

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



PHILOSOPHY LECTURE PROSPECTUS

HILARY TERM 2025

NOTES:

- 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.
- By convention, in-person lectures at Oxford begin at 5 minutes past the hour and end at 5 minutes before the hour.
- Unless otherwise specified, the lectures and classes are given for all of weeks 1 to 8.
- Teaching is now taking place in person. You should not expect recordings to be made available on a general basis.
- 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: Moral Philosophy, and General Philosophy

Mathematics and Philosophy, Physics and Philosophy, Computer Science and Philosophy: Elements of Deductive Logic, and General Philosophy

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

Philosophical Topics in Logic and Probability

Prof Adam Caulton – W. 12, Maths Institute (room L1)

These lectures are intended for first-year students in Computer Science and Philosophy, Mathematics and Philosophy, and Physics and Philosophy, sitting the paper of the same name. The paper is split into three sections: (A) deductive logic; (B) further deductive logic; and (C) probability. Section A was covered by lectures in Michaelmas Term. Section B will be covered in this series in lectures 1-4; section C will be covered in lectures 5-8.

Below are the proposed topics for the lectures, in the anticipated order. The lectures are accompanied by a course book, which will soon be made available to students.

Section B

Lecture 1: useful tools

Lecture 2: soundness and completeness of Halbach's L_1 and L_*

Lecture 3: compactness, Löwenheim-Skolem theorems, and Skolem's 'paradox'

Lecture 4: Putnam's model-theoretic argument

Section C

Lecture 5: the mathematical theory of probability

Lecture 6: credence and decisions

Lecture 7: chance and frequentist inference

Lecture 8: confirmational probability and Bayesian inference

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 to some extent. It is therefore in your interest if you are a finalist to attend as many relevant core lectures as your schedule permits.

Students should also refer to the section *Other Lectures*, following. Lectures listed there are not official core lectures, but sometimes cover topics of relevance to the Finals papers.

101 Early Modern Philosophy: Locke

Prof Paul Lodge – T. 10 (*weeks 1 to 6*), Examination Schools (Room 6)

These lectures will provide an introduction to some of the core topics from John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* suitable for students taking the paper in Early Modern Philosophy (paper 101).

Week 1. Locke's project in the *Essay*

Week 2. Locke's attack on innate knowledge

Week 3. Locke's theory of ideas

Week 4. Locke on primary and secondary qualities

Week 5. Locke on substance and essence

Week 6. Locke on personal identity

102 Knowledge and Reality: Epistemology

Dr Stephen Wright – W. 10, Examination Schools (South School)

This lecture series will introduce students to some of the main themes in the theory of knowledge. Topics to be covered will include scepticism, the definition of knowledge, fallibilism vs. infallibilism, internalism vs. externalism, epistemological disjunctivism, and the epistemology of testimony.

While the course will address some themes that will be familiar to students that have studied General Philosophy paper, no previous background in epistemology will be assumed. Additionally, while the lectures will discuss material from previous Knowledge & Reality exams, they are not conceived as revision sessions.

102 Knowledge and Reality: Metaphysics

Prof Gonzalo Rodriguez-Pereyra – Th. 4 – 5.30 (*weeks 3 to 8*), Oriel College (Harris Lecture Theatre)

Please see the Canvas page.

103 Ethics

Prof Andreas Mogensen – T. 10, Examination Schools (South School)

These lectures will cover topics in normative ethics. We'll begin by examining consequentialist theories of right action and their potential shortcomings. We'll then look in depth at a number of issues that can help inform our sense of what the correct theory of right action should ideally accommodate. Building on that foundation, we'll consider three key non-consequentialist theories of right action, in the form of Kantianism, contractualism, and virtue ethics, assessing whether they can provide an overall more plausible account of how we ought to live.

