

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



PHILOSOPHY LECTURES PROSPECTUS

TRINITY TERM 2019

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:

- A paper number (eg “101”) indicates that the lecture is a Core Lecture for the Honour Schools paper with that number.
- The normal duration of an event is one hour. That is, for “W. 11”, the event is booked in the room on Wednesdays from 11 to 12. Where the class or lecture has a different duration, 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 used by Philosophy 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 (ground floor) and Meeting Room 7 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, please 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:

Computer Science and Philosophy: Turing

Mathematics and Philosophy: Frege, *Foundations of Arithmetic*

Physics and Philosophy: The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence

Literae Humaniores: *Euthyphro* and *Meno*, if taking this as the philosophy option for Mods

Alan Turing on Computability and Intelligence

Prof Peter Millican – T. 2 to 4 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Hertford College (Ferrar Room)

These lectures, designed for the first year course in Computer Science and Philosophy, start with the background to Alan Turing's 1936 paper "On Computable Numbers", including Hilbert's programme, Gödel's incompleteness theorem, and Cantor's results concerning the countability of infinite sets. They then work in detail through the 1936 paper, using Charles Petzold's book *The Annotated Turing* (which contains the entire paper, together with comprehensive discussion) as a basis. Finally, the last three lectures will turn to Turing's 1950 paper "Computing Machinery and Intelligence", discussing some of the philosophical issues arising from the Turing Test and Searle's Chinese Room thought-experiment.

Frege: *Foundations of Arithmetic*

Prof James Studd – T. W. 12 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These are the core lectures for first-year mathematic and philosophy students. We'll consider, among other things, Frege's attack on Mill's empiricism, Frege's views on number ascriptions, the 'Julius Caesar' problem, and Frege's attempt at a logicist reduction of arithmetic to Hume's Principle, and ultimately to his ill-fated theory of extensions.

Set Text: Frege, *Foundations of Arithmetic* (trans. J. L. Austin)

Plato: *Euthyphro* and *Meno*

Prof Lindsay Judson – M. W. 11 (*weeks 1 & 5 to 7*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

Intended audience: Primarily intended for Classics Mods students who are doing the Plato special subject.

Brief description:

This is the first half of a course of 16 lectures, primarily for Classics Mods students offering these dialogues as their philosophy option; there will be 8 further lectures in Michaelmas

Term. I shall pay particular attention to introducing philosophical concepts, analysing arguments, and explaining how to read Platonic dialogues. The lectures will begin with an introduction to philosophy as whole, and ask the question 'what is it?'. I shall also say something about why Plato wrote dialogues and how we should approach them. In the next 5 lectures I shall look at the *Euthyphro*, exploring the two dialogues it contains – the one between Socrates and Euthyphro and the one between Plato and his readers. In the last two lectures this term and in the Michaelmas Term lectures I shall discuss the *Meno*: topics discussed will include definition and the 'Socratic fallacy'; the view that everyone always desires what is good; the paradox of inquiry and Plato's response to it; hypotheses, knowledge, and true belief.

Handouts and bibliography will be available in the Philosophy section of Weblearn (also accessible via my web-page).

The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence

Prof Simon Saunders – M. 2 – 3.30 (*weeks 1 to 6*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

Audience: Physics and Philosophy students preparing for prelims.

These lectures will consist of an introduction to the philosophy of space, time and motion in the early modern period, with particular focus on the writings of Descartes and Newton, and on the Leibniz-Clarke correspondence.

Lectures for the Honour Schools

Lectures listed in this section are **core lectures** for the papers in the Honour Schools: that is, these are lectures intended especially for students taking those papers at Finals. **Questions set in Finals papers usually take the content of core lectures into account.**

Students should also refer to the sections *Other Lectures* following. Lectures listed there are not official core lectures, but nonetheless often cover topics of relevance to the Finals papers. Those listings this term are open to all, but might particularly interest students taking 102 Knowledge and Reality, 103 Ethics, 115/130 Plato *Republic*, 116/132 Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics*, and 128 Practical Ethics.

101 Early Modern Philosophy: Locke and Berkeley

Prof Anita Avramides – M. 10 (*weeks 2 to 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures are primarily intended for those studying for the Early Modern Philosophy paper (101). Others are most welcome to attend.

- Week 2: Locke's Empirical Turn
- Week 3: On what we can know
- Week 4: Innate Ideas
- Week 5: Locke on Substance
- Week 6: Locke and Berkeley on abstract general ideas
- Week 7: Berkeley Immaterialism
- Week 8: Berkeley on (Finite) Spirit

106b Philosophy of Social Science

Prof Alexander Prescott-Couch – T. 10, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

Contemporary social science is extremely heterogeneous, with seemingly little consensus about methods and fundamental assumptions. While some social scientific projects take the form of causal analysis of large data sets, others primarily employ case studies or involve the construction of highly idealized models that bear only an indirect relation to real-world phenomena. Many anthropologists are interested less in causal questions and more in understanding the “meanings” of events or cultural practices. Some theorists believe that a deep understanding of society requires a functional analysis of key institutions, while other, more historically inclined researchers hold that understanding these institutions requires historical narratives or “genealogies.”

How should we think about this heterogeneity? Are these differences superficial, masking a single underlying set of fundamental aims and a unitary logic of scientific inference? Or do they indicate deep disagreement about the correct approach to studying society? Moreover, if such deep disagreements do exist, to what extent should we look to the natural sciences as a model in order to resolve them?

These lectures address these (and other) questions by examining classic debates in the philosophy of social science in light of contemporary social science and recent philosophy of science. Topics will include scientific explanation, the doctrine of *Verstehen*, idealization and modeling, functional explanation, historical narrative, critical theory and ideology, social metaphysics, and the role of values in science. The aim is to show how examining social science can provide a fuller picture of substantive and methodological commitments of the sciences as well as how philosophical analysis might inform methodological discussion within social science itself.

108 The Philosophy of Logic and Language

Prof Paul Elbourne – F. 10, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures will cover selected topics in the philosophy of logic and language, concentrating largely on the philosophy of language. We will cover truth, meaning (the nature of propositions, internalism and externalism about meaning), and reference (the semantics of names, demonstratives, and definite descriptions).

