Bram Vaassen

August 2024

Umeå University The Faculty of Arts and Humanities 901 87 Umeå SE $\begin{array}{l} {\rm https://www.bramvaassen.com/}\\ {\rm bram.vaassen@umu.se}\\ {\rm +46~90~786~61~98} \end{array}$

ORC-ID: 0000-0001-6423-1324

Areas of Specialization

Metaphysics, Philosophy of Mind

Areas of Competence

Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of AI, Philosophy of Language, Epistemology

Employment

Associate Professor in Philosophy, Aug. 2024-...

Department for Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies Umeå University

Associate Professor in Philosophy and Digital Humanities, Jan. 2024-

July 2024 HumLab

Umeå University

Postdoctoral Researcher, 2021–2023

Department for Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies Umeå University

Postdoctoral Researcher, 2020–2021

Department of Philosophy University of Cologne

Student Counsellor, 2019–2020

Department for Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies Umeå University

PhD Student (salaried), 2014–2019

Department for Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies Umeå University

Visiting Positions

Rutgers University

Visiting Research Scholar, Spring 2022 – Fall 2023

Invited by prof. Karen Bennett

UC Berkeley

Visiting Research Scholar, Spring 2016

Invited by prof. John Campbell

University College Dublin

Erasmus Exchange Student, Fall 2011

Education

PhD in Philosophy, 2014–2019

Umeå University

Thesis: Causal After All; A Model of Mental Causation for Dualists

Supervision: Pär Sundström, Gunnar Björnsson, Torfinn Huvenes

Faculty opponent: David Papineau

Shortlisted for the 2020 Mercier Prize for monographs in metaphysics

MPhil in Philosophy, 2013–2014

KU Leuven

Summa cum laude (88,64%)

Graduated 1st in my cohort

MA in Philosophy, 2012–2013

KU Leuven

Magna cum laude (84,33%)

Graduated 1st in my cohort

BA in Philosophy, minoring in English literature and linguistics, 2009–2012

KU Leuven

Cum laude (75,47%)

Publications

Against Causal Arguments in Metaphysics

Asian Journal of Philosophy 3 (2): 1-23 (2024)

https://doi.org/10.1007/s44204-024-00184-5

Mental Causation for Standard Dualists

Australasian Journal of Philosophy 102 (4) 978-998 (2024)

https://doi.org/10.1080/00048402.2024.2335325

Absence and Abnormality

Analysis 83 (1) pp. 98–106 (2023)

https://doi.org/10.1093/analys/anac030

AI, Opacity, and Personal Autonomy

Philosophy and Technology 35 (4): 1-20 (2022)

https://doi.org/10.1007/s13347-022-00577-5

Halfway Proportionality

Philosophical Studies 179, pp. 2823–2843 (2022) https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-022-01803-8

And Therefore (with Alex Sandgren)

Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy, (2022) https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174X.2021.2010430

Causal Exclusion without Causal Sufficiency

Synthese 198, pp. 10341–10353 (2021)

https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-020-02723-y

Dualism and Exclusion

Erkenntnis 86, pp. 543-552 (2021) http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10670-019-00118-1

Basic Beliefs and the Perceptual Learning Problem

Episteme (13), pp. 133-149 (2016)

https://doi.org/10.1017/epi.2015.58

Grants Major Grants

Umeå University internal research grant (465 000 SEK) awarded based on publication record, 2024

Two-year stipend (700 000 SEK) from the Kempe foundation (co-applied with Dimitri Coelho Mollo (PI) and Pär Sundström) for the What do Large Language Model Say? project, 2024

Three-year postdoctoral fellowship in the *Operationalizing AI Ethics* project, TU Delft, 2023 (declined)

International Postdoctoral Fellowship from the Swedish Research Council (3 150 000 SEK) for the Causation, Correlation, and Insensitivity project, 2020–2023

Minor Grants

Seed Money for the #FrAIday interdisciplinary lecture series (co-operation with several departments at Umeå University 10 000 SEK, 2021

Internal Funding for 'Causes and Powers'-workshop, 25 000 SEK, Fall 2018 (together with P. Sundström)