Week 1: Consequentialism(s)

Week 2: Doing and Allowing Harm

Week 3: Intending and Foreseeing Harm

Week 4: The Demandingness of Morality

Week 5: The Value of Equality

Week 6: Kant's Ethics

Week 7: Contractualism

Week 8 : Virtue Ethics

104 Philosophy of Mind

Prof Matthew Parrott – M. 10 (*weeks 1, 2, 5*) and M. 10 – 11.30 (*weeks 4, 6, 7*), Examination Schools (Room 6 or 7 – check boards on entry)

These lectures will provide an introduction to several topics in the Philosophy of Mind. The topics that will be covered are:

1. The Mark of the Mental
2. Consciousness and Subjectivity
3. Bodily Sensation and Bodily Awareness
4. Self-Consciousness
5. Our Knowledge of Our Own Minds
6. Our Knowledge of Others' Minds

106b Philosophy of Social Science

Dr Adrian Kreutz – Th. 12, Examination Schools (Room 8)

Overview: Those lectures introduce the classical and contemporary debates in the philosophy of social science. The aim is to familiarise ourselves with the philosophical foundations and presumptions unique to social scientific research. After an introduction to the discipline, the following topics will be covered: Social Explanation, *Verstehen* and *Erklären*, Narrative and Genealogy, Social Values, Norms, and Laws, Social Constructs and Kinds, and Social Ideologies. The aim of this series of lectures is to arrive at a comprehensive *Wissenschaftstheorie* for the social world.

Required Reading:

- Cartwright, N., & Montuschi, E. (Eds.). (2014): *Philosophy of social science: A new introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Garfinkel, A. (1990): *Forms of explanation: Rethinking the questions in social theory*. Yale University Press.

Week 1: Introduction

- Alexander Rosenberg. *Philosophy of Social Science*. Routledge (Fifth Edition), 2016., chapter one.
- Peter Winch, *The Idea of a Social Science*. Routledge, 2007.

Week 2: Social Explanation

- Michael Strevens, "Scientific Explanation" (Macmillan Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2nd edition)
- Hempel and Oppenheim, "[Studies in the Logic of Explanation](#)"
- P. Pettit, "Functional Explanation and Virtual Selection," *BJHP* (1996)
- G. A. Cohen, "Functional Explanation, Consequence Explanation, and Marxism" *Inquiry* (1982)
- Lewis, D. "[Causal Explanation](#)"

Week 3: Verstehen and Erklären

- S. Grimm, "How Understanding People Differs from Understanding the Natural World," *Philosophical Issues*
- Stueber, Karsten. 2012. "Understanding Versus Explanation? How to Think about the Distinction between the Human and the Natural Sciences." *Inquiry* 55: 17-32.
- Feest, Uljana. 2010. "Historical Perspectives on Erklären and Verstehen: Introduction." In *Historical Perspectives on Erklären and Verstehen*. Ed. Uljana Feest. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Kareem Khalifa, "Is Verstehen Scientific Understanding?," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 2019
- Jane Roland Martin, "Another Look at the Doctrine of Verstehen" in *Readings in Philosophy of Social Science* (ed. Martin)

Week 4: Narrative and Genealogy

- D. Velleman, "Narrative Explanation," *The Philosophical Review* (2003)
- Amia Srinivasan, "The Archimedean Urge", *Philosophical Perspectives* (2015).
- Paul Raekstad, Janosch Prinz, "The Value of Genealogies for Political Philosophy", *Inquiry* (2024).
- J.W.N. Watkins, 1957. "Historical Explanation in the Social Sciences," *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 8: 104–117.
- **Bernard Harcourt, "On critical genealogy", *Contemporary Political Theory* (2024).**

Week 5: Value-Laden and Value-Free

- Weber, "Objectivity in Social Science and Social Policy"
- Helen Longino, *Science as Social Knowledge*
- Susan Haack "Epistemological Reflections of an old Feminist" *Reason Papers* 18 1993 (pg. 31-43)
- Joshua Cohen, "The Moral Arch of the Universe," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*
- Weber, "Objectivity in Social Science and Social Policy"
- James Leach (1968) "Explanation and Value Neutrality" *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* Vol. 19 no 2: 93-108.

Week 6: Norms and Laws

- Bicchieri, C. (2006): "The rules we live by". In *The Grammar of Society: The Nature and Dynamics of Social Norms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1–55.
- Brennan, G., Eriksson, L., Goodin, R.E., & Southwood, N. (2013). "Norms". In Erikson, L. (ed.) *Explaining Norms*. Oxford University Press.
- Roberts, J. T. (2004): "There are no laws of the social sciences". In Hitchcock, C. (ed.), *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Science*. Blackwell.
- Reiss, J. (2017): "Are there social scientific laws?". In McIntyre, L. & Rosenberg, A. (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Social Science*. Routledge.