113 Post-Kantian Philosophy: Heidegger

Prof Stephen Mulhall – T. 12, New College

These lectures will aim to give an introduction to Heidegger's major early work, *Being and Time*; no previous knowledge of his writings will be assumed. Although the primary audience is assumed to be those working on Heidegger for the Post-Kantian Philosophy paper, anyone interested in the material is welcome to attend. We shall work through the text in the order in which it is written, and in some detail; so it might be advisable to bring a copy along. There will be plenty of time for questions.

115/130 Plato: *Republic*

Prof Dominic Scott – W. Th. 10, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

The *Republic* is one of Plato's most famous and influential works. The dialogue is prompted by questions about the nature of justice and the best possible kind of life we can live. These questions lead to wide-ranging discussions of the ideal city, virtue and vice, the nature of knowledge and reality, the nature and immortality of the soul, moral psychology, education, and the 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 aim will be to identify and discuss some of the main exegetical and philosophical questions that might be raised.

135 Latin Philosophy

Prof Simon Shogry – F. 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures are primarily aimed at Lit. Hum. undergraduates preparing to take the Latin Philosophy paper, but anyone interested in Stoic ethical thought or the philosophical works of Cicero and Seneca is encouraged to attend.

In the eight lectures this term, we will examine fundamental issues in Stoic ethics, as they

are presented in Cicero (*De Finibus* III, *De Officiis* I) and Seneca (*Letters* 92, 95, 121; *De Constantia*; *De Vita Beata*). This task will occasionally require forays into Stoic logic and physics, given the systematic character of Stoic philosophy.

In particular, we will be focusing on the following topics: the Stoic account of happiness and the goal of human action; the role of nature in ethics, and the Stoic theory of 'natural appropriation' (*oikeiôsis*); the Stoic distinction between being good and being preferred, and whether it is tenable; Stoic arguments for why only virtue is good, and why virtue is sufficient for happiness; the analysis and evaluation of emotions (*pathê*); and whether Stoic ethics is impossibly demanding. Throughout, we will keep in mind philological and literary questions arising from Cicero and Seneca's re-packaging of Greek philosophy for a Roman audience.

Other Lectures (suitable for all audiences)

The 2019 John Locke Lectures: *Minds That Speak*

Prof Philip Pettit (Princeton and ANU) – W. 5 – 7 (weeks 1 to 6), Mathematical Institute

The Faculty is delighted to welcome this year's John Locke Lecturer, Philip Pettit. All are welcome at this year's lectures. After the first lecture, there will be a drinks reception for Philip, with the generous support of Oxford University Press.

The theme of the lectures is the constitutive dependence of our characteristic mental capacities on the ability to speak and the social life it makes possible. The claim defended is that speaking ensures that minded subjects have these capacities. The method followed is to explore, counterfactually, how the advent of even a simple, information-sharing language would elicit the capacities in subjects otherwise like us.

Minds that speak, so the argument goes, will more or less inevitably 1. decide about how to judge and what to think; 2. control their thinking by rule-based reasoning; 3. enjoy a special perceptual consciousness; 4. make commitments and form community; 5. constitute persons and selves; 6. assume responsibility for what they do; and, a topic for another occasion, 7. command one another's respect. Is speech necessary for the capacities it is said to ensure? Perhaps not in the case of the first three, more purely psychological abilities; almost certainly, in the case of the other capacities, which have a social-psychological character.

Lecture 1. Minds that speak decide how to judge and what to think 1 May

Take beliefs and desires to constitute functional states that must be present in any agent, however simple. Acting on such attitudes, agents will do things intentionally. But they may not be able to act intentionally so as to shape their own attitudes: say, for example, to check their beliefs for responsiveness to data. If agents share a common language for reporting on their environment, however, things are bound to be different. Being able to decide what to say, truthfully and carefully, on some issue—being able to decide how to judge—they will be able to decide what to believe. Why? Because otherwise what they say would be no guide to how they are likely to act, and their language would be manifestly dysfunctional. But how do the on-off judgments associated with speech relate to the scalar credences that, by received accounts, constitute functional beliefs? They are consistent with credences insofar as they are stakes-sensitive: you may judge that *p*, without a credence of 1, provided you treat the non-*p* possibilities as unworrying or unlikely. Even if credences are behaviorally prior, however, judgments still play important roles. They can elicit credence as needed. They can make the contents of credences more articulate. And they can enable subjects to extend credence to novel (e.g. evaluative) contents; to mimic credence in acts of acceptance, trust and hope; and, of course, to mask credence in deception and self-deception.

Lecture 2. Minds that speak control their thought by rule-based reasoning 8 May

Minds that speak might make judgments carefully but only in a 'blind' or 'brute' manner; registering perception or belief that things are thus and so, they might just rationally transition, without knowing why, to believing a further fact supported by things being that way—say, that *p*. In such an exercise they would not reason their way to believing that *p*, as in concluding 'so, *p*' or 'it follows that *p*'. That would require them also to have beliefs about the linkage between what the premises or perceptions indicate and what the conclusion says. Reasoning is bound to appeal as a way of building up common ground between speaking minds. And, happily, the language that facilitates communication also enables speakers to form the required sorts of linking belief. But while reasoning makes special demands in those ways, it does not fit an intellectualist image. It remains tied to rational transitioning, as the Lewis Carroll's Tortoise shows; it may operate on a virtual basis, intervening only when normal processing raises red flags; and the linking beliefs it presupposes may be held in a case-by-case, not a general way. Moreover, reasoning must be able to operate at bedrock, when the rules followed cannot be explicated further and must be salient from examples. The problem of how it operates at bedrock involves the rule-following problem associated with Wittgenstein and Kripke. The best story suggests that speaking minds can access bedrock rules insofar as instances exemplify the rules for them: this, in a proleptic way—via dispositions to extrapolate in certain ways from examples—and subject to mutual correction in the event of divergence between the parties.

