



## Third Conference of the GWP (2019)

Michael T. Hicks<sup>1</sup> · Andreas Hüttemann<sup>2</sup> · Martin Voggenauer<sup>2</sup>

Accepted: 11 January 2022 / Published online: 23 February 2022  
© The Author(s) 2022

In February 2019 the third conference of the GWP (Gesellschaft für Wissenschaftsphilosophie) took place in Cologne. The conference consisted of six plenary lectures by Martin Carrier, Katherine Hawley, Kärin Nickelsen, Erik Olsson, Ken Waters and Michael Strevens plus more than 110 contributed papers.

The collection of five papers that we briefly introduce below (one of which was published in JGPS 2021/4) represents different approaches to and perspectives on various areas of philosophy of science that were discussed at the conference.

Martin Carrier's paper "What Does Good Science-Based Advice to Politics Look Like?" discusses options for providing scientific policy advice. His starting point is the problem that influences originating in the social arena and being imposed on science may spoil the trustworthiness of research. Carrier argues that non-epistemic values are essential for establishing the significance of questions and the relevance of evidence, while, on the other hand, such social choices are the prerogative of society. He argues that this tension can be resolved by recognizing social values and by adding them as separate premises (conditionalization) or by taking up such goals as political commissions. This means to presuppose rather than to promote non-epistemic values. Engaging with values is legitimate in a value-free framework as long as no particular stance is advertised as being distinguished by science. Scientific policy advice may expound a diversity of policy packages, each of which is laden with different values, and to leave the choice to politics.

Anna Klassen, whose paper "Methodological Signatures in Early Ethology—the Problem of Animal Subjectivity" has already been published in issue (4/2021), investigates the issue of adequate terminology to talk about animal behavior. The question of terminology is tied to the issue of animal subjectivity and the tension between anthropomorphism and empirical adequacy. After addressing the general discussion about animal subjectivity and the tension between anthropomorphism and empirical adequacy, she introduces her own theoretical and methodological framework before presenting an analysis of Lorenz' and Tinbergen's

---

✉ Andreas Hüttemann  
ahuettetm@uni-koeln.de

Michael T. Hicks  
hicksmt@gmail.com

Martin Voggenauer  
martin.voggenauer@gmx.net

<sup>1</sup> Department of Philosophy, ERI Building, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT, UK

<sup>2</sup> Philosophisches Seminar, Universität zu Köln, Albertus Magnus Platz, 50123 Cologne, Germany

methodological signatures. Finally, she addresses the possibility of using this typology to examine current frameworks of animal welfare research.

In her paper “Cooperative Division of Cognitive Labour: The Social Epistemology of Photosynthesis Research” Kärin Nickelsen addresses the question of how social interactions and the interplay of personal and impersonal epistemic goals influence or drive the dynamics of scientific research. Nickelsen analyses two episodes from the history of photosynthesis research of the late nineteenth- to mid-twentieth centuries, which display a wide and coordinated intellectual diversity similar to Kitcher’s “division of cognitive labour”. While Kitcher’s concept captures important aspects of the dynamics of this research, Nickelsen argues that it has to be augmented in some respects to capture important features of these concrete cases. In particular she points to the fact that—first—research in different groups was not so much a competitive race but rather to a large extent co-operative. Second, the research community was not stable, and, third, scientists are often not in a position to choose their approaches strategically, because, e.g., the relevant techniques are not available to them. On the basis of her analysis of the factors that were relevant for the generation of scientific knowledge she suggests how historical and philosophical approaches in the analysis of science can productively interact.

By explication Carnap means the transformation of an inexact, prescientific concept, the explicandum, into a new exact concept, into what he calls the “explicatum”. Erik Olsson in his paper “Explicationist Epistemology and the Explanatory Role of Knowledge” argues that much of contemporary epistemology can be unified under Carnap’s methodology of explication. In this paper he turns in particular to Kornblith’s and Williamson’s methodology, which share an emphasis on the explanatory role of knowledge and a skepticism towards conceptual analysis. Olsson asks whether these approaches can without loss be integrated within an explicationist framework and whether these approaches come out as internally coherent, given such an integration. Olsson argues that in Kornblith’s case the answer to these questions is essentially in the affirmative. Much of Williamson’s approach is also translatable into explicationism. However, from that perspective, Williamson’s central argument for treating knowledge as undefinable, referring to persistent yet unsuccessful attempts to solve the Gettier problem, according to Olsson amounts to an overreaction to that problem.

Finally, Yukonori Onishi and Davide Serpico in “Homeostatic Property Cluster Theory without Homeostatic Mechanisms: Two Recent Attempts and their Costs” discuss the concept of natural kind, which plays a significant role in the life sciences. Within the influential Homeostatic Property Cluster Theory, introduced by Boyd, the question arises why certain properties are statistically associated. Onishi and Serpico focus on one of the proposed solutions for this problem, the so-called homeostatic mechanism. More particularly they analyze two recent refinements of Homeostatic Property Cluster Theory: one that avoids any reference to the causes of the clustering of properties and one that replaces homeostatic mechanisms with causal networks represented by causal graphs. According to Onishi and Serpico the former is too slender to account for some inductive inferences in science, and the latter, thicker account invites interest-relativity, as the original Homeostatic Property Cluster Theory does. This suggests that human interest will be an essential part of a satisfactory account of natural kinds.

We dedicate this collection to the late Katherine Hawley.

**Funding** Open Access funding enabled and organized by Projekt DEAL.

**Open Access** This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons

licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

**Publisher's Note** Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.