

Einladung zum GASTVORTRAG

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Future Certainties

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<https://webconference.uibk.ac.at/b/joh-ycc-1sf>

In this talk I will argue that, even if we are often unsure about the future, there are many future certainties, where 'a future certainty' is something that we are now sure will happen, or be so, in the future.

'Certainty', as I will be thinking of it, is an epistemic feeling. It is a feeling moreover that comes in degrees. The feeling that p, I shall suggest, is justified to the degree that one is able to exclude relevant possibilities that not-p. Future certainties can be divided in three classes. (A) Certainties that are tied to known necessary truths, (B) certainties that are tied to known physical and psychological patterns, (C) certainties that are tied to promises that one knows or justifiably believes have been made. The certainties in class (A) are greater than those in (B), and those in (B) are normally greater than in (C). As John Searle has shown, promising is a rule-guided activity. The core claim of the talk will be: promises that conform to these rules provide future certainties for the receiver. I furthermore hope to show that promises can and do take a great variety of forms. I also want to make plausible the idea that institutions like journalism, banking, or universities are embodied promises.



René van Woudenberg teaches in the Philosophy Department of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He works mainly in the areas of epistemology and metaphysics, as well as the philosophy of religion. He is the director of the Abraham Kuyper Center for Science and the Big Questions, director of the RMA program in Philosophy, and leader of the TWCF-sponsored project "Epistemic Progress in the University." Recent publications include *The Epistemology of Reading and Interpretation* (Cambridge UP 2021).

Alle Interessentinnen und Interessenten sind herzlich eingeladen!