Lecture 3. Minds that speak enjoy a special perceptual consciousness 15 May

If I make a judgment that *p*, as minds that speak can do, I will have a 'maker's knowledge' of what I am doing, and recognize what (and that) I believe. Thus, my belief will be conscious in a perfectly ordinary sense of that term. But if I reason from things I believe, then by our account of the reasoning available to minds that speak, I will also hold those beliefs consciously; in this case, I will have a 'taker's knowledge' of what I believe. So what then of the perceptions I reason from? Do I have a taker's knowledge of what I perceive? And if I do, does that ensure the presence of a rich form of consciousness? Perception is a process, potentially present in mute as well as speaking creatures, that classifies directly available items by directly available properties; makes and accumulates its classifications as it varies attentional focus; and normally but not invariably triggers belief and action. Even unreasoning subjects, then, may not form perceptual beliefs in a wholly 'blind' manner—say, that associated with 'super blind-sight'—and must count in a suitably contrastive sense as conscious. But perception becomes conscious in a richer sense among subjects who speak like you or me and can reason from perception. It will present a field for us to mine in forming our judgments, that is manifestly defeasible, indefinitely explorable, and directly accessible. Is perceptual consciousness in that richer sense the real thing: does it qualify as phenomenal consciousness, as it is now often put? Perhaps. There are certainly more things to say in favor of that view than are generally recognized.

Lecture 4. Minds that speak form commitments and community

22 May

In our discussion of the capacities of judgment, reasoning and consciousness, we have been focused on the personal psychological impact of speech. In the remaining lectures, we shift the focus to the social psychological impact of speech, as we might describe it. The first effect, explored here, is to make such minds capable of mutual commitment: capable of speaking with authority for themselves in communicating with others. Minds that speak can rely on a maker's knowledge of their attitudes to set aside misleading-mind excuses—'I misread my thoughts'—and thereby avow (rather than just report) various attitudes. And they can rely on that knowledge to set aside changed-mind excuses also—'I changed my view'—in pledging (rather than just avowing or reporting) their intentions. In such exercises, they make their words more expensive and credible than they would otherwise be and, in that game-theory sense, make commitments to one another. As a result of that capacity for commitment, they can form distinctive kinds of community. They can build up common ground with one another—say, a set of beliefs to which each is manifestly committed—in any conversation. They can readily form joint intentions, positioning themselves to be able to avow an intention on behalf of a collectivity. And they can constitute themselves as a group agent, with each being manifestly committed to acting by established protocols when they act for the group as a whole; and this, across any in a range of possible scenarios.

Lecture 5. Minds that speak constitute persons and selves

29 May

Adult, able-minded persons are subjects like you and me who by their nature command certain rights. But what is the nature in virtue of which they command such rights? It is unsatisfactory to respond by offering a list of agential capacities that distinguish such human beings from other animals. What unifies these, and what gives them a connection with rights? A more promising approach starts with a prominent capacity that speech confers on minds that speak as we do. This is the ability we have to make commitments in which we speak for ourselves and, as a byproduct, project an authorized *persona* on which we invite others to rely; it is the ability, in an old word, to *personate*. We make commitments of this kind, not just actively, but virtually: that is, by not rejecting the many expectations that others manifestly make about us in social life. This account explains why persons must have some rights: in their absence, invitations to reliance would mean nothing. And it also explains the connection between persons and selves. Every adult, able-minded person must have a 1st-person self that they identify indexically—this will be their reference point in attitude and action—so that they cannot misidentify this self yet, as Hume stresses, may learn little about it from introspection. Every person must have a 2nd-person self that they project in inviting others to rely on them: this is who I am, each suggests in this vein. And every person must have a 3rd-person self, or indeed set of selves, that is constituted by the picture of them that emerges, subject only to their partial control, among their fellows; this is the self that concerns them in *amour propre*. The three selves vary in the requirements for their survival, in how epistemically accessible they are, and in how far they command our investment or care.

Lecture 6. Minds that speak assume responsibility for what they do

Assume that I hold you responsible for acting (only) on judgments of value that we share. To hold you responsible for a particular failure, then—to blame you—must be to make two assumptions. First, that you have the general capacity to understand what it is to make judgments of value. And, second, that you had the capacity to act on our shared judgments of value in the case where you failed: that you could have done otherwise. Must minds that speak have the capacity to understand values? Yes. They will avow many desires, based on desiderata that make avowal sensible, both in an active manner and a virtual: that is, by failing to disavow desires that others manifestly expect them to act on. But they may often be unmoved by desires they previously avowed, while recognizing at the same time that it is a failure for them as commissive subjects not to stand by the avowed desires. And that should give them access to the idea of something's being desirable in a familiar sense for any agent: it answers to desires that they may not feel but are committed to stand by. Must they also have the capacity to act on shared judgments of value associated with fitness for responsibility? Again, yes. In any functional society certain shared, routine norms of non-violence, non-fraudulence, and so on, are bound to materialize. Members will virtually avow the desirability of abiding by such norms, and virtually pledge to conform to them, insofar as they are manifestly expected both to judge conformity desirable and to intend to conform, and they acquiesce in that expectation. Registering that you have an important stake in proving faithful to those norms, then, I can exhort you to act appropriately, relying on your responsiveness to the considerations that triggered your commitment, including the reliance on others that it invited. I can say 'you should and can tell the truth', expecting this to help elicit the very responsiveness it posits: I can hold out the ideal in the expectation that it will move you, so that the 'can' does not just mark a (bare or robust) possibility. And if you fail to tell the truth, and I continue to think that you were (and are still) exhortable—whether by me, another or yourself—I will naturally express my impatience in words of a similar hortatory character: 'you should and could have told the truth'.

John Locke Lectures: discussion class

Prof Philip Pettit – Th. 11 – 1 (*weeks 1 to 6*), Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room *except week 3*: Lecture Room)

This discussion class is open to all who have attended the lectures, and presents an excellent opportunity to discuss the ideas raised in the lectures with the lecturer.

Argument and Analysis in Practical Ethics

Prof Janet Radcliffe Richards – W. 2, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

These classes are intended to supplement the lectures in practical ethics, but they are not specifically directed to examinations. Their aim is the analysis and clarification of familiar moral controversies: the kinds of issue that are likely to be presented as 'for and against' debates, where organizations like the BBC have to present 'both sides of the argument' and aim for 'balance'. The aim will not be to settle any of these questions, but to demonstrate how often the for-and-against approach hides and distorts the real issues, and to clarify the

roots of puzzlement and disagreement. The techniques involved can be extended to all areas of reasoning in moral philosophy.

Although the classes are listed as one hour, and attendees will be free to leave after then, there is scope for extending them if the discussions turn out to make that appropriate.

There is no required reading, but questions about the psychology of why people reason as badly as they do will inevitably arise. Anyone who is not familiar with psychological work in these areas might be interested to look at, e.g., Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking Fast and Slow*, and Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind*.

