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Alan Richardson

Alan Richardson is Professor of Philosophy at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. His research career has largely been concerned with the history of philosophy of science, especially logical empiricism. He is the author of *Carnap's Construction of the World* (Cambridge, 1997) and *Logical Empiricism as Scientific Philosophy* (Cambridge, 2024). He is a co-editor of the forthcoming Oxford University Press edition of Carnap's *Aufbau*, which is volume 2 of the Oxford Collected Works of Carnap.

As part of the conference

The Vienna Circle and Logical Empiricism. Research and Historiography

October 19-21, 2026
University of Vienna – Aula at
Campus

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Abstract

One of the many virtues of Michael Friedman's work was the way it allowed us to disentangle two issues: first, the various ways the epistemological or methodological function of the synthetic a priori can be articulated and, second, the various philosophical vocabularies you might feel you can or must use to articulate them. Friedman himself, somewhat surprisingly given his early work on space-time, came to be most interested in Carnap's attempt to articulate constitutive principles for semantic systems in metalogical vocabulary. In this talk I will both further elaborate that story and contrast it with the different development in Reichenbach's scientific philosophy. Our starting point will be the somewhat different accounts of structural objectivity in Reichenbach's (1920) *Relativitätstheorie und Erkenntnis A Priori* and Carnap's (1928) *Der logische Aufbau der Welt* and then we shall trace how those differences reflect different philosophical visions that get elaborated differently across the decades of their careers.

1st Michael Friedman Memorial Lecture

Alan Richardson
(University of British Columbia)

The Logical, the Methodological, and the Epistemological: Structural Objectivity and its After-Images in Reichenbach and Carnap

Wednesday, October 21, 2026
7 pm

Aula at Campus,
University of Vienna
Court 1, Door 1.11
Spitalgasse 2-4
1090 Vienna

No registration fee
Registration required:
[https://viennacircle-
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