

pirical questions to the test. New insights into traditional problems and fascinating avenues for future studies are emerging from work in this developing area of philosophy.

The event started with a practical training session, led by psychologist, Kelly Schmidtke (Nottingham), on experimental design and statistical analysis, enlivened by the inclusion of experiments involving workshop participants. Pendaran Roberts (Nottingham) later presented a paper giving details of their work together on colour disagreement. The data suggest that, contrary to claims in the literature, there is no more disagreement about colour than about shape. Their findings are now being used to defend a realist view of colour against a specific objection. Paulo Sousa (QUB) gave an entertaining keynote talk presenting the results of three recent studies on the way the folk (i.e., non-philosophers) view weakness of the will, suggesting that the nature of their concept is evaluative rather than descriptive, showing parallels with ascriptions of blame or credit.

Florian Cova presented new data on the folk concept of free will from studies using subjects with frontotemporal dementia. These subjects with blunted emotions were found to be as likely to make compatibilist judgements as unimpaired subjects, challenging the view that high-affect scenarios elicit compatibilist responses because of emotional reactions.

Participants were exposed to ‘bad art’ during Margaret Moore’s presentation. She discussed the effect of mere exposure to works of art on aesthetic appraisals, testing the hypothesis that exposure increases appreciation independently of artistic merit. The results contradicted previous findings focusing on works considered to have merit, revealing a decrease in perceived value following exposure to bad art (paintings by Kinkade). There were two discussion sessions, led by Peter Caven (Moral dilemmas and tragic remorse) and Guy Fletcher (When do we disagree?), during which participants worked together constructively to help the discussants develop proposed experimental projects, considering different methods and anticipating potential problems.

An open meeting was held, one outcome of which was the decision to develop an online forum linked to the Group’s [website](#), where researchers will be able to arrange collaborative ventures. Jonathan Webber (Cardiff) led a discussion about setting up an x-phi database.

The final talk was a thought-provoking keynote address by Joshua Knobe (Yale), discussing the folk notion of the ‘true self’ and exploring intuitions about

cases such as when a person makes a higher-order judgement about what they want to do, but succumbs to the temptation to act otherwise. The workshop closed after a lively debate about whether the true self would generally be taken to be the one making the rational judgement, or the one revealed in action taken in a moment of weakness.

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Causality and Explanation in the Sciences, 19–21 September

From Monday 19 till Wednesday 21 September 2011, the ‘Centre for Logic and Philosophy of Science’ brought philosophers and scientists together at Ghent University (Belgium) to discuss the relation between causality and explanation. This ‘Causality and Explanation in the Sciences’ conference (CaEitS) was already the sixth congress in the Causality in the Sciences conference series (see [here](#)).

In the first plenary session, Nancy Cartwright made the case that the effectiveness of evidence-based policy tends to suffer from locality, both with respect to its support factors (as policies do not produce results on their own) and cause-description (abstraction is needed to “get a cause that travels”). Thus construed, she argued that evidence-based policy should “mix its methods”: increasing its focus on concrete details in the target and its use of cross discipline heuristics. The first day came to a close with a plenary session by Henk de Regt entitled “How we understand through causal explanation”. In this presentation, it was argued that by an analysis of the concept of understanding, one can gain insight into why causal explanations provide understanding, instead of merely stipulating this.

Tuesday opened with a plenary lecture by Michael Strevens (“Causality Unified”). In his presentation, Strevens drew on his recent work on explanation to argue that the evidence adduced by the causal pluralists can be accommodated easily by a unified theory of causality, on which on all causal claims concern the same fundamental causal relation. In the plenary session that afternoon, Daniel Little argued in his talk (“Explaining the world”) that social causal explanations depend upon the specification of mechanisms and processes that are at work in the social world. As there are no “laws of society” that might serve the ontologi-

cal function of establishing “social necessity” for these mechanisms, Little opted to turn to features of structured human agency as the form of “necessity” that underlies causal links between antecedent conditions and the outcome in which we are interested, applying it to the example of “free-rider collective behaviour”.