Plato and Aristotle on Pleasure

Ms Katharine O'Reilly – Th. 11 (weeks 5 to 8), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

What is Plato's attitude to the role of pleasure in a well-ordered life? In what sense can pleasures be false? What kinds of pleasure does Aristotle recognize? In what way is the virtuous person's action most pleasurable for them?

This set of four lectures will focus on Platonic and Aristotelian discussions of pleasure across a number of key works. We will examine the replenishment theory of pleasure discussed in Plato's *Gorgias*, and its roots in the early physical tradition. We then consider the weighing and measuring arguments in the *Protagoras*, and discuss whether there is room for illusion about pleasure. Moving on, we focus on the illusion and true filling arguments in *Republic* IX, and the ontology of types of pleasure in the *Philebus*, including the arguments for false pleasure. In Aristotle, we explore the arguments for pleasure as an activation (*energeia*) in the NE, and his criticism of restorative theories of pleasure. We will look at the pleasure of learning in *Rhetoric* 1.11 and *Poetics* 4, and at the role of memory in the accounts of pleasure in *Metaphysics* Lambda and in the NE. Finally, we address Aristotle's views on the role of pleasure in virtuous development and virtuous action, as well as the pleasures of intellectual activity, in both the EE and the NE.

Audience: Relevant to undergraduates reading for papers in ancient philosophy, especially 115 & 130 – Plato's *Republic*, and 116 & 132 – Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, as well as those reading for papers on Moral Philosophy, Utilitarianism, and 103 – Ethics. The lectures are especially aimed at advanced undergraduates who want to deepen their understanding of pleasure related questions. Greek is not required. Graduate students are also encouraged to attend.

Primary Texts

Plato, selections from *Protagoras*, *Gorgias*, *Republic* IX, *Philebus* (all available in J. M. Cooper & D. S. Hutchinson eds. (1997), *Plato: Complete Works*. Hackett Publishing Company).

Aristotle, selections from *Rhetoric*, *Poetics*, *Metaphysics*, *Eudemian Ethics*, *Nicomachean Ethics* (all available in J. Barnes ed. (1984), *The Complete Works of Aristotle: the Revised Oxford Translation*, 2 vols. Princeton University Press).

Key topics in metaphysics: mereology and modality

Mr Alexander Roberts – T. 11 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures will supplement the faculty lectures for 102 Knowledge and Reality. The lectures will cover two topics from the metaphysics part of the Knowledge and Reality course: mereology and modality. Two lectures will be dedicated to each topic; the aim is to explore each topic in greater detail than the faculty lectures.

Lecture 1: Mereology - The Special Composition Question

The first lecture will introduce the subject of mereology and van Inwagen's Special Composition Question. In addition, the lecture will cover the main three responses to the question: restrictivism, nihilism, and universalism.

Lecture 2: Mereology - The Argument from Vagueness

The second lecture will cover one of the most influential arguments in recent metaphysics: the argument from vagueness. The first half of this lecture will introduce the phenomenon of vagueness. The second half will then slowly outline how the argument from vagueness applies to restrictivist answers to the Special Composition Question.

Lecture 3: Modality - Introduction to Modal Realism

The third lecture will cover David Lewis's concrete modal realist reduction of modality. The lecture will outline the methodology that led Lewis to this striking view, and discuss the crucial features of Lewis's multi-faceted proposal.

Lecture 4: Modality - Sophisticated Modal Realism

The first half of the final lecture will consider several influential objections to modal realism, of both an epistemological and metaphysical variety. The second half will consider how sophisticated versions of modal realism are designed to overcome these problems.

Suggested readings can be found at <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~magd4036/KTMM.pdf>.

Undergraduate thesis: library resources

Dr Hilla Wait – Th. 2 – 4 (*week 7*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

For anyone considering whether to take the undergraduate thesis option, a session on Thesis Research Training, presented by library staff, focussing on search skills, critical appraisal, citing and referencing, and bibliographical resources. This will include practical exercises in the use of relevant e-resources, and students should bring their laptops. Some tablets will be provided for those without laptops.

Applied Ethics Discussion Group

Dr Rebecca Brown – Th. 2 – 4 (*even weeks*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

Interested participants should [email the organiser](#).

Oxford philosophy 1900-1960

Dr Nakul Krishna (*Cambridge*) – M. 2 – 4, Trinity College (Danson Room)

NB. This is an abridged version. Please find the full syllabus and further details at this webpage: <https://nakulkrishna.com/teaching/philosophy-at-oxford-1900-60/>

Description: Dr Nakul Krishna (University of Cambridge) will be convening a set of informal seminars in Trinity Term based around the draft manuscript of his narrative history of Oxford philosophy in the first half of the 20th century, to be published by Penguin-Random House in 2020. The book is aimed at non-academic readers and is primarily a work of history rather than of philosophy. But philosophers and academics may also find the content, based on a wide range of published and unpublished archival sources, of interest.

The book begins with the birth of Gilbert Ryle in 1900 and ends with the death of JL Austin in 1960 and covers the following themes: idealism and realism in early-20th-century Oxford and Cambridge; the origins and varieties of ‘analytic’ philosophy; the reception of logical positivism in Oxford; wartime Oxford and the emergence of an influential generation of women in philosophy; the reception of Wittgenstein in post-war Oxford; the rise and fall of ‘ordinary language’ philosophy; ethics and politics in Oxford philosophy; the revival of metaphysics and the slow decline of Oxford’s influence relative to that of universities in the US.

Format: 45–50 mins lecture; break; 30–45 mins discussion (participants are free to leave after the first session)

Audience: All welcome; the material will be entirely accessible to undergraduates who are especially encouraged to attend. Please address any queries to Dr Krishna at the e-mail address above.

Expectations: No previous reading or background is required, but doing the recommended readings below is strongly recommended. The webpage contains a much more extensive bibliography, with URLs and/or uploaded PDFs of all readings.

Reading list

1st week / 29th April: Fog-wrestling (1900–32)

Themes: The idea of a ‘contextualist’ history of analytic philosophy; idealists and realists in early-twentieth-century Oxford; the growing influence of ‘Cambridge analysis’; Gilbert Ryle and the reception of German phenomenology in Oxford

Recommended reading

R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978 [1939]), 15–28.