Riksbanken Jubileumsfond Research Initiation, 150 000 SEK, Spring 2017 (together with P. Sundström) JC Kempe Scholarship, 10 000 SEK, Spring 2017

Wallenberg Travel Stipend, 10 000 SEK, Spring 2016

JC Kempe Scholarship, 15 000 SEK, Spring 2016

Umeå University Travel Stipend, 20 000 SEK, Spring 2016

Erasmus Exchange Scholarship, 1480 EUR, Fall 2011

Work in Progress

A paper on grounding relations between causal relations, under review

A paper on difference-making criteria for causation, under review

A paper on projection behaviour in non-veridical contexts, under review

A paper on exclusion arguments against metaethical non-naturalism, with Audrey Powers in preparation

A paper on explanation and machine learning in preparation

A paper on linguistic injustice and natural language processing, with Ethan Nowak $in\ preparation$

A paper on practical uses of ChatGPT in education, with Diego Arana Segura in preparation

A paper on causation and impure sets, with Torfinn Huvenes in preparation

Refereeing

MIND, Analysis, Australasian Journal of Philosophy, Philosophy and Technology, Noûs, Canadian Journal of Philosophy, Philosopher's Imprint, Philosophy of Science, Inquiry, Journal of Philosophy, Thought, Studies in History and Philosophy of Science, Royal Society Interface, European Journal for Philosophy of Science, Erkenntnis, American Philosophical Quarterly, Journal for General Philosophy of Science, Philosophical Studies, Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, Grazer Philosophische Studien, Synthese, Theoria, Analytic Philosophy, Philosophical Psychology, Dialectica, Logique & Analyse

Teaching As main instructor

Philosophy of Games (Master level) lecturing, grading, evaluation, feedback and admin

Umeå University, Fall 2024

Datamanagement and Open Science (PhD level) lecturing, grading, evaluation, feedback and admin Umeå University, Fall 2024

Metaphysics (BA intermediate) lecturing, grading, evaluation, feedback and admin Umeå University, Spring 2024

Philosophy of Perception (Master level) grading, evaluation, feedback and admin Umeå University, Spring 2019, internet course

The Problem of Consciousness (Master level) lecturing, grading, evaluation, feedback and admin Umeå University, Fall 2018 and 2019

As teaching assistant

Journalism, Media and Communication (BA lower-level) constructing and teaching the philosophy of science section Umeå University, Spring 2021 and 2022 internet course

Philosophy of Science and Research Ethics (Doctoral level) constructing philosophy of science section, lecturing, supervising and evaluating group exercises

Swedish Agricultural University, Fall 2016—2019, and 2021

Theory in Archeology (Master Level) leading seminar on philosophy of science Umeå University, Spring 2019

Philosophy of Social Science (BA intermediate) leading seminars on objectivity, case studies, and the limits of science Umeå University, Spring 2019 and 2021

Metaphysics (BA intermediate) grading Umeå University, Spring 2018 and 2019, both online and on campus

The problem of Consciousness (Master level) grading, evaluation and feedback Umeå University, Fall 2017

Philosophy of Perception (Master level)

grading, evaluation and feedback Umeå University, Spring 2017, online course

Philosophy of Risk (BA lower-level) supervising group exercises on decision theory. Umeå University, Spring 2017 and 2019

Theory of Knowledge, Science, and Formal Methods (BA lower-level) lecturing, grading and supervising group exercises.

Umeå University, Fall 2016, Spring and Fall 2017, Fall 2018, Fall 2019

Introduction to Philosophy, (BA lower-level) grading and feedback on 'body and mind'-section Umeå University, Fall 2016, Spring and Fall 2017, both online and on campus

Supervision

Philosophy C-paper (BA upper level) Responsible for 5–8 students in preparation and supervision Umeå University, Spring 2024, internet course

Samuel Cavalin: The Content Fallacy in Aquinas' Universality Argument Umeå University, Spring 2020, internet course

Philosophy B-papers (BA lower-level)