The final day opened with a plenary talk by Mauricio Suárez entitled “Causation, manipulability, and quantum mechanics”. In his presentation, Suárez argued that, contrary to the perceived view, quantum mechanics does not constitute an exception to the applicability of the manipulability account of causal explanation, and that indeed the Causal Markov Condition is in principle applicable to the field of quantum mechanics.

Apart from the plenary sessions, around fifty contributed papers were presented. Though it is beyond the scope of this report to consider these presentations in detail, one clear division can be made, namely between those talks who focused on causality and explanation as such, and those who emphasized the application of general philosophical positions on concrete scientific disciplines. The former group consisted of contributions on mechanistic explanations (Jon Williamson, John Pemberton, Mark Couch, Patrick McGivern, Federica Russo, Phyllis Illari, Petri Ylikoski, Ben Barros, Cyril Hédoin and Nicolas Brisset, Raoul Gervais), effect talk (Jan Willem Wieland, Alex Broadbent), causal inference (Jan Lemeire, Tim De Craecker, Frederik Van De Putte and Tjerk Gauderis, Holly Andersen, Jan Sprenger, Lorenzo Casini), interventionism (Alexandre Marcellesi, Silvia De Bianchi, Samuel Schindler), understanding (Alexandra Bradner, Wesley van Camp) and Kairetic and Structural accounts of explanation (Merel Lefevere, Alex Koo, Theo Kuipers, F.A. Muller). The latter group consisted of contributions on biology (Jan Baedke, Laszlo Kosolosky, Fridolin Gross, Michael Joffe, Leonardo Bich and Matteo Mossio), physics (Matt Farr and Alexander Reutlinger, Mark Shumelda, Michel Ghins, Andrew Wayne, Peter Bokulich), social sciences (Alessio Moneta and Tiziana Foresti, Jan Willem Lindemans, Alex Prescott-Couch, Francesca Pongiglione, Rogier De Langhe), medicine (Samantha Kleinberg, Brendan Clarke, Marshall Abrams) and mathematics (James Franklin, Victor Gijssbers, Pat Corvini, Mieke Boon).

Besides having experienced a canal boat trip through the inspiring old city centre of Ghent, the participants were treated to a number of [funny clips](#) presenting basic

reasoning fallacies related to the conference topic.

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Computer Simulations and the Changing Face of Scientific Experimentation, 21–23 September

An interdisciplinary workshop on “Computer Simulations and the Changing Face of Scientific Experimentation” (see [here](#)) was held at the Simulation Technology Research Centre of the University of Stuttgart. Philosophers, historians and practising scientists from various fields came together to discuss the relation between computer simulations and experiments in contemporary science and in its recent historical development.

On the philosophical side there is consensus that simulations and experiments are distinct scientific methods. Experiments are an empirical method whereas simulations clearly are not. This restricts the possibilities for substituting experiments by simulations. For example, experiments that put fundamental hypotheses to the test can never be replaced by simulations.

While the debate about the alleged materiality of simulations that occupies a large part of the *Synthese* issue 2009:169 is now considered as partly misguided, questions are still open concerning the conditions under which simulations are nonetheless able to provide new knowledge about empirical systems. Anouk Barberousse (University of Lille) made a strong case for the empirical significance of simulation data, criticizing the “Laplacian view” according to which computer simulations just deterministically derive results from the premises built into them as not doing justice to the way simulation studies are conducted. In a similar vein Paul Humphreys (University of Virginia) talked about qualitative differences of data generated by simulations and experiments. A complicated borderline case in this respect is that of empirical data that is refined by highly sophisticated computational methods as for example in CT scans.

In scientific practice simulations and experiments are regarded as distinct but complementary methods. Judith Rommel (SimTech, University of Stuttgart) in a talk on the interplay of simulations and experiments quantum chemistry and Wolfgang Nowak (SimTech), who explained how simulations are used to tune the exper-