2nd week / 6th May: Nonsense (1929–36)

Themes: Logical positivism and the Vienna Circle; Oxford and Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*; the birth of *Analysis*; the invention of ‘analytic’ philosophy

Recommended reading

Susan Stebbing, ‘The Method of Analysis in Metaphysics’, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 33, no. 1 (1 June 1933): 65–94.

3rd week / 13th May: Argy-Bargy (1930–39)

Themes: The reception (and rejection) of logical positivism in Oxford; JL Austin and the beginnings of ‘linguistic’ philosophy; philosophy and left politics in the 1930s

Recommended reading

Isaiah Berlin, ‘Verification’, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 39 (1938): 225–48.

4th week / 20th May: Hothouse (1937–45)

Themes: Oxford (philosophy) in the war; women in Oxford philosophy; Oxford philosophy and classical scholarship

Recommended reading:

Mary Midgley, ‘At Oxford, 1938–42’, in *Owl of Minerva: A Memoir* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 76–129.

5th week / 27th May: Saturdays (1945–53)

Themes: Post-war Oxford; styles of ‘ordinary language philosophy’; Ryle’s philosophy of mind; Austin’s Saturday morning meetings; the reception of Wittgenstein’s later philosophy in Oxford

Recommended reading

Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, 60th anniversary edition (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 1–12.

6th week / 3rd June: Corruption (1952–58)

Themes: Ethics in Oxford philosophy; metaethical ‘prescriptivism’; the revival of (Aristotelian) naturalism; the revival of Platonism

Recommended reading

G. E. M. Anscombe, ‘Does Oxford Moral Philosophy Corrupt Youth?’, in *Human Life, Action and Ethics: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, ed. Mary Geach and Luke Gormally (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2006), 161–68.

7th week / 10th June: Thaw (1956–60)

Themes: Systematic philosophy and ‘descriptive metaphysics’ in the late-1950s; the gradual emergence of post-war American philosophy as a rival to Oxford; critiques of Oxford philosophy

Recommended reading

P. F. Strawson, ‘The Post-Linguistic Thaw’, in *Philosophical Writings*, ed. Galen Strawson and Michelle Montague (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 71–77.

8th week / 17th June: Epilogue (1955–1976)

Themes: More critiques of Oxford philosophy; the American reception of Oxford philosophy; the legacy of Oxford philosophy (1900–1960)

Recommended reading

J. L. Austin, ‘A Plea for Excuses’, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, New Series, 57 (1 January 1956): 1–30.

Graduate Classes

Graduate classes are, except where otherwise indicated, intended for the Faculty's BPhil and MSt students. Other students may attend, and are welcome, provided they first seek and obtain the permission of the class-giver(s).

With the more popular graduate classes, attendance by those outside of the BPhil and MSt can cause the teaching rooms to become overcrowded. In such circumstances, BPhil and MSt students, for whom these classes are intended, must take priority. Those not on the BPhil or MSt will be expected, if asked by the class-giver(s), to leave the class for the benefit of the intended audience.

Graduate students will need to check whether it is possible to count towards their attendance requirement any class of less than eight weeks' duration. Course handbooks or the Faculty's graduate office should be consulted for guidance.

Aristotle on Intellect and Virtue

Prof Terence Irwin, Prof Dhananjay Jagannathan (*Columbia*), Prof Karen Nielsen – T. 2 – 4, Somerville College (*weeks 1 to 3: Maitland 19, weeks 4 to 8: Park 5*)

This class is open to all Oxford students who are reading for a degree that includes Philosophy. Anyone else who would like to come should seek the permission of the instructors.

We will discuss Aristotle's conception of *phronêsis*, variously translated by 'wisdom', 'insight', 'practical wisdom', 'intelligence', 'prudence'. In Aristotle's division between virtues of character and of intellect, *phronesis* is one of the intellectual virtues. But it differs from other intellectual virtues in so far as (1) we cannot acquire it without acquiring the virtues of character, and (2) virtue of character is not complete without *phronesis*.

What is this intellectual virtue, and how is it related to the virtues of character? According to Aristotle:-

1. Those who have *phronesis* deliberate well about what conduces to living well as a whole.
2. *Phronesis* requires not only grasp of universal truths, but also the correct perception of particular cases.
3. *Phronesis* is displayed in political life by politicians who understand what is best for the political community.

Can we form a coherent account of *phronesis* out of all these different remarks about it? Or does Aristotle use 'phronesis' to cover a number of distinct intellectual virtues?

Does *phronesis*, as Aristotle understands it, have any contribution to make to a reasonable account of the moral virtues? Aristotle is often praised for his view that virtue of character requires the training of emotions, pleasures, and pains. Has he anything equally useful to say about the intellectual component of virtue? Is he even right to suggest that virtues have an intellectual element of the sort that he attributes to them? Or should we conclude that in this respect his conception of virtue is excessively rationalistic?

Since Aristotle's conception of phronesis is part of his practical epistemology, we will discuss some relevant aspects of his epistemology in general, to see how far his views about phronesis fit his general views about knowledge (*epistêmê*), and how far they may require some modification of those general views.

We will be primarily concerned with the philosophical strengths or weaknesses of Aristotle's account. But we will also try to understand the relation between the different texts in which he sets out the account. Our main text will be *Nicomachean Ethics* Book VI, which is also *Eudemian Ethics* Book V. Its topics are treated more briefly in *Magna Moralia* I 34, and in parts of II 1-3. We will discuss the relation of *EN* VI to the rest of the *EN* and *EE*, and the relation between these two treatises and the *MM*.

We will more or less follow the order of *EN* VI. Here is a provisional list of some of the questions that we hope to cover during the term:

- (TI) The story so far: the virtues of character (*EN* ii: *EE* ii 1-5).
- (KN) Practical truth. *EN* vi 1-2.
- (DJ) The place of experience (*empeiria*) in the epistemology of the *EN* (vi 7-8, 11; x.9, *Metaphysics* i.1).
- (KN) Good deliberation (*EN* vi 9) and its relation to phronesis.
- (KN) Practical intellect (*nous*: *EN* vi 2, 11) and the basic principles of phronesis.
- (TI) The relation between phronesis and virtue of character.
- (DJ) The accounts of goodness in *EE* VIII and the *EN*.

