

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



PHILOSOPHY LECTURES PROSPECTUS

MICHAELMAS TERM 2017

The Philosophy Centre is found at the Radcliffe Humanities Building, on Woodstock Road, which is also the site of the Philosophy and Theology Faculties Library.

NOTES:

- “CL” means the lecture is a Core Lecture for one of the Honour Schools papers.
- The normal duration of an event is one hour. Where the class or lecture lasts longer than an hour, the start time and end time will be given.
- Unless otherwise specified, the lectures and classes are given for all of weeks 1 to 8.
- Lectures and classes begin at five minutes past the hour, and end five minutes before. (E.g: a lecture listed as “M. 10” will start on Mondays at 10.05am, and finish at 10.55am.)
- Students registered on Philosophy courses, and Faculty members, will need their University card to enter the Philosophy Centre at Radcliffe Humanities. Visitors should use the intercom on the front door to ask for access.
- There are several rooms used as lecture/class spaces at Radcliffe Humanities. The main rooms are: the Ryle Room (1st floor) and the Lecture Room (2nd floor). Other rooms sometimes used are the Colin Matthew Room and Meeting Room 4 (both ground floor) and the Seminar Room (3rd floor).
- There is lift and stair access to all floors. A list of rooms is found by the stairwell and lift on each floor.
- “Schools” refers to the Examination Schools (75 – 81 High Street), one of the main lecturing facilities in the University. If you visit the Schools for a lecture or class, be sure to check the electronic notice boards in the lobby, which will tell you which room the lecture/class is in.
- Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this Prospectus is accurate at the start of term, but sometimes errors persist. If you think you have found a mistake, please contact James Knight (james.knight@philosophy.ox.ac.uk).

Lectures for the First Public Examination

Students preparing for their First Public Examination (Prelims or Mods) should attend the following lectures this term:

PPE, Philosophy and Modern Languages, Philosophy and Theology, Psychology and Philosophy: Introduction to Logic, Moral Philosophy, and General Philosophy

Mathematics and Philosophy, Physics and Philosophy, Computer Science and Philosophy: Introduction to Logic and General Philosophy

Literae Humaniores: any listed Prelims/Mods lecture that corresponds to their chosen Philosophy option for Mods

Early Greek Philosophy

Dr Anna Marmodoro – T. 12, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures are primarily, but not exclusively, aimed at those studying Early Greek Philosophy and offering this paper for Mods. They will explore the origins and early development of philosophical thinking in Greece, in a variety of areas: cosmology, theology, psychology, and ethics. The lectures will cover the following topics: 1. and 2. Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes; 3. Heraclitus; 4. Parmenides; 5. Zeno; 6. Xenophanes and Empedocles; 7. Anaxagoras; 8. Democritus.

The discussion will be based on the fragments and *testimonia* of the Early Greek philosophers found in collections such as Kirk, Raven and Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, (2nd edition) Cambridge 1983 ('KRS'), and D. Graham, *The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy*, Cambridge 2010, 2 vols.

It will be helpful to have read the relevant fragments in advance. Suggested initial secondary reading is listed under each lecture.

A general introductory reading

- Long, A.A. "The Scope of Early Greek Philosophy", Ch.1 in Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*.

Lecture 1 and 2: Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes

- Algra, K. "The Beginnings of Cosmology", Ch. 3 in Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, 1999.
- Hussey, E., *The Presocratics*, Duckworth 1972, pp. 11-31

Lectures 3: Heraclitus

- Hussey, E., "Heraclitus", Ch.5 in Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, 1999.
- Wiggins, D., 1982, "Heraclitus' Conception of Flux, Fire and Material Persistence" in M. Schofield and M. Nussbaum (eds.), *Language and Logos*, Cambridge: CUP, 1-32.

Lectures 4: Parmenides

- Sedley, D. "Parmenides and Melissus", Ch.6 in Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*.

Lecture 5: Zeno

- McKirahan, R. D. Jr, "Zeno", Ch.7 in Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*.

Lecture 6: Xenophanes and Empedocles

- Broadie, S. 'Rational Theology' Ch.10 in Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*.
- Leshner, J. H., 2008, "The Humanizing of Knowledge," in Patricia Curd and Daniel Graham, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Presocratic Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 458–84.
- Solmsen, F. "Love and Strife in Empedocles' Cosmology", in Furley and Allen, *Studies in Presocratic Philosophy*, vol.2, first published in *Phronesis* 10 (1965), 109-48.

Lectures 7: Anaxagoras

- Graham, D.W. "Empedocles and Anaxagoras: Responses to Parmenides", Ch. 8 in Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*.
- *Anaxagoras of Clazomenae. Fragments and Testimonia*. A text and Translation with notes and essays by P. Curd, University of Toronto Press, 2010, chapters 3 and 4.
- Marmodoro, A., *Everything in Everything. Anaxagoras' Metaphysics*, OUP 2017.
- Sedley D., *Creationism and its Critics in Antiquity*, Univ of California Press 2007 chapter 1.

Lecture 8: Democritus

- Taylor, C.C.W., "The Atomists", Ch.9 in Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*.
- Vlastos, G., 1945, "Ethics and Physics in Democritus", *Philosophical Review* 54: 578–592 and 55: 53–64; reprinted in Vlastos 1995: 328–350.

Moral Philosophy: Mill, Utilitarianism

Prof Will MacAskill – F. 12, Schools

These lectures will provide an introduction to moral philosophy and utilitarian thought, using J. S. Mill's *Utilitarianism* as a springboard. Topics covered will include pleasure, happiness and the good life; the forms of utilitarianism; consequentialism; Mill's 'proof' of the utility principle; and rights and justice.

