



**Workshop: ‘Fitness Meets Niche Construction and Symbiosis’
Institute of Philosophy, Jagiellonian University, 6-7 June 2019, Kraków**

The term *fitness* is used very often in evolutionary biology and plays a central role in the theory of evolution. However, for decades, the status of this concept has been debated, and many questions have been raised by philosophers and biologists alike. What is the definition of fitness? What does *being fitter* really mean, in scientific terms? How can fitness be measured? In recent years, new ideas have emerged within the scientific community which might shed some new light on our understanding of fitness. However, their relationship to the debate concerning fitness still needs to be established. Two things, among many others, are particularly worth mentioning here: first, the theory of niche construction, which invites us to think of an environment not as being granted to organisms, but as created by them. Thus this theory transforms our understanding of environments, a concept which figures frequently in fitness literature. Second, microbiology teaches us that plants and animals interact with many symbiotic microorganisms. Moreover, these microbes exert a major impact on the fitness of these plants and animals, thus expanding our knowledge of the factors that determine fitness. The question is whether – and if so, how – these discoveries influence the debate concerning fitness. The aim of the workshop is to explore this question.

Keynote Speaker:

Lynn Chiu is a philosopher of biology affiliated with the ImmunoConcept Lab of the University of Bordeaux/CNRS, which operates at the intersection of biology and philosophy. Her past research and current interests concern many important problems found at the frontiers of the philosophy of biology, such as the philosophy of perception, niche construction, symbiosis, and biological individuality.

Learn more about Lynn here: https://sites.google.com/view/lynnchiu/research_1

General Information

Organizers

Institute of Philosophy, Jagiellonian University

Coordinator: Adrian Stencel

Who can apply?

Philosophers, biologists, medical doctors, and any other scholars, at any point in their career, who are interested in this subject.

Where and when will the workshop be held?

In Kraków, 6-7 June 2019.

How to apply?

Send an abstract (maximum 500 words) before 31 March 2019 to:

philbio.workshops@gmail.com

All decisions will be made prior to 30 April 2019.

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