19th century British metaphysics

Prof William Mander – T. 9 – 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This class aims to introduce students to the main outlines of metaphysics in Nineteenth Century British Philosophy, by examining the development of and responses to the concept of the *unknowable* or *unconditioned*. We will consider the systems of Sir William Hamilton, Henry Mansel, Herbert Spencer, J.S.Mill, William Kingdon Clifford, G.H.Lewes, J.F.Ferrier and F.H.Bradley. For each meeting students will be expected to have read an indicated portion of the primary text, together with one chapter of the m/s of my book on this subject, *The Unknowable*, due to be published by OUP next year. Links to both may be found on WebLearn.

Nietzsche

Prof Peter Kail and Prof Alexander Prescott-Couch – Th. 4 – 6, St Peter's College
(Latner Room *except week 2: Theberge Room*)

This seminar will provide an overview of Friedrich Nietzsche's later thought, particularly his views on science and morality. Topics will include Nietzsche's views of naturalism, scientific explanation, truth, psychology, freedom and self-creation, morality, and genealogy as a method. We will also have a session considering Nietzsche's style and his relation to contemporary analytic philosophy.

Existential Phenomenology: Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*

Prof Joseph Schear and Prof Mark Wrathall – W. 11 – 1, Corpus Christi College
(Rainolds Room)

In this course we will read closely select sections of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's 1945 classic work, *Phenomenology of Perception* (PoP). This book, though strikingly original, was self-consciously written in the wake of seminal writings of Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre. Accordingly, we will read some of the relevant work of Heidegger and Sartre alongside sections of PoP. Topics will include existential phenomenology as a distinctive form of philosophical investigation, others, the cogito, temporality, and freedom. We will not presuppose background knowledge of Merleau-Ponty's book or any other writings. However, we do ask participants to read the fifteen page Preface before the first meeting. Graduate students in philosophy have priority but anyone is in principle welcome to take part. We will be using the 2012 translation of PoP by Donald Landes published by Routledge.

Indian Philosophy

Dr Jessica Frazier and Prof Jan Westerhoff – M. 2 – 3.30, Faculty of Theology and Religion (Seminar Room 1)

Though aimed primarily at Philosophy students, this class is also open to graduate students from the Faculties of Theology and Religion, Oriental Studies, and Classics.

The first four weeks (taught by Jan Westerhoff) cover the following topics:

1. Is language eternal? The Mīmāṃsā theory of an objective word-referent relation.
2. Do persons exist? The ancient Indian controversy about the existence of an ātman.
3. Is there a nature of the world? Madhyamaka's radical anti-foundationalism.
4. Does matter exist? The Yogācāra denial of the external world.

The final four weeks (taught by Dr Jessica Frazier) will deal with:

5. What is consciousness? Mind, reason, and phenomenology in Vedānta and Sāṃkhya
6. What is identity or essence? Attributes, Modes, and Meaning in Parināma-vāda
7. Is there a 'Fundamental Ontology'? Being and change in Vedānta
8. What is value? Natural Law and Affective Judgement in Dharma and Nāṭya Śāstra

Please note that, if you sign up to the graduate class, you should be ready to attend all sessions and do the required reading to actively participate in the sessions. You cannot expect to drop in and out of classes in line with your (research) interests, as you are taking up a space that could otherwise have gone to another student.

If you would like to attend these classes please get in touch with Jan Westerhoff directly at jan.westerhoff@lmh.ox.ac.uk by Friday, 19th April 2019. Readings for the first class will be circulated as soon as possible after this date.

Political Philosophy

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

This class is restricted to BPhil students only: no exceptions will be made. If the number of students wishing to attend exceeds 30, priority will be given to first year BPhil students. It would be helpful to have a sense of numbers at this stage. To this end, BPhil students who would like to attend the class should fill this doodle poll (<https://doodle.com/poll/6kuzupxp5m9wp2zf>) It lists only Tuesday week 1 – which we will take as standing for the whole series.

A syllabus for this course is now available online at <https://oxfordpoliticalphilosophy.weebly.com/b-phil-trinity-term-2019.html>.

Feminist Philosophy

Prof Rachel Fraser – W. 9 – 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

The aim of this course is to introduce students to a range of work in feminist theory. There will be three to four readings each week, not all of which will be particularly accessible to students whose primary background is in analytic philosophy. Not all of the reading will be written in an obviously academic idiom – part of learning to do feminist philosophy well is learning to appreciate and excavate the philosophical contents of texts whose philosophic content is submerged or obscure. We will focus on the following topics: power, oppression and domination, choice, and the connection between feminist theory and feminist practice.

Reading for the first week will be:

--Martha Nussbaum, *Feminists and Philosophy*, New York Review of Books, 1994.

-- Michelle Le Doueff, *Hipparchia's Choice*. First Notebook.

-- bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Centre*, chs 1 and 2.

A full syllabus will be available at <https://www.rachelelizabethfraser.com/teaching.html>.

Topics in Global Priorities

Prof Will MacAskill and Dr Christian Tarsney – T. 3 – 5. *Weeks 1 to 4*: Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room); *weeks 5 to 8*: Manor Road Building

Suppose we want to know how we can do the most good with a given unit of resources (e.g., because we accept the dictum of effective altruism that we *should be trying* to do the most good with at least a substantial fraction of our resources). The first question to ask, plausibly, is what *causes* we should direct our resources towards: what problems we should be try to solve, or what opportunities we should try to exploit, in order to do the most good per unit of resource. Global priorities research aims to answer this question. It compares the case for investing in various high-value causes (like global public health, animal welfare, mitigating existential risks, or improving institutional decision-making) and broad categories of causes (like “short-term” vs. “long-term” causes) using tools from philosophy, economics, and an open-ended range of other traditional academic disciplines.

This seminar will explore some of the central questions of global priorities research, with a central focus on the “longtermist paradigm” – very roughly, the view in most situations, if our aim is to do the most good, we should focus primarily on the effects of our present choices on the very distant future (thousands, millions, or billions of years from the present). We will first consider the case for longtermism, then consider a number of worries and objections, and finally consider its practical implications (e.g., whether we should focus on minimizing existential risks, minimizing the risk of outcomes worse than extinction, bringing about long-lasting “trajectory changes”, etc).

Readings for Week 1 are Bostrom, “Astronomical Waste” and Greaves & MacAskill, “The Case for Longtermism”. (The latter will be made available through the course WebLearn site a week in advance of the first meeting.) Students looking for extra reading can consult Beckstead, *On the Overwhelming Importance of Shaping the Far Future* (available online), particularly Chapters 1 and 3.