Timoteus Dahlberg: Singularity and the possibility of human level AI Andreas Horndahl: Autonomic ethical agents in military contexts Umeå University, Spring 2017

Academic Service

Representation

Pedagogical Coordinator of HumLab

Representative for HumLab at Umeå University's Strategic Education Council

Representative for HumLab at Umeå University's Humanities Research School reference group

Representative for $Id\acute{e}$ och $Samh\"{a}llsstudier$ at copy-editing and translation procurement process, 2022

Representative for *Idé och Samhällsstudier* the #FrAIday scientific board Spring 2021 — Spring 2022

Student representative 'Humanities Research School' reference group, 2018

Board member HumDok, 2018

Chair Idésam Doctoral Council Fall 2017

Chair Filosofiska Föreningen, Summer 2017– . . .

Secretary Idésam Doctoral Council, Spring 2017

Vice-Chair Filosofiska Föreningen, Spring 2017

Student representative at the hiring committee for University Lecturer position in practical philosophy, Umeå University, Spring 2017

Student representative at the hiring committee for PhD student position in philosophy, Umeå University, Spring 2017

Workshop and Conference Organisation

Co-organiser for 'Causal Distinctions'-workshop at University of Cologne, Fall 2020

Co-organiser for 'Powers and Causes'-workshop at Umeå University, 2018

Co-organiser for 'Where is there Causation?'-workshop at Umeå University, 2016

Abstract refereeing for European Congress for Analytic Philosophy, Spring 2020

Abstract refereeing for Swedish Congress of Philosophy, Spring 2019

Outreach

Co-explorer on 'Recruiting outside the box - Logics of Inclusion'-panel at Stockholm's $Explorative\ Talks$, 2023

Active contributor to the Armchair Opinions podcast and blog, where non-philosophers ask questions, and academic philosophers answer, 2019–2020

Chair of Umeå's Filosofiska Föreningen, which organizes lectures by researchers at the cutting edge of philosophy for an accessible audience, 2017—...

Delivered 'Harry Potter is real, but he is no wizard' at the *Umeå's GradTalks*, 2016

Teacher at *Urban Words* in Leuven, a community program directed at underprivileged youths, 2013–2014

Presentations

'Grounding Causal Competition' Nordic Network for Metaphysics at Uppsala University, September 2024

'Not all Kids get Medals' 45th International Wittgenstein Symposium, Kirchberg-am-Wechsel, August 2024

'No but really...What is so bad about overdetermination?' Naturalism and the Mind at Umeå University, June 2024

'Using ChatGPT to facilitate assignment feedback and evaluation' *Teaching Hub* at the Eastern APA, New York, January 2024

'Hume's Revenge' Causation, Counterfactuals, and Regularity, University in Bergen, August 2023 (invited talk)

'Autonomy and Causal Information' Manipulation and Autonomy, Beyond the Dichotomy Lorentz Center, Leiden August 2023 (invited talk)

'Insensitive Sufficiency and the Time-Asymmetry of Causation' *Philosophy of Time Society Group Mtq (Central Div, APA)* February 2023

'Explanation and the Autonomy of Affected Parties' AI-Colloquium, Chalmers University, February 2023 (invited talk.)

'Some questions for empirical research on causal intuitions' Experimental Philosophy Seminar, Lake Forest College, October 2022 (invited talk.)

'Higher-Level Causes and Freaky Realizations', Higher Seminar in Philosophy of Science, University of Cologne, July 2022 (invited talk)

'Higher-Level Causes and Freaky Realizations', Swedish Congress of Philosophy, Lund University, June 2022

'Higher-Level Causes and Freaky Realizations', *Higher Seminar in Philosophy of Science*, Stockholm University, February 2022 (*invited talk*)

'Absence and Abnormality', *Knowledge and Science* Colloquium of the Institute of Philosophy, Universität Hamburg, December 2021 (*invited talk*)

'Absence and Abnormality', Colloquium of the Institute of Philosophy, Leibniz Universität Hannover, November 2021 (*invited talk*)