General Philosophy (route A)

Prof Peter Millican – W. 12, Schools

These lectures introduce the General Philosophy course, covering the six topics of Knowledge & Scepticism, Induction, Free Will, Personal Identity, Mind & Body, and God & Evil, but also relating these to wider contexts, both in Philosophy and other disciplines. Some of the material is historical, explaining how certain philosophical concerns (e.g. about the nature of the world and humanity's place within it) naturally arose with the development of the modern scientific world-view in the early modern period. This will provide a context for better understanding the classic texts (notably those of Descartes and Hume) from which the Faculty reading lists begin. But more importantly, many of the same issues remain relevant and potentially of vital significance today, and part of the aim of these lectures will be to help students appreciate how philosophical views and assumptions impact on our contemporary understanding of the world and ourselves, and can thus provide a valuable perspective on other disciplines that form part of our joint degrees (e.g. Computing, Economics, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Theology).

Introduction to Logic

Prof Volker Halbach – M. 12, Schools

The lectures follow Volker Halbach's *Logic Manual* (Oxford University Press 2010). Further materials, including the Exercises Booklet, sample papers, and worked examples, are available at: <http://logicmanual.philosophy.ox.ac.uk>.

One chapter of the Logic Manual is covered each week. It is recommended that you read each week's chapter before the lecture.

Lectures for the Honour Schools

101 Early Modern Philosophy: Descartes

Prof Paul Lodge – F. 10, Schools

- Week 1: Introduction to the philosophy of Descartes
- Week 2: The method of doubt
- Week 3: The *cogito*
- Week 4: Cosmological arguments for God's existence
- Week 5: Knowledge and error
- Week 6: The ontological argument for God's existence
- Week 7: Dualism
- Week 8: The nature of the material world

101 Early Modern Philosophy: Hume

Prof Peter Millican – T. 10, Schools

These lectures will cover the main themes of Hume's philosophy as presented in Book 1 of the *Treatise of Human Nature*, together with appropriate reference to other works. Though mainly designed for students taking the Early Modern Philosophy paper in Finals, others (e.g. graduate students) are welcome to attend. The lectures will aim to provide a coherent overview of Hume's aims and projects, to elucidate and analyse his main arguments, and to discuss the most influential and controversial aspects of those arguments.

- Week 1: Hume's background and aims
- Week 2: Basic principles: theory of ideas and faculties
- Week 3: Induction and belief
- Week 4: Probability and rationality
- Week 5: Causation and free will
- Week 6: Scepticism and the external world
- Week 7: The soul and the self
- Week 8: Scepticism and naturalism

102 Knowledge and Reality: Metaphysics

Prof Ralf Bader – W. 10, Schools

These lectures will focus on some of the core topics of metaphysics, in particular on causation, dispositions, persistence, composition, existence and induction.

103 Ethics III: Applied Ethics (also for 128 Practical Ethics)

Prof Jeff McMahan – M. 2, Schools

These lectures will cover a range of related issues – though the relations among them may not be immediately apparent. The sequence of topics is very likely to be as follows.

Lecture 1: The morality of abortion. This lecture will address such questions as when we begin to exist and what our moral status is when we have just begun to exist and are psychologically rudimentary beings.

Lecture 2: The morality of causing people to exist. Is there a significant difference between an individual's dying or being killed immediately after beginning to exist and that individual's being prevented from ever existing? If there are moral reasons not to kill individuals like ourselves immediately after we have begun to exist, are there also reasons to cause individuals like us to exist?

Lecture 3: Infanticide and prenatal injury. Given that a viable foetus would be an infant if its location were different, can there be a significant difference morally between abortions performed after foetal viability and early infanticide? Is killing a foetus worse than causing it a nonlethal injury – or is the latter worse than the former? Is abortion a rational response to prenatal injury?

Lecture 4: The moral status of nonhuman animals. Many nonhuman animals have psychological capacities higher than those of human foetuses and newborn infants. Are common beliefs about how it is permissible to treat animals consistent with common beliefs about abortion, infanticide, and the treatment of profoundly cognitively impaired human adults?

Lecture 5: Euthanasia and assisted death. Does euthanasia come within the scope of the constraint against the intentional killing of an innocent person? In what conditions might a person's consent make it permissible to kill them?

Lecture 6: Individual self- and other-defence. What is the justification for harming or killing one person in defense of another? Does this justification extend to the killing of threateners who are in no way responsible for the threat they pose? Or to the killing of people who are indistinguishable from culpable threateners but in fact pose no threat at all?

Lecture 7: Killing in war. Traditional just war theory holds that combatants on all sides in a war are permitted to kill enemy combatants but that they may not intentionally attack or kill noncombatants. Are these claims plausible or does traditional just war theory require revision?

Lecture 8: Killing in war continued. This lecture will continue the discussion of the ethics of war and will also consider whether torture can be morally permissible and if so in what conditions.

104 Philosophy of Mind

Dr Umut Baysan – W. 10, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures will introduce the mind-body problem and some prominent views that address it. We will start with identifying the mind-body problem and then move on to substance dualism, namely the view that the mind is an immaterial substance. After discussing some problems that this view faces, we will consider some contemporary versions of it and look for some charitable defences. Then we will discuss the problem of the knowledge of other minds, and introduce behaviourism (the view that the mind is nothing over and above behavioural dispositions) as a solution to both this problem and the mind-body problem. After discussing various objections to behaviourism, we will start exploring versions of the identity theory, the view that our mental states (beliefs, desires, sensations etc.) are identical with the physical states of our brains and nervous systems. Some objections to this view will take us to the final two lectures in which we will explore functionalism, which characterises mental states in terms of causal/functional roles (i.e., what they typically do; what they are caused by; and what effects they have). We will conclude this set of lectures by discussing whether functionalism can account for the qualitative features of conscious mental states.

Most introductory texts in philosophy of mind cover these topics, but some particularly helpful ones are Jaegwon Kim's *Philosophy of Mind: 3rd edition* (Westview Press, 2011) (though the 2nd edition is equally good), David Braddon-Mitchell and Frank Jackson's *The Philosophy of Mind and Cognition: 2nd edition* (Blackwell, 2007), E. J. Lowe's *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind* (CUP, 2000) and Pete Mandik's *This is Philosophy of Mind* (Wiley Blackwell, 2014). We will also work with original articles that these texts discuss, most of which are either collected in anthologies such as John Heil's *Philosophy of Mind: A Guide and Anthology* (OUP, 2004) or otherwise available online.