Absolute Generality

Prof James Studd – M. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

Almost no systematic theorizing is generality-free. Scientists test general hypotheses; set theorists prove theorems about every set; metaphysicians espouse theses about all things regardless of their kind. But how general can we be? Do we ever succeed in theorizing about ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING in some interestingly final, all-caps-worthy sense of ‘absolutely everything’?

Not according to generality relativism. In its most promising form, this kind of relativism maintains that what ‘everything’ and other quantifiers encompass is always open to expansion: no matter how broadly we may generalize, a more inclusive ‘everything’ is always available.

The importance of the issue comes out, in part, in relation to the foundations of mathematics. Generality relativism opens the way to avoid Russell’s paradox without imposing ad hoc limitations on which pluralities of items may be encoded as a set. On the other hand, generality relativism faces numerous challenges from generality absolutists: What are we to make of seemingly absolutely general theories? What prevents our achieving absolute generality simply by using ‘everything’ unrestrictedly? How are we to characterize relativism without making use of exactly the kind of generality this view foreswears?

The absolute generality debate bears on a wide-range of issues in logic, metaphysics, the philosophy of mathematics, and the philosophy of language. Over the course of term, we’ll engage with the following topics:

- semantics for determiners and quantifiers
- model-theoretic semantics for non-set-sized domains
- the semantics/pragmatics of quantifier domain restriction
- the metasemantics of quantifiers
- plural logic
- the set-theoretic paradoxes
- the foundations of Zermelo–Fraenkel set theory
- indefinite extensibility
- potentialism and actualism about the set-theoretic hierarchy

This is a somewhat technical subject; but the class won’t presuppose that you’re already familiar with the formal apparatus (beyond standard first-order logic).

The course will be loosely structured around a monograph I wrote on this topic, with compulsory (= *'ed) and optional readings drawn from a wide-spectrum of views across the debate.

Reading for week 1.

Williamson, T., 2003, Everything, *Philosophical Perspectives* 17, 415–465, Sections I–IV.

*Studd, J. P., 2019, Everything, *More or Less* (OUP), Chapter 1.

The readings for weeks 2–8 will be posted on the class webpage: jamesstudd.net/AG

Epistemic Dependence

Prof Ursula Coope and Prof Alison Hills – W. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

We depend on others for much of what we know. How is it possible to get knowledge from others? Is knowledge transmissible by testimony in a way that understanding is not? Does our epistemic dependence on others threaten something important (epistemic autonomy)? How can we evaluate claims to expertise in a certain area without ourselves being experts in that area?

These questions will be the focus of our seminar. They are questions that have generated much discussion in recent philosophy. In attempting to answer them, we shall look at these recent discussions, and also at the way in which some of these questions were taken up in ancient philosophy (especially by Plato, but also by Cicero and certain Neoplatonist commentators).

Philosophy of Mathematics

Prof Joel David Hamkins and Prof Timothy Williamson – T. 2 – 4, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

The classes led by Professor Hamkins will discuss the philosophy of set theory, including set theory as a foundation of mathematics, determinateness in set theory; the status of the continuum hypothesis; and set-theoretic pluralism. Those led by Professor Williamson will discuss issues concerning the ontology of mathematics and what is involved in its application. Discussion will be based on the following readings:

Week 1 (30 April) Williamson: Robert Brandom, 'The significance of complex numbers for Frege's philosophy of mathematics', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (1996): 293-315
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/4545241.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A706993a253eb2163510eb4ab6ff49530>

Week 2 (7 May) Hamkins: Penelope Maddy, *Defending the Axioms: On the Philosophical Foundations of Set Theory*, OUP (2011), 150 pp.

Week 3 (14 May) Hamkins: Donald Martin, 'Multiple universes of sets and indeterminate truth values', *Topoi* (2001): 5-16.
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023%2FA%3A1010600724850>

Week 4 (21 May) Hamkins: Chris Freiling, 'Axioms of symmetry: throwing darts at the real number line', *Journal of Symbolic Logic* (1986)
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2273955.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Abdade53ae34da15f957324c66b2e0307>

Solomon Feferman, 'The Continuum Hypothesis is neither a definite mathematical problem nor a definite logical problem',
https://math.stanford.edu/~feferman/papers/CH_is_Indefinite.pdf

Week 5 (28 May) Hamkins: his 'The set-theoretic multiverse', *Review of Symbolic Logic* (2012): 416-449.

Penelope Maddy, 'Set-theoretic foundations', *Contemporary Mathematics* (2017).
<http://philsci-archive.pitt.edu/13027/1/MaddyFoundations.pdf>

Week 6 (4 June) Williamson: Cian Dorr, 'Of numbers and electrons', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (2010): 133-181.
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/j.1467-9264.2010.00282.x>

Week 7 (11 June) Williamson: Otávio Bueno and Mark Colyvan, 'An inferential conception of the application of mathematics', *Noûs* (2011): 345-374.
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/j.1468-0068.2010.00772.x>

Week 8 (18 June) Williamson: 'Alternative logics and applied mathematics', *Philosophical Issues* (2018): 399-424. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/phils.12131>

Copredication

Prof Ofra Magidor – F. 11 – 1 (*weeks 2 to 7*), Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

Copredication is the phenomenon exhibited by sentences such as (1)-(3):

- (1) Lunch was delicious but lasted hours.
- (2) Three heavy books are informative.
- (3) The bank was vandalized after calling in Bob's debt.

The puzzle about copredication is that (1)-(3) ascribe two properties that, at least on the face of it, can't be jointly instantiated, e.g. being delicious (a property of food items) and lasting hours (a property of events); being heavy (a property of physical objects) and being informative (a property of informational entities); being vandalised (a property of physical buildings) and calling in debts (a property of institutions). Nevertheless, it is easy to conceive

of contexts where each of (1)-(3) seem to be true.

In this class we will explore a range of theories concerning co-predication. We will also look at some of the implications of this debate to other topics such as the semantics of generics and the ontology of art.

