



Stockholms
universitet

PROGRAMME

Ceremony of The Inauguration
of New Professors and
Conferment of Doctoral Degrees

STOCKHOLM CITY HALL
SEPTEMBER 28, 2012 AT 5 P.M.

Inaugural Lecture Honorary Doctors About the ceremony



PROGRAMME

1. MUSIC

Organ

2. SPEECH

by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor *Kåre Bremer*

3. PRESENTATION

of Stockholm University's Gold Medal

4. INAUGURATION

of new professors

5. AWARD

for excellence in teaching of the year

6. INAUGURAL LECTURE

by professor *Gustaf Arrhenius*, Practical Philosophy
Future Generations

7. CONFERMENT

of Honorary Doctorates, 'Jubilee' Doctorate and the degree
of Doctor of Law at the Faculty of Law
Conferrer: Professor *Jan Rosén*, Private Law

Honorary Doctors:

Annette Kur, professor

David B. Wilkins, professor

8. MUSIC

Song by *Magdalena Risberg* and *Markus Petterson*,
University College of Opera in Stockholm

9. CONFERMENT

of Honorary Doctorates, 'Jubilee' Doctorates and the de-
gree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Faculty of Humanities
Conferrer: Professor *Bengt Novén*, French

Honorary Doctors:

Marjatta Hietala, professor

Milton Núñez, professor

10. MUSIC

Royal College of Music Brass Ensemble

11. CONFERMENT

of Honorary Doctorate and the degree of Doctor of Philosophy/Economy at the Faculty of Social Sciences
Conferrer: Professor *Gudrun Dahl*, Social Anthropology

Honorary Doctor:

Keith Banting, professor

12. MUSIC

Stockholm Student Singers

13. CONFERMENT

of Honorary Doctorates, 'Jubilee' Doctorates and the degree of Doctor of Philosophy/Technology at the Faculty of Natural Sciences.
Conferrer: Professor *Ylva Engström*, Molecular Biology

Honorary Doctors:

Ray Dixon, professor

Katherine Freese, professor

Lars Granath, cartographer

Isabela Raffi, professor

14. MUSIC

Organ

'Jubilee' Doctorates are conferred on persons who have held doctorates for fifty years.

FUTURE GENERATIONS

Inaugural lecture by professor *Gustaf Arrhenius*,
Practical Philosophy

One of the most important insights to slowly emerge over the past hundred years is that the actions of the current generation – that is, what we do – could have profound and far-reaching effects for future generations. Perhaps it was during the debate over nuclear power that this insight took firm root in the public consciousness. The problem of nuclear waste brought with it a much longer time perspective than any previous generation has had to consider. For example, it is expected that high-level waste needs to be isolated from people and nature for 100,000 years – a mind-bogglingly long time. More recently – at least in this time perspective – climate change has emerged as the cardinal challenge with respect to issues that may have consequences for the living conditions far into the distant future.

Much of my research concerns our obligations to future generations, how we should morally evaluate different alternatives with consequences for generations. The news we receive from empirical climate scientists is almost exclusively bleak and alarming. I wish I could say that the situation is better in the field of politics and moral philosophy but unfortunately the results are also troubling in these areas. It has proven to be surprisingly difficult to find a theory regarding our moral duties to future generations that satisfies even the most minimal adequacy condition for such a theory and all the classical moral and political philosophies yield very counterintuitive results and prescriptions. Let me explain.

In the discussion of, for example, a fair distribution of economic resources, the *number* of people has usually been taken for granted. The question has been how to distribute the benefits and burdens among an already given group of people. When one is considering policies that affect future generations, however, one cannot take the affected group as given since our actions not only affect the living conditions of future people but also the *number* of people and *who* these people will be. This is quite obvious with respect to policies such as China's one-child rule, but there are many

other political and individual decisions that may have major effects in this area. It is no coincidence that the world's population has increased so dramatically in the last century.

It is hardly controversial to claim that the current generation consumes resources at the expense of future generations. Combined with a significant increase in population, this could lead to an over-populated world, perhaps ten billion people per generation, where most people's lives are barely worth living, where life is short and the hardships are barely compensated for by the brighter moments in life. Suppose that we can avoid this development and instead create a future with a smaller population where the vast majority of people have very good lives. In this scenario there will be, after a certain adjustment period, around one billion people per generation, and these people will on average enjoy very good, long lives – the kind of life that the most fortunate among us are living today.