106a / 124 Philosophy of Science

Prof Adam Caulton – M. T. 10 (*weeks 1 to 6*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

This twelve-lecture course is split into two uneven parts. Part one (the larger part) is a broadly historical presentation of the attempts in the past century to understand scientific methodology, in particular scientific inference and theory change. Topics discussed in this part include:

- the philosophy of logical positivism, including verificationism about meaning and the distinction between theoretical and observational vocabulary;
- the prospects for a formal account of inductive confirmation, along the lines of deductive logic;
- the feasibility of a scientific methodology free from all but deductive inference;
- the problems raised by the underdetermination of theory by data and the holistic nature of empirical confirmation;
- the problem of radical theory change (“scientific revolutions”) and its possible implications for scientific progress;

- the use of probability in science and scientific inference, especially Bayesianism;
- inference to the best explanation, also known as abductive inference.

Part two touches on three special topics. We will discuss:

- the different species of scientific realism and anti-realism and the best arguments for and against them;
- laws of nature, what they are and how (if at all) we come to know them;
- explanation, what it is and its role in science.

The lectures are particularly intended for students reading philosophy with a scientific subject, but all are welcome. Experience of Prelims/Mods Logic will be assumed.

Background reading: Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (University of Chicago Press).

Helpful books and articles:

- Alan Chalmers, *What Is This Thing Called Science?*, Fourth Edition (Open University Press)
- Earman, J. and Salmon, W. C., ‘The Confirmation of Scientific Hypotheses’, in M. H. Salmon et al., *Introduction to the Philosophy of Science* (Prentice Hall, 1992), pp. 42–103.
- Ladyman, J., *Understanding Philosophy of Science* (Routledge, 2002).
- Papineau, D., ‘Methodology: the Elements of the Philosophy of Science’, in A. C. Grayling (ed.), *Philosophy 1: A Guide Through the Subject* (Oxford University Press, 1998).

- Peter Godfrey-Smith, *Theory and Reality: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science* (University of Chicago Press)

110 Medieval Philosophy: Aquinas

Prof Cecilia Trifogli – W. 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

I will present the following topics from Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, qq. 2-11, 75-89; II.I, qq. 1-10, 90-97: (1) Existence of God (I, q. 2); (2) Nature of God (I, q. 3); (3) Soul (I, qq. 75-76); (4) Cognition (I, qq. 79, 84-86); (5) Will (I, qq. 80, 82-83; II.I, qq. 8-10); (6) Happiness (II.I, qq. 1-5); (7) Voluntary Actions (II.I, q. 6); (8) Eternal and Natural Law (II.I, qq. 90-97).

113 Post-Kantian Philosophy: Heidegger

Prof Mark Wrathall – Th. 10, Schools

This course of lectures will provide an introduction to some of the central themes of Heidegger's thought. In the first six weeks, I will concentrate on *Being and Time*. Topics to be covered include Heidegger's approach to ontology, his account of everyday and inauthentic versus authentic modes of human existence, and his approach to truth and the problem of skepticism about the "external world." The last two weeks of the term will be devoted to two of Heidegger's most influential essays: "The Origin of the Work of Art" and "The Question Concerning Technology."

115 / 130 Plato: *Republic*

Prof Luca Castagnoli – M. 9 – 11 (*weeks 1 to 6*), Schools

The *Republic* is one of Plato's most famous, and most influential, works. The dialogue is prompted by questions concerning the nature of justice, and the best possible kind of life we can live. These questions prompt wide-ranging discussions of the ideal city, the nature of knowledge, the Theory of Forms, the nature and immortality of the soul, moral psychology, education, and the nature and social role of arts. The study of the *Republic* will thus introduce you to many of Plato's central ideas and arguments.

These lectures are primarily intended for students taking papers 115/130 in any of the Honour Schools, but anyone with an interest in Plato and the history of philosophy is welcome to attend (knowledge of ancient Greek is not required). The lectures will focus on a selection of key passages, topics and arguments in books 1-5 of Plato's *Republic*. They will aim to identify and discuss some of the main exegetical and philosophical questions that might be raised, and to say enough about Plato's other dialogues to support a well-informed reading of the *Republic*. It is suggested that attendees bring a copy of the *Republic*.

Lectures focussing on books 6-10 will be given by Prof. Scott in Hilary Term.

The following is an approximate and provisional guide to the topics of the lectures in Michaelmas Term:

1. Introduction to the study of Plato's *Republic*: why read Plato? How to read Plato? What is the *Republic* about? The elenchus of Cephalus and Polemarchus (book 1, 327a-336a).
2. The elenchus of Thrasymachus (book 1, 336a-354c).
3. Glaucon's and Adeimantus' challenge; the ring of Gyges and the choice of lives (book 2, 357a-368b). The City-Soul analogy and the City of Pigs (book 2, 368c-372e).
4. From the luxurious city to Kallipolis. The selection, education and life of the guardians (book 2, 373a – book 4, 427c).
5. The virtues of Kallipolis; the tripartite soul and its virtues (book 4, 427d-445e).
6. The three waves: children, women and philosopher rulers in Kallipolis (book 5, 449a-476c). Belief and knowledge (book 5, 476d-480a).

118 The Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein

Dr Edward Harcourt – M. 12 (*weeks 2 to 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

Topics covered will include (and in roughly this order) language and world; following a rule; necessity and grammar; private language; solipsism; behavior, criteria and other minds; Wittgenstein's methodology and Wittgenstein's method.

The lectures will not make any sense unless you have already read L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* and, ideally, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Any additional reading in the corpus of Wittgenstein's later work would also be helpful, perhaps especially *The Blue Book* and *Lectures on the Foundations of Mathematics* (ed. C. Diamond).

NB there will be no lecture in week 1.

