, and to students whose work is in keeping with the interests of the Society. Dues are $20US per year, which includes a subscription to the SPT Newsletter (dues for students are $15US, and gratis for people in developing nations).

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