Which future is the best one? Which one should we aim for? Most people would probably agree that the latter is preferable; that is, a smaller population with a high quality of life is better than a much larger population with a much lower quality of life. Many of the classical theories of morality yield, however, the opposite result. Classical utilitarianism, which often appears as a more or less explicit principle in economic thought, is one example. According to this theory we should try to maximise the overall welfare in the world. The overall welfare can be increased in two ways, however, when the size of the population is no longer given: by keeping the population at a constant size and making people's lives better or by increasing the size of the population with lives worth living (as the old Swedish saying goes: many small brooks will form a big river...). So, according to utilitarianism, a future with an enormous population with lives barely worth living could be the best one. But the idea that we have a moral obligation to radically increase the world's population at the expense of the individual well-being of future people seems repugnant and rather a reason to reject utilitarianism.

Many different theories have been proposed over the years, all of which claim to avoid the classical theories' absurd results. The problem, however, is that the theories that

avoids these results have other strange implications that is at least as unreasonable. We know this for sure through a number of so-called impossibility theorems, which are one of the more important results of my research. The proofs of these theorems show that there is no theory that fulfils a number of intuitively compelling adequacy conditions – conditions which everyone seems to agree that a reasonable moral theory must fulfil. Examples of such conditions are that one future is better than another if everyone is better off in the former as compared to the latter, or that it is better to create happy rather than unhappy people.

These results seem rather troubling and may elicit some form of moral nihilism, the view that there are no correct answers to moral questions and that morality is merely a matter of personal opinion. We then end up in the position that we have no moral obligations to future generations, and that we are doing nothing wrong if we waste the earth's resources in a way that leads to misery and suffering in the future. The question "Why should I sacrifice anything for posterity when they have never done anything for me?" then becomes a question without an answer. However, this conclusion is also very hard to accept. Rather, it is a very reasonable demand on a moral theory that the well-being of future generations is given at least some weight.

The research on how to interpret the impossibility theorems and what conclusion to draw from them is still in its infancy. Fortunately, nihilism is only one of many possible conclusions. The results coming from the empirical environmental research suggest that we probably need to radically reconsider how we live our lives. Similarly, one might say that the troubling results from moral philosophy regarding our obligations to future generations indicate that we also in this area need to think in radically new terms and reject entrenched and seemingly reasonable ways of thinking. Perhaps the question is rather whether we dare set off in a new search for the truth with an open mind. Whether we will succeed and what the result will be remains to be seen, perhaps only by future generations.

HONORARY DOCTORS

FACULTY OF LAW

Annette Kur

born in 1950, is Professor of Intellectual Property Law at Munich University and Head of Department at the Max Planck Institute for Intellectual Property and Competition Law in Munich (MPI). She is also Yong Shook Ling IP Law Professor at the National University of Singapore. Professor Kur has worked for many years and also currently as an adviser to the American Law Institute.

David B. Wilkins

born in 1956, is the Lester Kissel Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, where he has also served as the Editor-in-Chief of the Harvard Law Review. Professor Wilkins worked for Supreme Court Judge Thurgood Marshall in the United States Supreme Court. He has conducted exhaustive studies on the legal profession, emphasising the experience of black and female lawyers in corporate law firms.

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

Marjatta Hietala

born in 1943, is among the leading historians in Europe, and is very active at both national and international level. She is a Professor of General History at Tampere University and has previously worked at Joensuu University and the Finnish Academy. Marjatta Hietala is the first woman to chair the International Committee of Historical Sciences (ICHS), the world organisation of historians.

Milton Núñez

born in 1944, is a Professor of Archaeology at the University of Oulu, and has a doctorate from the University of Calgary. Professor Núñez has built up the subject of archaeology at Oulu, developing the subjects of osteology and laboratory archaeology there. For many years Milton Núñez has also been of great importance for the subject of osteoarchaeology and has been a source of inspiration for archaeological science at Stockholm University.

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Keith Banting

born in 1947, has published very extensively on issues including immigration, integration and the design of the welfare state. He is a Professor of Political Science at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada and holder of the Queen's Research Chair in Public Policy. Keith Banting is a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Stockholm University Linnaeus Center for Integration Studies (SULCIS) and has visited Stockholm University on many occasions.