Week 7: Social Constructs and Social Kinds

- Tollefson, "Social Ontology" in *Philosophy of Social Science: A New Introduction* (ed. Cartwright and Montuschi)
- Quinton, A. (1975-6). "Social Objects." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 76: 1-27.
- S. Haslanger, (2000). "Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them to Be?" *Noûs*
- K. Jenkins, "Amelioration and Inclusion: Gender Identity and the Concept of Woman," *Ethics*
- S. Bernstein, "The Metaphysics of Intersectionality," *Philosophical Studies*
- Ásta. (2013) "The Social Construction of Human Kinds," *Hypatia* 28, 716–732 (published under Ásta Sveinsdóttir).
- Boghossian, P. (2001) "What is Social Construction?" *Times Literary Supplement*.
- Schaffer, J. (2017) "Social Construction as Grounding; Or: Fundamentality for Feminists, a Reply to Barnes and Mikkola," *Philosophical Studies* 174, 2449–2465.

Week 8: Ideology and Critique

- K. Marx: *The German Ideology: Part I* (Tucker, pp. 146-200)
- K. Marx: Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (Tucker, pp. 3-6)
- M. Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory"
- Aytac, U., Rossi, E. (2023): "Ideology Critique Without Moralism". *American Political Science Review*, 117(4), 1215-1227.
- Haslanger, Sally (2017). "Culture and critique". In: *Aristotelian society supplementary volume*. Vol. 91. 1. Oxford University Press, pp. 149-173.

- Jaeggi, R. (2008). "Rethinking ideology." In B. de Bruin & C. F. Zurn (Eds.), *New waves in political philosophy* (pp. 63–86). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

107 Philosophy of Religion

Prof Mark Wynn – F. 10, Examination Schools (Room 1)

The lecturer may provide information on Canvas: please check there.

109 Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Criticism

Prof James Grant – W. 10, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures will cover core topics on the undergraduate paper in aesthetics. Anyone interested in aesthetics, whether an undergraduate philosophy student or not, is welcome to attend. The topics covered each week will be:

1. The Nature of the Aesthetic
2. The Epistemology of the Aesthetic
3. The Aesthetic and the Ethical
4. The Definition of Art
5. The Ontology of Art
6. Depiction
7. Interpretation
8. Expression

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).

112 The Philosophy of Kant

Prof Anil Gomes – W. 12 (*weeks 1 to 3*) and W. 12 – 1.30 (*weeks 6 to 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures will provide an introduction to some of the central ideas in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), one of the most important and influential thinkers in the western philosophical tradition. They are primarily intended for those taking the Philosophy of Kant paper (112), but anyone who is interested in the material is welcome to attend. The main focus will be Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781/ 1787), a work which aims to mark the boundaries to our knowledge and to explain the possibility of metaphysics, natural

science, and mathematics. We will cover, amongst other topics, the nature of Kant's critical project; space and time in the first Critique; the Transcendental Deduction; the rejection of transcendent metaphysics; transcendental idealism. Our primary aim will be to try and get an overall sense of Kant's work in theoretical philosophy, partly as a way of understanding why it has exerted such influence and why it continues to attract such fascination. Details of translations and other readings can be found on the Faculty Reading list.

113 Post-Kantian Philosophy: Nietzsche

Prof Peter Kail – F. 10, Examination Schools (Room 8)

These lectures provide a general introduction to Nietzsche's philosophy, with particular emphasis on his naturalistic critique of modern Western morality. After a brief overview of his life and works, we shall turn to his *On the Genealogy of Morality* (GM) and work through that text. GM will serve as a springboard for a discussion of topics that will bring in material from other works from Nietzsche's so-called middle and late works, including *Beyond Good and Evil*, and *Twilight of the Idols*. The topics discussed include naturalism, genealogy, 'Christian' morality, self, agency and freedom. In preparation for these lectures, students are encouraged to read GM.