Meaning and Truth

Prof Ian Rumfitt – Th. 2 – 4, All Souls College (Hovenden Room)

This seminar will explore truth, meaning, and the relationship between them. The topics and suggested reading for each session are as follows:

Week One (2 May): Ramsey's two theories of truth

Reading: F.P. Ramsey, 'Facts and Propositions', in Ramsey, ed. D. Mellor, **Philosophical Papers** (CUP, 1990), pp.34-51;

F.P. Ramsey, ed. N. Rescher, **On Truth** (Kluwer, 1990), Chapter 1, pp.6-24

Week Two (9 May): Strawson's mature account of truth

Reading: P.F. Strawson, 'Meaning and Truth' in Strawson, **Logico-Linguistic Papers** (Methuen, 1971), pp.170-89

Week Three (16 May): Kripke's theory of truth

Reading: S.A. Kripke, 'Outline of a Theory of Truth' in R.L. Martin, ed., **Recent Essays on Truth and the Liar Paradox** (OUP, 1984), pp.53-81

Week Four (23 May): Axiomatic theories of truth

Reading: V. Halbach and L. Horsten, 'Axiomatizing Kripke's Theory of Truth', *JSL* 71 (2006): 677-712

Week Five (30 May): Pragmatist theories of meaning

Reading: D.H. Mellor, 'Successful Semantics', in his **Mind, Meaning, and Reality** (OUP, 2012), pp.60-77

Week Six (6 June): Davidson's final account of truth

Reading: D. Davidson, **Truth and Predication** (Harvard UP, 2005), Introduction and Chapter 1, pp.1-28

Week Seven (13 June): Davidson's final account of the relation between truth and meaning

Reading: D. Davidson, **Truth and Predication** (Harvard UP, 2005), Chapters 2 and 3, pp.29-75

Week Eight (20 June): The correct account of the relationship between truth and meaning

Reading: To follow

Philosophy of Action

Prof John Gibbons – T. 11 – 1 , Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

Background reading: Anscombe, *Intention*; Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events*, chs. 1-5; Mele (ed.) *Philosophy of Action*; Bratman, *Intention, Plans and Practical Reason*.

Week 1: Acting for Reasons. How are reasons, explanations and justifications related to each other? When we explain an intentional act by identifying the agent's motive or the intention with which the act was done, do we explain it causally, teleologically, or both?

Reading: Davidson, 'Actions, Reasons, and Causes', and 'Agency' in *Essays on Actions and Events*.

Week 2: Trying and Willing. Is trying a mental act, a physical exertion, or what? What can and can't we try to do? Is every intentional act a successful attempt? Is trying to do something an act of will?

Reading: Hornsby, *Actions*, ch.3; Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, ch. 3.

Week 3: The Individuation of Action. If you turn on a light by flipping a switch, is your turning on the light the same action as your flipping the switch? If not, how are they related?

Reading: A. Goldman, 'The Individuation of Action' *JP* (1971); J.J. Thomson, 'The time of a killing', *JP* (1971); J. Bennett, 'Shooting, Killing, and Dying', *Canadian JP* (1973).

Week 4: Deviance. Is the problem of deviant causal chains a decisive objection to Davidson's theory of intentional action? Can the problem be solved?

Reading: A. Mele, *The Springs of Action* ch. 11; G. Harman, 'Practical Reasoning', *The Review of Metaphysics* (1976).

Week 5: Intending and Intentional Action. What is the relation between intending to do something and doing it intentionally? Can you do something intentionally without intending to do it?

Reading: M. Bratman, 'Two Faces of Intention' *Phil Review* (1984); H. McCann, 'Settled Objectives and Rational Constraints', *APQ* (1991).

Week 6: Desire. What is the relation between having a reason to do something, being motivated to do it, and wanting to do it? Do we want to do everything we do intentionally?

Reading: M. Smith, 'The Humean Theory of Motivation' *Mind* (1987); T. Nagel, *The Possibility of Altruism* Part II.

Week 7: *Weakness of Will*. Can I do of my own free will something that I clearly perceive at the time it would be better not to do?

Reading: Davidson, 'How is Weakness of the Will Possible?', in *Essays on Actions and Events*; P. Petit and M. Smith, 'Practical Unreason', *Mind* (1993).

Week 8: *The Guise of the Good*. Does desire, or intention, or intentional action always aim at the good? Is the 'guise of the good' thesis psychological, conceptual or metaphysical?

Reading: Anscombe, *Intention*, §§37-40; M. Stocker, 'Desiring the Bad', *Journal of Philosophy* 76 (1979).

Identity and Indiscernibility

Prof Gonzalo Rodriguez-Pereyra – M. 4 – 6, Oriel College (Robert Beddard Room)¹

In this class we will discuss the question whether there is a non-qualitative element to identity. Therefore, the identity of indiscernibles will be a central topic of discussion. Students should read the paper by Adams for the first week. The papers that will help to centre the discussion each week are as follows:

Week 1. R. M. Adams. Primitive thisness and primitive identity. *Journal of Philosophy*, 1979.

Week 2. G. Rodriguez-Pereyra. The argument from almost indiscernibles. *Philosophical Studies*, 2017.

Week 3. M. Della Rocca. Two spheres, twenty spheres, and the identity of indiscernibles. *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, 2005.

Week 4. G Rodriguez-Pereyra. How not to trivialize the identity of indiscernibles. In *Universals, Concepts and Qualities*, ed. by P. F. Strawson and A. Chakrabarti, Ashgate/Routledge 2006/2016

Week 5. S. Saunders. Physics and Leibniz's Principles. In *Symmetries in Physics*, ed. by K. Brading and E. Castellani, CUP, 2003.

Week 6. S. Dasgupta. Individuals: an essay in revisionary metaphysics. *Philosophical Studies*, 2009.

Week 7. TBA.

Week 8. TBA.

¹ The Robert Beddard Room is on Oriel's third quad: ask for the door code at the lodge. The code changes on a daily basis, and you will need to ask at the lodge before each class.

New work in the philosophy of language

Dr Matt Mandelkern – W. 1.30 – 4.30, All Souls College

This will be a forum for speakers from the greater Oxford area to present new work in philosophy of language and semantics. Each week we will start with an hour introductory session, taught by me, from **1:30-2:30**. Then the speaker will join for presentation/discussion until **4:15** or so. Attendees are welcome to join at 1:30 or at 2:30, as they like. Speaker schedule, abstracts, and background readings will be posted at <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~sfop0776/nwpl.html>.

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. Please consult the term's lecture list for more details.