

ROBERT NORTHCOTT – C.V.

Department of Philosophy, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HX

email: r.northcott@bbk.ac.uk

web: <http://robertnorthcott.weebly.com>

Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, Birkbeck College, University of London

AOS: philosophy of science, especially the special sciences; causation

Publications

Research articles

‘Free will is not a testable hypothesis’

Erkenntnis (forthcoming)

‘The efficiency question in economics’

Philosophy of Science (forthcoming)

‘Conceived this way: Innateness defended’

forthcoming in *Philosophers’ Imprint*

(co-authored with Gualtiero Piccinini)

‘Economic theory and empirical science’

forthcoming in Conrad Heilmann and Julian Reiss (eds), *Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Economics*

‘When are purely predictive models best?’

Disputatio (forthcoming)

‘A Dilemma for the Doomsday Argument’

Ratio 29.3, September 2016, pp268-282

‘Opinion polling and election predictions’

Philosophy of Science 82, December 2015, pp1260-1271

‘Prisoner’s Dilemma doesn’t explain much’

chapter 4 in Martin Peterson (ed) *The Prisoner’s Dilemma* (Cambridge 2015), pp64-84

(co-authored with Anna Alexandrova)

‘Harm and causation’

Utilitas 27.2, June 2015, pp147-164

‘Degree of explanation’

Synthese 190.15, October 2013, pp3087-3105

‘It’s just a feeling: why economic models do not explain’

Journal of Economic Methodology 20.3, September 2013, pp262-267

(co-authored with Anna Alexandrova)

‘Verisimilitude: a causal approach’

Synthese 190.9, June 2013, pp1471-1488

‘Partial explanations in social science’

chapter 7 in Harold Kincaid (ed) *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Social Science* (Oxford 2012), pp130-153

‘Genetic traits and causal explanation’

- chapter 4 in Kathryn Plaisance and Thomas Reydon (eds) *Philosophy of Behavioral Biology* (Springer: Boston Studies in Philosophy of Science 282, 2012), pp65-82
- ‘How necessary are randomized controlled trials?’
in Ronald Munson, *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics* (9th edition, Thomson Wadsworth 2012), pp187-191
- ‘Natural-born determinists: a new defense of causation as probability-raising’
Philosophical Studies 150.1, August 2010, pp1-20
- ‘Walsh on causes and evolution’
Philosophy of Science 77.3, July 2010, pp457-467
- ‘On Lewis, Schaffer and the non-reductive evaluation of counterfactuals’
Theoria 75.4, December 2009, pp336-343
- ‘Is actual difference making actually different?’
Journal of Philosophy 106.11, November 2009, pp629-634
- ‘Progress in economics’
chapter 11 in Don Ross and Harold Kincaid (eds) *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Economics* (Oxford 2009), pp306-337
(co-authored with Anna Alexandrova)
- ‘Causation and contrast classes’
Philosophical Studies 139.1, May 2008, pp111-123
- ‘Weighted explanations in history’
Philosophy of the Social Sciences 38.1, March 2008, pp76-96
- ‘Can ANOVA measure causal strength?’
Quarterly Review of Biology 83.1, March 2008, pp47-55
- ‘Causal efficacy and the analysis of variance’
Biology and Philosophy 21.2, March 2006, pp253-276
- ‘Pearson’s wrong turning: against statistical measures of causal efficacy’
Philosophy of Science 72.5, December 2005, pp900-912
- ‘Comparing apples with oranges’
Analysis 65.1, January 2005, pp12-18
- ‘Defining causal strength’
CPNSS Discussion Paper CTR 14/03, September 2003

Other

- ‘Bad luck or the ref’s fault?’
in Ted Richards (ed), *Soccer and Philosophy* (Open Court, 2010), pp319-326
- ‘The Irrational Game: why there’s no perfect system’
in Eric Bronson (ed), *Poker and Philosophy* (Open Court, 2006), pp105-115
- Review of ‘The Scientific Study of Society’ by Max Steuer
Economics and Philosophy 20.2, October 2004, pp375-381
(co-authored with Anna Alexandrova)

Employment

- Senior Lecturer, Birkbeck College, University of London, October 2013-
- Lecturer, Birkbeck College, University of London, May 2011-September 2013

- Associate Professor, University of Missouri-St Louis, October 2011–May 2012 (on leave)
- Assistant Professor, University of Missouri-St Louis, August 2005–September 2011