120 Intermediate Philosophy of Physics: Special Relativity

Prof Harvey Brown – M. T. 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

The course investigates the conceptual foundations of special relativity and various philosophical implications of the theory. It starts with an examination of the role of the relativity principle in Newtonian physics and its unexpected validity (absence of ether wind effects) in 19th century ether theories of electromagnetism. We will then see how Einstein, by using thermodynamics as a template, put different strands of 19th century physics together to create special relativity, and in the process illuminate the meaning of kinematics. New philosophical questions also arise, including: to what extent are space and time parts of a more fundamental unitary entity (spacetime); whether the geometry of space time explains the behaviour of matter or vice versa; and to what extent ideas such as the passage of time, and persistence through time have to be modified or abandoned in the context of relativistic physics.

The lectures are primarily aimed at second year undergraduates in the Physics and Philosophy course, and will from time to time presuppose the corresponding level of knowledge of physics, but they are open to anyone.

The anticipated schedule is as follows:

- Week 1 The relativity principle in Newtonian mechanics
- Week 2 Length contraction and time dilation in 19th century ether theories
- Week 3 Deriving the Lorentz (1905), Einstein (1905) and Poincaré (1911) transformations
- Week 4 Einstein's 1905 "principle theory" approach and his later misgivings
- Week 5 The twins paradox; special relativity as a theory of spacetime geometry
- Week 6 Geometrical versus dynamical explanation and spacetime ontology
- Week 7 Relativity and the metaphysics of time
- Week 8 A brief look at the role of special relativity in general relativity

121 Advanced Philosophy of Physics: *see* entry for graduate class **Philosophy of Physics**

122 Philosophy of Mathematics

Prof Alex Paseau – M. 2 (*weeks 1, 3 – 8 plus one make-up lecture TBC*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

This course offers an overview of some of the main problems and arguments in the philosophy of mathematics. Topics covered include: platonism and mathematical knowledge; structuralism; nominalism; formalism; intuitionism; and empiricism. The self-contained lectures will draw on material from the lecturer's draft book *What is a Number?*, which will be made available to students on WebLearn. NB There will be no lecture in week 2; a make-up lecture will be arranged in the second half of term.

124 Philosophy of Science: *see* **106a/124 Philosophy of Science**, *above*

128 Practical Ethics: *see* **103 / 128 Ethics: Applied Ethics**, *above*

131 Plato on Knowledge, Language and Reality in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*

Prof Simon Shogry – Th. F. 10 (*weeks 1 to 6*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These twelve lectures are aimed primarily at Lit Hum Finals students thinking about sitting for examination paper 131 (Plato: *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*), as well as those studying for the M.St. in ancient philosophy or the B.Phil. with an interest in Platonic metaphysics and epistemology. Lit Hum Finals students should note that, despite the change in name, these lectures will adequately prepare them for the current version of the 131 paper.

The first six sessions will be dedicated to the main claims and arguments from Plato's *Theaetetus*, namely, the proposed identity of knowledge and sense-perception; the flux theory of being and becoming; Protagoras's self-refutation; Socrates's final objection to knowledge as sense-perception; puzzles of false belief; the wax tablet model of the soul; the proposed definition of knowledge as true belief plus an account, and Socrates's objections to it.

The second six sessions will be dedicated to the main claims and arguments from Plato's *Sophist*, namely, the method of division and collection; the alleged impossibility of saying what is not; the metaphysical battle between the corporealist 'Giants' and the 'Friends of the Forms'; the 'Late Learners' and the communion of kinds; the distinction between identity and predication; the analysis of negative predication; the Stranger's account of statement and its use in his analysis of false statement and false belief.

In discussing these topics, we will focus on issues of interpretative and philosophical significance, evaluating competing scholarly positions with reference to their ability to reconstruct Plato's text accurately and to attribute to him a coherent philosophical view.

Greek Text:

Platonis Opera I, ed. by E. A. Duke, W. F. Hicken, W. S. M. Nicoll, D. B. Robinson, and J. C. G. Strachan, (Oxford, 1995).

Suggested English Translation:

Theaetetus, tr. Levett, revised by Burnyeat (Hackett, 1990).

Sophist, tr. White (Hackett, 1993).

NB: both of these translations are re-printed in J. Cooper's *Plato: Complete Works* (Hackett, 1997).

Hand-outs and further bibliographical suggestions will be given in the lectures.

133 Aristotle on Nature, Life and Mind (Aristotle's *Physics*)

Prof Ursula Coope – W. 2 (*weeks 1 to 3 and 5 to 7*) and Th. 12 (*weeks 1 to 6*),
Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

This course of lectures is designed primarily for (i) undergraduate students taking the Aristotle's *Physics* paper, and (ii) MSt students taking the subject A option 'Aristotle on Nature, Life and Mind'. Other graduate or undergraduate students who are interested in the topics are very welcome to attend.

We shall start by looking at Aristotle's account of living things, and of the changing world they inhabit. Topics to be discussed include: causation, teleology, change, agency, place, time and infinity. We shall then turn more particularly to certain questions about sentient, and indeed human, nature, by asking about the nature of perception and thought and about the relation between the mind and the body.

The first 8 lectures will focus mainly on Aristotle's *Physics*, books 2-4, though we shall look at other passages of Aristotle where appropriate. (These are the lectures that will be most relevant for undergraduates studying the Aristotle's *Physics* paper.)

In the final 4 lectures, we shall turn to Aristotle's philosophy of mind, focussing mainly on passages from Aristotle's *De Anima*, and looking at how they make use of ideas from the *Physics*.