113 Post-Kantian Philosophy: Heidegger

Dr Jack Wearing – F. 12, Examination Schools (Room 8)

This course of lectures will focus on Martin Heidegger's 1927 work *Being and Time*, covering themes from both Divisions. We will look at the Introductions to the text in Week 1, the 'existential analytic' of Dasein from Division One in Weeks 2-6, and the account of authenticity developed in the opening chapters of Division Two in Weeks 7-8. A provisional list of topics can be found below.

Students are encouraged to read the recommended sections of the text alongside the lectures. Please use the translation by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962).

Week 1: The Question of Being and the Phenomenological Method

Recommended reading: Introductions I and II

Week 2: Dasein and Being-in-the-world

Recommended reading: Division One, Chapters I-II

Week 3: Presence-at-hand, Readiness-to-hand, and Worldhood

Recommended reading: Division One, Chapter III, §§14-18; Chapter VI, §43

Further reading: Division One, Chapter III, §§19-21

Week 4: Authenticity I – Being-with and *das 'Man'*

Recommended reading: Division One, Chapter IV

Further reading: Division One, Chapter V, §§35-38

Week 5: Understanding, Language, and Truth

Recommended reading: Division One, Chapter V, §§28, 31-34; Chapter VI, §44

Week 6: Moods, Anxiety, and Care

Recommended reading: Division One, Chapter V, §§29-30; Chapter VI, §39-42; Division Two, §45

Week 7: Authenticity II – Being-towards-death

Recommended reading: Division Two, Chapter I

Week 8: Authenticity III – Guilt, Conscience, and Resoluteness

Recommended reading: Division Two, Chapter II

Further reading: Division Two, Chapter III

113 Post-Kantian Philosophy: Schopenhauer

Prof William Mander – F. 11, Examination Schools (Room 8)

Week 1 – Three arguments for idealism

Week 2 – Kant, and three objections to idealism

Week 3 – The argument for the world as will

Week 4 – Further exploration of the world as will

Week 5 – Pessimism and the platonic ideas

Week 6 – Aesthetic appreciation

Week 7 – Pessimism, death, and suicide

Week 8 – Character, free-will, ethics, and asceticism

115 / 130 Plato: *Republic*

Prof Dominic Scott – W. 11, Examination Schools (North School) and Th. 10, Examination Schools (South School)

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

In the first part of the course, I shall give an overview of the *Republic*:

1. Introduction to the *Republic*; questions about the value of justice (the challenges of Thrasymachus, Glaucon and Adeimantus)
2. The state-soul parallel and the evolution of the ideal state in books II–IV
3. The tripartite soul in book IV
4. Philosopher-rulers in books V–VI; introduction to the theory of forms
5. Sun, line, and cave (books VI–VII)
6. The analysis of injustice in books VIII–IX

In the remaining lectures, I shall pursue selected topics in more depth:

- A. The unity of the *Republic*, especially the relation of book I to the rest of the work
- B. Plato's politics, including his views on democracy and on the role of women in the state
- C. Education, especially the significance of the cave allegory and the importance of mathematics
- D. Moral psychology: further analysis of books VIII–IX and their relation to book IV
- E. Plato's analysis of the arts in books II–III and X

116 / 132 Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*

Dr Stefan Sienkiewicz – M. Th. 12, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures are primarily intended for undergraduates taking the *Nicomachean Ethics* paper in Greek or in translation, but other interested parties are welcome to attend. Topics covered will include Aristotle's account of the human good, the function argument, parts of the soul, habituation and the doctrine of the mean, voluntary and involuntary action, decision and deliberation, the ethical virtues, the intellectual virtues, *akrasia*, pleasure, friendship and the relationship between contemplation and *eudaimonia*.

120 Intermediate Philosophy of Physics: Special Relativity

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

This is a twelve-lecture course on the philosophical foundations of special relativity. Topics to be covered include (but may not be limited to):

1. The conceptual status of Newton's laws
2. Galilean covariance
3. The Michelson-Morley experiment and Lorentz's programme
4. Einstein's 1905 derivation of the Lorentz transformations
5. The distinction between principle and constructive theories

6. Spacetime structure: from Newton to Minkowski
7. Generally covariant formulations of physical theories
8. Relativity and conventionality of simultaneity
9. The twins paradox
10. Frame-dependent explanations and Bell's rockets
11. Presentism and relativity
12. Dynamical and geometrical approaches to relativity theory