- 'AI, Opacity, and Personal Autonomy', 1st Göteborg-Umeå Practical Philosophy Workshop, University of Gothenburg, November 2021
- 'Absence and Abnormality', 5th Meeting of the Nordic Network for Metaphysics, Lund University, November 2021 (*invited talk*)
- 'AI, Opacity, and Autonomy', Governing AI @ MANCEPT Workshops, September 2021
- 'No New Problems from Causal Pairing', Colloquium of the Institute of Philosophy, Universität Hamburg, June 2021 (*invited talk*)
- 'Dualist Mental Causation' Mind, Language and Metaphysics Postgrad Conference, Durham University, May 2021
- 'Procedural Opacity and Applicant Autonomy' Technology and Work, KU Leuven, February 2021
- 'System opacity and user autonomy for AI algorithms' HUMlab tech breakfasts, Umeå University, November 2020
- 'Halfway Proportionality', Causal Distinctions, University of Cologne, October 2020
- 'Halfway Proportionality', Higher Seminar of Philosophy, Umeå University, October 2020 (invited)
- 'Insensitive Interventionism and Dualist Mental Causation', Research seminar in theoretical philosophy, University of Gothenburg, February 2020
- 'Therefore Non-Symmetry' (with Alex Sandgren), CLLAM Seminar at Stockholm University, January 2020
- 'Therefore Non-Symmetry' (with Alex Sandgren), Beyond Truth Conditions, Umeå University, December 2019
- 'Causal Exclusion without Causal Sufficiency', Swedish Congress of Philosophy, June 2019
- 'How to Cause when Powerless', Powers and Causes, Ume
å University, November 2018
- 'Re-Thinking the Holding Fixed Condition', CiNaPS, University of Antwerp, September 2018

- 'Neo-Russelianism and Dualist Mental Causation', CEU Summer School: Metaphysics and History of Laws of Nature, Juli 2018
- 'Dualism and Exclusion, new formulation of an old argument', Warwick Mind-Grad, Warwick University, November 2017
- 'What Can Neo-Russellianism about Causation Do for Dualism about Consciousness?', Where is there Causation?, Umeå University, October 2017
- 'Semantics, Pragmatics and Negative Causation', Semantics and Philosophy in Europe, University of Padua, September 2017
- 'Interventionism and Time-Asymmetry', Aristotelian Society and Mind Joint Session, University of Edinburgh, July 2017
- 'Interventionism and Time-Asymmetry', Rocky Mountain Philosophy Conference, CU Boulder, April 2017
- 'Naturalist Dualism and Mental Causation', Non-physical Views of the Mind, University of Cambridge, May 2016
- 'Naturalist dualism, Epiphenomenalism and the Nature of Causation' R. Wollheim Society, UC Berkeley, April 2016
- 'Naturalist Dualism and Mental Causation' CLAW Colloquium, KU Leuven, January 2016 (invited talk)
- 'Intervening on Chalmers's Epiphenomenalism', PLM Masterclass with David Chalmers, Stockholm University, June 2015
- 'Perceptual Learning and Basic Beliefs', Epistemology of Perception workshop with Jack Lyons, KU Leuven, September 2014
- 'Getting Around Qualia', GCTP, VU Amsterdam, May 2014 and HIW Graduate Student Conference, KU Leuven, March 2014
- 'Rhythm and Infinity', HIW Graduate Conference, KU Leuven, March 2013

References

Pär Sundström

Umeå University par.sundstrom@umu.se +46 90 786 51 63

David Papineau

King's College London david.papineau@kcl.ac.uk +44 20 7848 2351

Carolina Sartorio

Rutgers University carolina.sartorio@rutgers.edu

Torfinn Huvenes (teaching)

University of Bergen torfinn.huvenes@uib.no $+47\ 55\ 58\ 89\ 05$

Karen Bennett

Rutgers University kbennett@philosophy.rutgers.edu +1 848 932-9861

Thomas Kroedel

University of Hamburg thomas.kroedel@uni-hamburg.de +49 40 42838-8370

Gunnar Björnsson

Stockholm University gunnar.bjornsson@philosophy.su.se +46 90 786 77 81