134 Knowledge and Scepticism in Hellenistic Philosophy (Sextus Empiricus)

Prof Luca Castagnoli – Th. 11 – 1 (*weeks 1 to 6*), Oriel College (MacGregor Room)

'Human beings have a natural desire for knowledge', said Aristotle. However, both before and after him the philosophical quest for knowledge led some to the view that it was a hopeless or misguided aspiration. In the Hellenistic age the debate on the possibility of knowledge took centre stage as Plato's school, the Academy, 'turned sceptical' with Arcesilaus and Carneades and argued against the epistemological optimism of the two major rival Hellenistic schools, Stoicism and Epicureanism. To complicate things, not long before Zeno of Citium and Epicurus founded their schools, Pyrrho embraced and embodied the anti-dogmatic ideal of a human life stripped of knowledge and belief and thereby free from anxiety as a recipe for human happiness. That ideal was revived and developed more than two centuries later by Aenesidemus, the founder of the Pyrrhonian school, a brand of Scepticism different from the Academic one and in competition with it (the late writings of Sextus Empiricus are our best source). The lectures will introduce some of the central Hellenistic epistemological views and debates as they developed between (and within) these philosophical schools. They aim to offer an understanding of:

- some of the main sources for philosophical scepticism from the fourth century BC to the 3rd century AD, and for the 'empiricist' epistemologies of Stoicism and Epicureanism;

- the variety of different positions encompassed by the term ‘Sceptic’;
- the Sceptics’ attacks on ‘dogmatic’ epistemology and the various strategies adopted by the ‘dogmatists’ to defend the possibility of knowledge;
- the ‘dogmatic’ counter-attacks against the Sceptical positions, and the Sceptics’ attempts to defend themselves;
- how the issue of epistemology impacted on the field of ethics: do we need knowledge to live a good and happy life? Is it possible and desirable to *live* one’s Scepticism in a consistent way?

The final four lectures will examine more in detail selected passages from Sextus Empiricus’ *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, focusing especially on his detailed account in book 1 of the origins, aims, distinctive nature and argumentative strategies of the Pyrrhonian sceptic. We will also discuss how Sextus’ Pyrrhonism differs from other ancient forms of scepticism, and examine Sextus’ replies to the most common objections raised against Pyrrhonian scepticism, that it is self-refuting and that it is impossible to live a sceptical life (and that such a life would not be desirable anyway). Finally, we will survey a selection of Pyrrhonian arguments against dogmatic philosophical concepts and theories in the three main areas of logic, physics and ethics (books 2 and 3).

This course is primarily intended for undergraduate students taking paper 134, Sextus Empiricus, and for Ancient Philosophy MSt students who plan to write their Option A essay in the area of Hellenistic epistemology and scepticism, but anyone with an interest in ancient Greek philosophy, philosophical scepticism and the history of epistemology is welcome to attend (knowledge of ancient Greek is not required).

The main topics to be introduced in the lectures are provisionally scheduled as follows:

- W1. An introduction to Hellenistic philosophy and epistemology.
Epicurean epistemology.
- W2. Stoic epistemology.
- W3. Scepticism in Plato’s Academy.
- W4. Early Pyrrhonism: Pyrrho and Aenesidemus.
- W5. Sextus Empiricus’ Pyrrhonism: beliefs, appearances, and the aim of Pyrrhonian scepticism.
- W6. The modes of the suspension of judgement: Aenesidemus and Agrippa.
The self-refutation charge and the possibility of Pyrrhonian inquiry.
- W7. The Pyrrhonian attack on logic: criteria of truth, signs and proofs.
The Pyrrhonian attack on physics: causes, motion and time.
- W8. The Pyrrhonian attack on ethics and the possibility of a Pyrrhonian life.

Main Texts

- A. A. Long, D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, 2 vols., Cambridge: CUP, 1987. Vol. I: esp. sections 1-3 (Pyrrho); 15-19 (Epicureans); 39-42 (Stoics); 68-70 (Academics); 71-72 (Aenesidemus).
- Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Scepticism*, trans. by J. Annas and J. Barnes, Cambridge: CUP, 2000.

Introductory readings

- K. Vogt, 'Ancient Skepticism', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/skepticism-ancient/> .

D. Sedley, 'The Protagonists', in M. Schofield, M. Burnyeat, J. Barnes (eds.), *Doubt and Dogmatism: Studies in Hellenistic Epistemology*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980, 1-19.

198 Special Subject: Foundations of Effective Altruism

Prof Hilary Greaves – T. 4 (*week 1*), M. 3 (*week 5*), M. 4 (*other weeks*), Littlegate House ([*map*](#)) (Suite 5, Petrov Room *except week 1*: Suite 6)

These lectures focus on issues in moral philosophy and related disciplines that lie at the centre of debates concerning the 'effective altruism' movement. Topics to be covered include: Obligations of beneficence and of justice towards the global poor; the importance of cost-effectiveness; measuring effectiveness; individual and collective action; identified vs. statistical lives; aggregative and non-aggregative approaches to value; evidence for and varieties of altruism; epistemic issues in altruistic action; population ethics and existential risk.

While 'effective altruism' is the unifying theme, each of these topics is also of intellectual interest in its own right. These lectures are well suited to students who have previously studied the Ethics paper, and are interested in pursuing related but more advanced topics.

Other Lectures (suitable for all audiences)

A survey of Plato's dialogues

Prof Dominic Scott – T. 10, Schools

Students at Oxford, either in Philosophy or Classics, can study a number of Platonic dialogues in depth: the *Euthyphro*, *Meno*, *Republic*, *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*. But these constitute only a portion of his total output, and the purpose of this course is to introduce students to a number of other dialogues, which are thematically related to those on the syllabus: the *Protagoras*, *Gorgias*, *Symposium*, *Phaedo*, *Parmenides* and *Phaedrus*. The themes covered include moral psychology, virtue, rhetoric, the value of justice, love, immortality, the 'theory of forms' and pedagogy. In discussing these works, I shall make frequent comparisons with the core texts on the syllabus, explaining how Plato's thought might have developed, and how he might have come to change his mind on central issues. At the end of the course, I shall also look at the notorious 'Seventh Letter', a document attributed to Plato. Autobiographical in character, it purports to be an account (and defence) of his involvement in practical politics.

This course is suitable for those studying Plato in Mods or Greats, as well as Philosophy students reading the *Republic*, *Theaetetus* or *Sophist*.

Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* on friendship

Mr Bradford Kim – F. 11 – 12.30 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

This lecture series explores key issues in Aristotle's theory of friendship, as recorded in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In particular, we will explore how the relatively ignored topic of friendship illuminates the popular question of whether Aristotle's ethics is altruist or egoist.