121 Advanced Philosophy of Physics

Prof James Read – Th. 9 – 11 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

There will be four seminars, on the philosophy of spacetime and symmetries. Topics covered will be:

1. Introduction to the philosophy of symmetries
2. The hole argument of general relativity
3. The Aharonov-Bohm effect
4. The local validity of special relativity in general relativity

127 Philosophical Logic

Prof James Studd – M. 11 (*all weeks*) and T. 11 (*weeks 1 and 2*), Radcliffe Humanities
(Lecture Room)

These are the core lectures for students taking FHS Paper 127. But they may also be of interest to others who want to learn about the technical details and philosophical applications of extensions to (and deviations from) classical logic.

There will also be two additional lectures in weeks 1 and 2. These deal with the mathematical methods used in the course, and are primarily aimed at students who did not take the second logic paper, Elements of Deductive Logic, for Prelims.

The paper is studied in conjunction with a set textbook, Theodore Sider's *Logic for Philosophy* (Oxford University Press). I recommend that you read the indicated sections of the book before attending the lecture each week.

The schedule for the main series of lectures is as follows:

Week 1. Classical propositional logic, variations, and deviations

LfP 2.1–2.4 (2.5 non-examinable), 3.1–3.4 (3.5 non-examinable)

Review of syntax and classical semantics for PL; three-valued semantics; supervaluationism

Week 2. Modal propositional logic: semantics

LfP 6.1–6.3, 7.1–7.3 (7.4 non-examinable)

Syntax of MPL; Kripke semantics for K, D, T, B, S4 and S5. Deontic, epistemic and tense logic.

Week 3. Modal propositional logic: proof theory

LfP 2.6, 2.8, 6.4

Axiomatic proofs for PL. Axiomatic proofs for K, D, T, B, S4 and S5.

Week 4. Modal propositional logic: metatheory

LfP 2.7, 6.5 (Proofs in 2.9, 6.6 non-examinable)

Soundness and Completeness for MPL. (Proof of completeness is non-examinable).

Week 5. Classical predicate logic, extensions, and deviations.

LfP 4, 5

Review of the syntax and classical semantics of PC. Extensions of PC.

Week 6. Quantified modal logic: constant domains

LfP 9.1–9.5, 9.7

Semantics and proof theory for SQML.

Week 7. Quantified modal logic: variable domains, 2D semantics

LfP 9.6, 10

Kripke semantics for variable domain K, D, T, B, S4, and S5. Two-dimensional semantics for @, X and F.

Week 8. Counterfactuals.

LfP 8

Stalnaker's and Lewis's semantics for counterfactuals.

Lecture notes and problem sheets will be posted on the course page on Canvas.

128 Practical Ethics / 103 Applied Ethics

Dr Emma Curran – Th.10, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

In these lectures, we will continue our survey of issues within practical ethics. We will be focusing on the topics of *collective action*, *the non-identity problem*, *health and disability*, *self-defence*, *punishment*, and *death*. For those wishing to familiarise themselves with the topics covered, please consult the following indicative readings:

Collective Action. Derek Parfit's *Reasons and Persons*, (Oxford University Press, 1984: Chapter 3); Shelly Kagan's "Do I Make a Difference?" (*Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 2011).

Non-Identity Problem. Derek Parfit's *Reasons and Persons*, (Oxford University Press, 1984: Chapter 16); Caspar Hare's "Voices from Another World" (*Ethics*, 2007); Melinda Robert's "The Non-Identity Fallacy" (*Utilitas*, 2007).

Health and Disability. Elizabeth Barnes' "Valuing Disability, Causing Disability" (*Ethics*, 2014); Guy Kahane and Julian Savulescu's "Disability and Mere Difference" (*Ethics*, 2016).

Self-Defence. Helen Frowe's *The Ethics of War and Peace* (Routledge, 2011: Chapter 1); Michael Otsuka's "Killing the Innocent in Self-Defense" (*Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 1994).

Punishment. H.L.A. Hart's *Punishment and Responsibility* (Oxford University Press, 2008: Chapter 1); John Rawls' "Two Concepts of Rules" (*The Philosophical Review*, 1955).