- Visiting Research Fellow, Centre for Philosophy of Natural and Social Science, London School of Economics, April–July 2005
- Visiting Scholar, UC San Diego philosophy department, September 2003–June 2004 and September 2004–April 2005
- Research Associate, Centre for Philosophy of Natural and Social Science, London School of Economics, August 2000–September 2005

Education

PhD Philosophy, London School of Economics, defended July 2004

Adviser: Colin Howson

Thesis title: ‘Approximate truth and causal strength in science’

MSc Economics, London School of Economics

Average grade: 67 (in top six of year, from about 125 students in total)

Diploma in Economics, King’s College, University of Cambridge

Grade: 1* distinction (in top three of whole year of economics undergraduates)

BA Mathematics and History, King’s College, University of Cambridge

Part II History, Grade: 2.1 Part IA Mathematics, Grade: 2.1

S-levels, Hampstead Comprehensive School

Subjects and grades: Chemistry 1, Physics 1, Further Mathematics 2

A-levels, Hampstead Comprehensive School

Ancient History A, Chemistry A, Further Mathematics A, Mathematics A, Physics A

Awards and Scholarships

- National Science Foundation HPS Scholars Award, ‘Causation and evolution’, spring-autumn 2010 (\$50,000)
- UM Research Board award, ‘Measuring causal strength in biology’, spring-autumn 2008 (\$20,000)
- UMSL Research Award, ‘Causes in science and philosophy’, autumn 2006 (\$7000)
- UMSL Small Grants, five separate ones in the period 2006-2010 (up to \$1000 each)
- Jacobsen Essay Prize in philosophy, University of London (open to all U of L faculty and graduate students), March 2004
- Analysis Trust scholarship, October 1999–September 2000 (c £15,000)
- Inaugural LSE Department of Economics teaching prize, June 1998

Teaching

Birkbeck:

- Undergraduate: Epistemology; Evolution and Philosophy; Further Epistemology; Philosophy of Science; Problems of Explanation and Interpretation
- Graduate: Evolution and Philosophy; Introduction to Epistemology; Philosophy of Science

University of Missouri-St Louis:

- Graduate: Philosophy of Science, Metaphysics, Darwinism and Philosophy of Biology, Philosophy of Social Science, Bayesianism
- Undergraduate: Philosophy of Science, Metaphysics, Darwinism and Philosophy of Biology (including for Honors College), Philosophy of Social Science, Bioethics

- Syllabi and notes for all these courses were developed by me from scratch
- My student evaluation scores are consistently above the departmental average, often far above.

London School of Economics:

- Four years as a TA in LSE Department of Economics
- Three summers as a TA in LSE International Summer School in Economics
- Winner (the only year I was eligible), LSE economics department teaching prize, as voted for by students (from over 50 TAs in total)
- Selected because of my popularity with students to deliver LSE's external one-week intensive program 'Introduction to Economics', Brunei Investment Agency
- Co-writer of external Intermediate Macroeconomics exam for LSE, 2004–2006
- Private tutoring in mathematics and in economics

Service

Reviewer for:

Analysis, Australasian Journal of Philosophy, British Journal for the Philosophy of Science, Critica Revista Hispanoamericana de Filosofía, Economics and Philosophy, Erkenntnis, European Journal for Philosophy of Science, International Studies in the Philosophy of Science, Journal for General Philosophy of Science, Journal of Applied Philosophy, Journal of Philosophical Logic, Mind, Philosophical Quarterly, Philosophical Psychology, Philosophical Studies, Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, Philosophy and Theory in Biology, Philosophy of Science, Revista Portuguesa Filosofia, Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science, Studies in the History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences, Synthese, Topoi

National Science Foundation, Oxford University Press, Routledge Press, University of Missouri Research Board, Flanders Research Foundation, Cognitive Science Society, Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Central States Philosophy Association, Society for the Metaphysics of Science

Chapters from: *Causality and Probability in the Sciences* (Russo and Williamson eds, College Publications 2007), *Causality in the Sciences* (Illari, Russo and Williamson eds, Oxford UP 2011), *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Social Science* (Kincaid and Ross eds, Oxford UP 2012), *The Prisoner's Dilemma* (Peterson ed, Cambridge UP 2015)

I was a member of the QAA working group that drafted a subject benchmark statement for Philosophy (June 2014)

Professional Memberships:

- Philosophy of Science Association
- British Society for the Philosophy of Science
- European Philosophy of Science Association
- American Philosophical Association
- British Philosophical Association
- fellow of the Higher Education Academy