Week 1: Introduction. This lecture will provide a broad introduction to Aristotle's ethics and his theory of friendship. Key issues will be discussed; for example, the place of altruism and egoism in ancient ethics, translations of Greek words for love and friendship, etc.

Week 2: Loving Because of the Lovable. Aristotle says that friends love because of the lovable (*to philēton*) and posits three kinds of lovable things: the good, the pleasant, and the useful. This lecture will assess various interpretations of two issues. The first is whether we are to understand the lovable in terms of one's own well-being. The second is whether we are to understand loving because of the lovable as involving the lovable as the *final* cause of love (what love is for the sake of) or the *efficient* cause of love (what sets love in motion). Key Texts: *Nicomachean Ethics* 8.2 and 9.3.

Week 3: Other Selves and Oneself. This lecture begins a two-part examination of Aristotle's notion of another self (*heteros/allos autos*), a notion that is the linchpin of several arguments about friendship. The first two instances in 8.12 and 9.4 are related, and various

interpretations are assessed regarding the central feature of other selfhood, that is, what makes a person another self of oneself. Key Texts: *Nicomachean Ethics* 8.12, 9.4, and 9.7.

Week 4: Why Need Friends? This lecture assesses the final two instances of another self in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. These occur in 9.9, where Aristotle argues that the happy person needs friends. Various interpretations are assessed as to how Aristotle uses the notion of another self for this argument. Key Texts: *Nicomachean Ethics* 9.9 and 9.12.

Introduction to the philosophy of action

Mr Harry Alanen – F. 11 – 12.30 (*weeks 5 to 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures aim to give students an overview of the central problems and positions in the philosophy of action. More specifically, the aim will be to help students raise critical questions regarding what actions are, and how actions are to be explained, by considering what different theories of action try to achieve.

The lectures are aimed at undergraduates intending to take finals in Philosophy of Mind or Ethics, but those taking Philosophy of Social Sciences or Cognitive Science may also find the lectures helpful overviews of the problems relating to the explanation of action. Graduate students interested in an overview of key positions and developments in philosophy of action are also encouraged to attend.

Each lecture will be followed by an optional Q&A session. A reading list will be provided before the lectures start.

Outline of lectures:

Lecture 1 (Week 5). The problem of explaining human behaviour.

This lecture raises a number of preliminary questions and problems regarding action and agency, such as: how is human behaviour and action best explained? Are the best explanations of actions scientific explanations? If so, what does this mean for our own understanding of our actions and reasons? In connection to these questions the lecture will consider a type causal explanation called the 'covering law'-model of explanation, developed e.g. by Carl Hempel, according to which causes and effects are connected by a law of nature.

Lecture 2 (Week 6). Anscombe's *Intention*, and Intentionalist Theories of Action.

This lecture considers some of the chief contributions Anscombe has had on the philosophy of action. Her discussion on the different uses of "intention" will be examined, her notion of acting "under a description", the relevance of descriptions for the individuation of actions, and the relevance of "why?" questions for explaining actions. We will also consider some intentionalist accounts of action, inspired by Anscombe.

Lecture 3 (Week 7). Donald Davidson & Causal Theories of Action.

This lecture discusses the work of Donald Davidson, and the influence his work had for later causal accounts of action, in particular on the so-called “standard story of action” (as developed by e.g. Michael Smith). The lecture will cover Davidson’s use of events to individuate actions, his views on causation, and the relevance his anomalous monism has for his theory of action. This should help show a number of key differences between Davidson’s account of action and the “standard story”.

Lecture 4 (Week 8). Problems for the Causal Theories of Action.

The final lecture will focus on a number of different problems the causal theories of action faces, beginning with the problem of deviant causal chains. Another problem we will consider is whether or not causal accounts leave agents “out” of the account of their actions. Whether or not this constitutes a serious worry will be discussed, as will different ways of responding to it, such as opting for substance or agent causation in favour of event causation. We will also consider an objection according to which a causal account is not possible. By considering these difficulties (many inspired or drawing on the work of Anscombe) the final lecture aims to tie in with the questions raised in Lecture 1: what kind of an account a theory of action should aim at giving. Even if a causal account of action is possible, is it preferable over a non-causal one?

Graduate Classes

Pro-seminar for first-year BPhil students

Various class-givers – T. 2 – 4 (*Practical*) and F. 11 – 1 (*Theory*), various locations

Practical Philosophy groups: Prof Alison Hills / Prof Adrian Moore – Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room) / St Hugh's College

Theoretical Philosophy groups: Prof Paul Elbourne / Prof John Hyman – Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room) / The Queen's College

The Pro-seminar introduces students to study, practice, and standards in graduate-level philosophy. Every BPhil student will attend four sessions in each of the areas of Practical Philosophy (broadly, value theory), and Theoretical Philosophy (broadly, metaphysics and epistemology). Seminar-givers will contact their groups, specifying readings, in advance of term.

Sophistry and Fallacy in Plato and Aristotle

Prof Luca Castagnoli and Dr Paolo Fait – W. 11 – 1, Oriel College (Harris Seminar Rm)

These eight two-hour classes will focus on some key Platonic and Aristotelian texts which offer (1) accounts of the nature and aims of the sophists' activity and arguments, and problematize the difference between philosophical dialectic and eristic; (2) analyses of specific fallacies, with special focus on a selection of fallacies that are closely related to central philosophical topics such as meaning, identity, predication, logical consequence, etc.; (3) classifications of the fallacies as a whole. We will also look at the question of whether and how Plato and Aristotle thought that the study of fallacy was important to philosophical activity. In addition, we will ask examine whether Plato's Socrates ever makes conscious use of fallacy in the dialogues, and if so, what philosophical and pedagogical purpose this use could have had.

The class is intended for graduate students at all levels, and counts as the mandatory graduate class for Ancient Philosophy MSt students in Michaelmas Term.

