

**Descartes Lectures 2008 and Workshop on
Pragmatism and Naturalism**



Tilburg, 07.05.2008 - 09.05.2008

Descartes Lectures 2008

Main Speaker: Professor Huw Price, University of Sydney

Every other year, a distinguished philosopher visits Tilburg University for one week to present the René Descartes Lectures. It is a great pleasure to announce the first speaker, Professor Huw Price from the University of Sydney, who will speak on ‘Three Themes in Contemporary Pragmatism’.

The workshop ‘Pragmatism and Naturalism’ provides further opportunities to discuss the material presented in the lectures.

Organizers: Stephan Hartmann (TiLPS)

Professor Huw Price

Huw Price is Bertrand Russell Professor of Philosophy and a Fellow of Trinity College at the University of Cambridge. He was previously ARC Federation Fellow and Challis Professor of Philosophy at the University of Sydney, where from 2002 to 2012 he was Founding Director of the Centre for Time. In Cambridge he is co-founder, with Martin Rees and Jaan Tallinn, of a project to establish a Centre for the Study of Existential Risk.

His publications include *Facts and the Function of Truth* (Blackwell, 1988; 2nd. edn. OUP, forthcoming), *Time’s Arrow and Archimedes’ Point* (OUP, 1996), *Naturalism Without Mirrors* (OUP, 2011) and a range of articles in journals such as *Nature*, *Journal of Philosophy*, *Mind* and *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*. He is also co-editor (with Richard Corry) of *Causation, Physics, and the Constitution of Reality: Russell’s Republic Revisited* (OUP, 2007). His René Descartes Lectures (Tilburg, 2008) will shortly appear as *Expressivism, Pragmatism and Representationalism* (CUP, 2013), with commentary essays by Simon Blackburn, Robert Brandom, Paul Horwich and Michael Williams.

He is a Fellow of the British Academy, a Fellow and former Member of Council of the Australian Academy of the Humanities, and a Past President of the Australasian Association of Philosophy. He was consulting editor for the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* from 1995 to 2006, and is an associate editor of *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy* and a member of the editorial boards of *Contemporary Pragmatism*, *Logic and Philosophy of Science*, the Routledge International Library of Philosophy, and the *European Journal for Philosophy of Science*.

Lecture I: Two Notions of Naturalism

Lecture I begins with a distinction between two themes in philosophical naturalism. The first theme takes science to be our best guide to what there is, the second takes it to be our best guide to the nature of our own thought and talk. Thus the first theme ('object naturalism') motivates a scientifically-constrained metaphysics, while the second ('subject naturalism') motivates a scientifically-constrained philosophy of language and philosophical psychology.

The lecture discusses a sense in which these two themes may conflict: in particular, a sense in which subject naturalism may undermine a presupposition of object naturalism. The presupposition in question is the assumption that belief, judgement and assertion are 'referential', or 'representational', in some theoretically robust sense. In showing that this assumption is itself open to naturalistic challenge, the lecture identifies a little-recognised vulnerability in popular forms of (object) naturalism.

Lecture II: Two Readings of Representationalism

The remaining lectures aim to show, first, what conception(s) of representation might replace the assumption in question; and second, what the project of philosophical naturalism looks like, in the light of these changes. Lecture II begins with the so-called bifurcation thesis – the view that speech acts into descriptive and non-descriptive categories. The lecture advocates a different bifurcation, between two notions of representation: an 'external', world-tracking notion, and an 'internal', inferentialist notion. I argue that traditional representationalism confuses these notions.

Lecture III: Two Programs for Pluralism

Lecture III outlines a conception of the project of naturalistic philosophy, in the light of this new bifurcation thesis. The recognition that not all representations in the inferential sense need be representation in the world-tracking sense permits a new pluralism within the former class: a pluralism about the functions of representation (in the former sense) in the lives of natural creatures in a natural environment. I emphasise that this kind of pluralism is orthogonal to familiar programs for pluralism in the philosophy of science. It involves a new dimension of variability, that conventional representation-

alism simply hides from view.

Workshop on Pragmatism and Naturalism

Synopsis

Many views are gathered under the banner of naturalism. What all of them share is a dismissal of aprioristic, high-brow philosophy, prior to all epistemic practices. This view raises major challenges that must ultimately be dealt with, such as whether naturalism allows for the formulation of norms by which our beliefs about the world can be assessed. One option that may be explored in this context is to ask whether a return to pragmatism offers a viable way out of the problems that confront naturalists more generally. Pragmatists have claimed that although all scientific statements are of a hypothetical character, intended to bring us to a state of thought at rest, they are our best guesses at the entities, processes, and structures of the universe. The aim of this workshop is to seek a better understanding of the core meaning and reach of both naturalism and pragmatism. Papers on naturalism, pragmatism and the relation between naturalism and pragmatism are invited. The workshop also offers the opportunity to discuss Huw Price's Descartes Lectures in more detail.