FACULTY OF NATURAL SCIENCES

Ray Dixon

born in 1947, is a Professor of Molecular Microbiology at the John Innes Centre in the United Kingdom. For four decades Professor Dixon has been a world leading researcher in the regulation of genetic expressions, focusing especially on genes that code for proteins in nitrogen metabolism in bacteria.

Katherine Freese

is one of the world's best known astroparticle physicists. Professor Freese is known for innovative models of the earliest development of the universe and for methods for detecting the "dark matter" in the universe. She has done groundbreaking work chiefly concerning the dark energy and dark matter in the universe, two of the major problems in cosmology. She has, for example, proposed models for cosmological inflation in the early universe and has made ingenious proposals for the detection of dark matter, methods that are now in use around the world.

Lars Granath

born in 1948, is a cartographer whose specialist nautical maps are considered to have "doubled the size" of the Swedish archipelagos. He has developed a unique method for hydrographical surveys of water areas using remote sensing technology. This method is of great importance for pleasure boats in many of the archipelago areas and lakes in Sweden that are most attractive for outdoor recreation. Lars Granath has built up and conducted teaching in the

subject of cartography and has conducted research in the area of aerial photography and remote sensing. He has subsequently been successful in commercialising his discoveries. His specialized nautical charts have both increased the accessibility of areas that were hard to navigate and made boating safer. He has also written several guidebooks to the Swedish archipelagos and archipelago harbours and has previously been awarded prizes for both innovation and cartography.

Isabella Raffi

born in 1954, is a Professor of Paleontology and Paleoecology and one of the world's leading experts on a main group of sediment forming marine plankton, the coccolithophorids, and their taxonomy, evolution, paleoecology and biochronology. Isabella Raffi has made crucial scientific contributions to Cenozoic marine biostratigraphy, which encompasses the past 66 million years, and to the emergence of the Cenozoic Era's increasingly precise geological time-scale, which is based on Milankovitch cycles and how these are reflected in deep-sea sediments.

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE CEREMONY

The ceremony begins with massed standards – the Swedish flag, Stockholm University standard and different student flags – carried by students.

The ritual of the academic ceremonies has its roots in European medieval time and its universities. The use of a lecture in the academic ceremony probably comes from the turn of the twentieth century. The idea was that the ceremony should have some elements of instruction. At the conferment of doctor's degrees different insignia are presented:

The doctoral cap is the symbol of freedom and power, and is given only to honorary doctors and new doctors at the Faculty of Law, while the crown of laurels – also a symbol of freedom – is given to honorary doctors and new doctors at the faculties of Philosophy (Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences). The diploma – the written evidence of graduation – is given to all doctors, including the 'jubilee' doctors. It is written in Latin. The ring symbolizes the loyalty to the science and is given only to the honorary doctors. The conferrer decides whether (s)he wants to confer the degrees in Latin or Swedish.

ABOUT STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY

Stockholm University, located in the capital of Sweden, is a city university enjoying many links with today's society - both from a local and an international perspective. The university is one of the largest in Sweden with about 60,000 students and 1,900 graduate students.

Undergraduate education is pursued alongside postgraduate studies and research at the four faculties: Humanities, Law, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and teacher training. With about 70 departments offering approximately 1,900 courses, 200 study programmes, and nearly 70 master programmes in English every year, the university is able to provide a wide variety of choices to meet the needs of its students. The university has a clear basic research profile with leading research in many areas, which makes it possible for active researchers to choose freely among areas, issues, methods and material. Academic freedom is

the result of a long tradition of new thinking and openness to the unknown, an attitude which, in extension, has so far given the university five Nobel Prizes. Moreover, the university established the first female chair in mathematics in Europe, to which Sonja Kovalevsky was appointed in 1884. Stockholm University also carries out extensive applied research. Researchers' rights to publish their results in different contexts are always safeguarded by the university.

The activities at the earlier private Stockholm University College, which in 1960 became a state university, Stockholm University, started on a small scale in 1878 with a series of lectures in mathematics, physics, chemistry and geology, also opened for the public. In 1904, the university college got the right to award degrees and the first doctoral degree was awarded in 1906. In 1970, the university moved to Frescati, just north of the city.

Within the campus you will find most of the departments, the University Library, the University Administration, and also book-shops, restaurants, student premises and recreational sports and fitness center. Today, the main university campus stretches across a naturally and culturally inspiring landscape – in and around the world's first National City Park. A wide variety of building styles, blending both traditional and modern, has helped to make the campus a place of architectural interest.

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