Key texts:

Plato, *Euthydemus*, *Sophist* (and selected passages from other dialogues, especially *Protagoras*, *Gorgias*, *Republic*, *Theaetetus*)

Aristotle, *On Sophistical Refutations*, *Prior Analytics*, *On Rhetoric*

Provisional calendar of classes:

1. Plato on the sophists and the difference between dialectic and eristic
2. Eristic in action: Plato's *Euthydemus*
3. Does Socrates cheat? Plato's use of fallacy

4. Aristotle: dialectic, eristic and sophistic. Refutation, falsehood and babbling.
The definition and classification of sophistical arguments
5. Aristotle: linguistic fallacies 1: equivocation, syntactic ambiguity
6. Aristotle: linguistic fallacies 2: form of expression, composition/division
7. Aristotle: extralinguistic fallacies 1: fallacy of accident, fallacy of consequent,
secundum quid
8. Aristotle on extralinguistic fallacies 2: *petitio principii*, non-cause

Universals

Prof Cecilia Trifogli – T. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

I will present and discuss two major views in the medieval debate about the ontological status of universals: that of John Duns Scotus and that of William of Ockham. I will cover the following topics:

- (1) Scotus on the existence and ontological status of common natures.
- (2) Scotus's theory of individuation ('haecceity').
- (3) Ockham's arguments against realism about universals.
- (4) Ockham's positive account of universals ('conceptualism').

The texts of Scotus and Ockham are available in English translation in:

Five Texts on the Mediaeval Problem of Universals, transl. Paul Vincent Spade, Hackett, Indianapolis 1994, pp. 57-113 (Scotus), 114-231 (Ockham).

Introductory reading:

M. McCord Adams, 'Universals in the early fourteenth century' in: *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, ed. N. Kretzmann, A. Kenny, J. Pinborg, CUP 1982, pp. 411-439.

Phenomenology

Prof Joseph Schear – Th. 2 – 4, Christ Church (Lecture Room 2)

This class falls under the BPhil category History of Philosophy 1800-1950. We will read some classical phenomenological texts devoted to intentionality, the 'basic theme' of phenomenology (as Husserl called it). No background will be presupposed. These texts will not be treated as historical curiosities but rather as possible contributions to our understanding of the nature of intentionality. Where possible we will draw connections to contemporary work on intentionality by authors such as John Searle, John McDowell, Tim Crane, Charles Siewert, John Haugeland, and others.

Week 1: Introduction: What is intentionality? What is phenomenology?

Week 2: Husserl on the Intentionality of Perception

Week 3: Husserl on the Intentionality of Judgment

Week 4: Husserl on Reason and Intentionality

Week 5: Heidegger on Intentionality and Being

Week 6: Heidegger on the Intentionality of Understanding

Week 7: Heidegger on the Intentionality of Moods

Week 8: Sartre on the Intentionality of Emotions

Political Philosophy

Prof Cecile Fabre and Prof Tom Sinclair – Th. 11 – 1, All Souls College (Wharton Room)

This class is open to all graduate students with an interest in moral, political and legal philosophy, subject to seating space in the Wharton Room, All Souls College. If there is not enough space, priority will be given to BPhil students. The purpose of the class is to develop your understanding of the political philosophy of authority, legitimacy, and democracy.

Students will be required to do at least two of the core readings. From week 4 onwards, they be strongly encouraged to volunteer to give presentations on the weekly topics, using the readings as guidelines. Priority will be given to students in their first year of the B. Phil programme, followed by second year BPhil students, followed by students on any other graduate programme. As a rule of thumb, you should allocate a day per week to do the required reading. The readings (list available at <http://www.oxfordpoliticalphilosophy.weebly.com>) should be used as bases for formulating and defending your own views about the issues and arguments at hand.

Topics in Ethics

Prof Hilary Greaves and Dr Teru Thomas – W. 1.30 – 3.30, Littlegate House ([map](#)), Suite 6 (Seminar Room)

This is a survey course covering miscellaneous topics in ethics. The intention is to make the course both accessible to students who have no prior training in ethical theory, and interesting to those who have. (Thus, while the course will presuppose no prior knowledge, the topics covered are for the most part not the ‘usual suspects’ from undergraduate courses.) A provisional list of topics to be covered is as follows:

- The project of ‘consequentialising’ apparently non-consequentialist theories
- Parity
- Global consequentialism
- Actualism and possibilism in ethics
- Emotion and rationality in ethics
- Normative vagueness
- Role morality
- Moral uncertainty

Students completing this course should be well-placed to write a BPhil assessed essay on any of the topics that interests them.

Students attending the first class should read the following papers beforehand. (These will be posted on Weblearn, together with a list of optional further readings.)

- Portmore, D. ‘Consequentializing’
- Brown, C. ‘Consequentialise this’
- Schroeder, M. ‘No So Promising After All: Evaluator-Relative Teleology and Common-Sense Morality’

Applied Ethics

Dr Rebecca Brown and Prof Guy Kahane – M. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This seminar will explore a range of debates in practical ethics, and is open to all graduate students with an interest in this topic. Two–three core readings will form the basis of the discussion for each seminar, and students will be expected to volunteer to start the seminar with a brief presentation of the week’s core readings.

The topics to be covered are:

Week 1 (9th Oct) Disability

Week 2 (16th Oct) Commodification

Week 3 (23rd Oct) Gene Editing and Selection

Week 4 (30th Oct) Neurointervention

Week 5 (6th Nov) Moral Intuitions and Cognitive Science

Week 6 (13th Nov) Effective Altruism

Week 7 (20th Nov) Health and Responsibility

Week 8 (27th Nov) Punishment

The core readings for week 1 are:

- Barnes, E. *The Minority Body: A Theory of Disability*. OUP, 2015. Chapters 1, 3 [available online: <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198732587.001.0001/acprof-9780198732587>]

- Savulescu J. and Kahane, G. 2011. ‘Disability: A Welfarist Approach’, *Journal of Clinical Ethics*, 6, 1: 45-51 [available online: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3227811/pdf/CE-11-010.pdf>]

Philosophy and psychology of reasoning and decision

Prof Philipp Koralus – M. 2 – 4, St Catherine’s College (above the Porter’s Lodge)

The capacity to reason and draw inferences is central to all advanced human endeavors. Pushed to its limits, this capacity makes possible science, philosophy, and modern civilization. Equally remarkably, we are subject to systematic failures of reasoning in all domains, ranging from simple puzzles to medical diagnosis and political forecasting. These striking failures have been widely experimentally documented, and their discovery has yielded more than one Nobel Prize over the past half-century. The reality of both successes and failures of thinking poses a dual challenge for our understanding of the human mind.