Organizers: TiLPS

Speakers

Mauro Dorato (University of Rome), Melinda Fagan (Rice University), Paul Horwich (New York University), Henry Jackman (York University), Andrew Jorgensen (University College Dublin), Jonathan Knowles (Norwegian University of Science and Technology), Dominique Kuenzle (University of Zurich), Jim O'Shea (University College Dublin), Herman de Regt (Tilburg University), Kevin Scharp (The Ohio State University), Jan Sprenger (Tilburg University), Mauricio Suárez (University of Madrid), Konrad Talmont-Kaminski (University of Finance and Management in Warsaw), Dorette van der Tholen (Tilburg University), Erik Weber and Leen de Vreese (University of Gent), Michael Williams (John Hopkins University), Jesús Zamora Bonilla (UNED)

Program

Wednesday 07.05

8.45 ' 9.15	Registration (Cobbenhagen Building, Kleine Foyer)
9.15 ' 9.30	Stephan Hartmann: <i>Welcome and Introduction</i>
Chair: Stephan Hartmann	
9.30 ' 10.15	Paul Horwich: <i>Deflationism, Pluralism, and Normativity</i>
10.15 ' 11.00	Henry Jackman: <i>Pragmatism, Naturalism and Semantic Normativity</i>
11.00 ' 11.30	Coffee break
Chair: Michael Williams	
11.30 ' 12.15	Dorette van der Tholen: <i>Naturalistic Epistemology and Privileged Intuitions</i>
12.15 ' 13.00	Jim O'Shea: <i>Sellars' Pragmatic Naturalism: Reasons, Causes, and the Janus-Faced Character of Language</i>
13.00 ' 14.00	Lunch
Chair: Reinhard Muskens	
14.00 ' 14.45	Kevin Scharp: <i>Naturalism and Truth</i>
14.45 ' 15.30	Dominique Kuenzle: <i>Assertional Commitments as Normative Language-World Relations</i>
15.30 ' 16.00	Coffee Break
Chair: Maurice Schouten	
16.00 ' 17.30	René Descartes Lectures: Huw Price, <i>Lecture I: Two Notions of Naturalism</i>
19.30	Workshop dinner

Thursday 08.05

Chair: Huw Price

9.30 ' 10.15

10.15 ' 11.00

11.00 ' 11.30

Chair: Monica Meijsing

11.30 ' 12.15

12.15 ' 13.00

13.00 ' 14.00

Chair: Kevin Scharp

14.00 ' 14.45

14.45 ' 15.30

15.30 ' 16.00

Chair: Herman de Regt

16.00 ' 17.30

Melinda Fagan: *Integrative Pragmatism as Social Epistemology of Science*

Jonathan Knowles: *Naturalism versus Pragmatism*

Coffee break

Erik Weber and Leen de Vreese: *Against Causal Objectivism: A Pragmatist Account of Two Concepts of Causation*

Herman de Regt: *A Pragmatist Interpretation of the Science of Consciousness*

Lunch

Andrew Jorgensen: *The Sky over Canberra*

Mauro Dorato: *The Method of Tenacity and the Method of Science: Are They Really in Conflict?*

Coffee Break

René Descartes Lectures: Huw Price, *Lecture II: Two Readings of Representationalism*

Friday 09.05

Chair: Jan Sprenger

9.30 ' 10.15

10.15 ' 11.00

11.00 ' 11.30

Chair: Mauricio Surez

11.30 ' 12.15

12.15 ' 13.00

13.00 ' 14.00

Chair: Jonathan Knowles

14.00 ' 14.45

Chair: Stephan Hartmann

14.45 ' 16.15

16.15 ' 16.45

16.45 ' 17.30

Mauricio Suárez: *Scientific Representation: Against All Metaphysics*

Jesús Zamora Bonilla: *Epistemic Practices: An Inferentialist-Naturalist Approach*

Coffee Break

Jan Sprenger: *Pragmatism in Formal Modeling: Two Case Studies*

Konrad Talmont-Kaminski: *Simon's Heuristics, Reliabilism and Habits*

Lunch

Michael Williams: *Pragmatists, Minimalism and Expressivism*

René Descartes Lectures: Huw Price, *Lecture III: Two Programs for Pluralism*

Coffee Break

Discussion with Huw Price