To meet this challenge, we will need an account of our minds that can make sense of how failures arise, but that also explains how it is possible for us to systematically reason correctly. The seminar is based on the view that constructing such an account will require the combined resources of philosophy and psychology.

We will discuss a range of topics from the perspective of systematic theory building, from among the following: Propositional reasoning. Reasoning with conditionals. Reasoning with universals and generics. Reasoning with risk. Decision-making. Moral judgment. At various stages, we will consider both normative and descriptive dimensions, as well as the relationship between reasoning and language.

Though we will often be discussing psychological data, the focus will be on how those data might constraint models with formal precision. No subject specific knowledge is assumed, so the seminar can also serve as a (very specific) introduction to the philosophy of cognitive science. Since we will not be assuming any formal background knowledge beyond very basic logic, the seminar can (in part) serve as an intro to using formal methods in theorizing about thought and language. Depending on interest, there is also scope for introducing participants to practical experimental methods that are useful for philosophers.

Week-to-week readings will be made available to seminar participants who provide an email address at the first meeting.

Some references:

Harman, G. *Change in View*. MIT Press.

Hastie and Dawes, *Rational Choice in an Uncertain World*.

Koralus, P. *Reason and Inquiry*. Oxford University Press. (Chapter drafts to be distributed in seminar)

Kahneman, D. *Thinking, Fast, and Slow*.

Metaphysics

Prof Timothy Williamson – W. 4 – 6 (*weeks 2 to 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

The class will use Ted Sider's *Writing the Book of the World* (OUP, 2011) as a basis for discussion. The material will be divided as follows:

Week 2	Chapters 1-3 (Structure, Primitivism, Connections)
Week 3	Chapters 4-5 (Substantivity, Metametaphysics)
Week 4	Chapters 6-7 (Beyond the Predicate, Questions)
Week 5	Chapter 8 (Rivals)
Week 6	Chapter 9 (Ontology)
Week 7	Chapter 10 (Logic)
Week 8	Chapters 11-13 (Time, Modality, A Worldview)

Philosophy of Physics

Prof Harvey Brown, Prof Simon Saunders, Dr Christopher Timpson – W. 11 – 1,
Merton College (David Harvey Room, T S Eliot Theatre)

This series of classes will cover contemporary topics in the philosophy of physics, with emphasis on the foundations of quantum mechanics, in particular the Everett interpretation, information theory, symmetries, and the foundations of statistical mechanics, spread over MT and HT. The primary intended audience is MSt students in Philosophy of Physics and fourth year Physics & Philosophy undergraduates studying the Advanced Philosophy of Physics paper. Others (especially BPhil students with a Philosophy of Physics interest) are welcome.

The provisional schedule for the first 4 weeks is:

Week 1. (SS) The measurement problem of quantum mechanics

Week 2. (SS) The Everett interpretation

Week 3. (SS) Decoherence theory

Week 4. (SS) Quantum probability

Week 5. (HB) The significance of Noether's (first) 1918 theorem linking symmetry and conservation principles

Week 6. (HB) The Aharonov-Bohm effect

Week 7. (CT) Delayed choice experiments in quantum mechanics

Week 8. (HB) The role of rods and clocks in general relativity

After first week, we will be working through 1-2 relevant papers in each class, and it's an expectation of attendance (at least for MSt/APP students) that you are willing to present the contents of one of the papers in a class at some point. Advance offers welcome (email simon.saunders@philosophy.ox.ac.uk, harvey.brown@philosophy.ox.ac.uk and christopher.timpson@philosophy.ox.ac.uk).

Regular Faculty Seminars

The programmes of the Faculty seminars will no longer be included in this Lecture Prospectus, since running lists are often not settled by the time this Prospectus is published. Instead, students and Faculty members are referred to the weekly events digest, sent from the Faculty in each week of term, which includes details of each of the seminars (often with a linked abstract). Interested parties may also refer to seminars' individual webpages, where one exists.

The Faculty seminars listed here all take place in some weeks of each term of the year, at Radcliffe Humanities (either in the Ryle Room or the Lecture Room). The usual schedule is given as a guide, but should be checked in any term against that term's Lecture List, or the digest for the week.

Monday **Moral Philosophy Seminar**

Usual schedule: weekly, 4.30 to 6.30, Lecture Room

Webpage: http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/lectures/moral_philosophy

Philosophy of Mathematics Seminar

Usual schedule: weeks vary; 4.30 to 6.30, Ryle Room

Webpage: <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~philmath/pomseminar.html>

Tuesdays **Post-Kantian European Philosophy Seminar**

Usual schedule: even-numbered weeks, 5 to 7, Ryle Room

Webpage: http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/lectures/the_postkantian_seminar

Thursdays **Workshop in Ancient Philosophy**

Usual schedule: weekly, 4.30 to 6, Ryle Room

Webpage: http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/lectures/workshop_in_ancient_philosophy

Philosophy of Physics Seminar

Usual schedule: weekly, 4.30 to 6.30, Lecture Room

Webpage: <http://www.philosophy-of-physics.ox.ac.uk/tag/thursday-seminars/>

Fridays **Jowett Society / Philosophical Society**

Usual schedule: weekly, 3.30 to 5.30, Lecture Room

Webpage: <https://jowettsociety.wordpress.com/>

In addition to these, there are usually "work in progress" groups, or WIPs: most commonly, the Theoretical Philosophy WIP (<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~twip/>), and in some terms a Mind WIP meets. There is also a Faculty Aesthetics seminar which meets in one term of the year.