Death. "Death" in Thomas Nagel's *Mortal Questions* (Cambridge University Press, 1979); Shelly Kagan's *Death* (Yale University Press, 2012: Chapter 10).

For general background reading in practical ethics, I recommend *The Oxford Handbook of Practical Ethics* (Oxford University Press, 2005) edited by Hugh LaFollette's and *A Companion to Ethics* (Wiley Blackwell, 1993) edited by Peter Singer.

129 The Philosophy of Wittgenstein

Prof Stephen Mulhall – T. 2, New College

These lectures will focus primarily on Wittgenstein's later philosophy, since it will be challenging enough to get a good basic grasp of this phase of Wittgenstein's thinking over eight weeks. No prior knowledge will be assumed; and close attention will be paid to both the content and the form of the primary textual expression of that later philosophy – *Philosophical Investigations* – so I would strongly recommend that you bring a copy of the 4th edition of the English translation of that text (by Anscombe, Hacker and Schulte) to the lectures every week. We will work through the text from the beginning, and get as far into it as time permits. Although more than one week will have to be spent on the opening sections, since getting the right initial orientation is of real importance, this should still give us time to cover such topics as ostensive definition, vagueness and family resemblance, philosophical method, understanding, rule-following and the private language remarks. Although the lectures are primarily intended for those taking the FHS option paper on 'The Philosophy of Wittgenstein', anyone with an interest in this thinker and his work is welcome to attend.

135 Latin Philosophy

Prof Simon Shogry – F. 12, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

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

Protagoras (for Second Classical Language in Greats)

Dr Stefan Sienkiewicz – T. 12 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures are primarily intended for undergraduates doing the second classical language paper for Greats, in which the *Protagoras* features as one of the set texts, but other interested parties are welcome to attend. Topics covered will include the Platonic dialogue form, the teachability of virtue, Protagoras' political theory and the unity of the virtues.

Supplementary Subject in the History and Philosophy of Science: Philosophy of Science

Dr Sophie Allen – M. 12, Examination Schools (Room 8)

This course introduces you to some general topics in the philosophy of science. What is science and can we distinguish science from other forms of enquiry? What are scientific theories about? Do scientists discover what there is in the world, or are scientific theories tools with which we predict and explain? Is there a scientific method, and what does it involve? How are scientific theories, models or hypotheses confirmed or rejected? What is the relationship between evidence and theory? Does science make progress? And if so, how does it progress? Is scientific enquiry free from social and cultural influences?

These lectures will not presuppose any prior study of philosophy. They support the options of *History and Philosophy of Science*, available in some Honour Schools in the natural sciences subjects, and the supplementary subject *Philosophy of Science* in the Honour School of Physics. Students considering taking these options are encouraged to come along.

Students should initially approach philosophy tutors in their own colleges in order to arrange tutorial teaching for this course (or ask their own subject tutors to do this for them), although there may also be the possibility of arranging some tutorial teaching at the lectures.

Interested students are referred to past papers on OXAM for some idea of what is covered (search on paper code, using the search term "S00004W1").

Other Lectures (suitable for all audiences)

Personal commitments and moral demands

Matt Bradley – F. 11 (*weeks 5 to 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

It is commonplace that each of us is personally committed to a great many things – to people, projects, values, roles that we play, ways of seeing ourselves – and that these things play a crucial role in structuring our lives. It is also commonplace that the demands of morality often seem to require that we set these personal commitments aside. A central problem in ethics concerns how we ought to adjudicate conflicts of this sort, when they arise. Which in turn involves settling what it means to be personally committed to something, and how moral demands present themselves to us in relation to our personal commitments. Some contemporary philosophers have taken considerations of this sort to be the basis of dramatic critiques of moral theories, or of ‘morality’ itself. Others think that they are a mark of self-indulgence, or squeamishness. This lecture series introduces and explores a number of philosophical responses to this problem, drawing out their implications for (a) conceptions of the self, and (b) our conception of morality and moral demands along the way.

This course of lectures is primarily targeted at students taking the two Ethics papers (103, 128), and it weaves in and out of material covered in those papers. But all are welcome, and it is hoped that students working across practical philosophy will encounter material relevant to their studies. Each lecture will be accompanied by a detailed handout and suggested reading list.

Lecture one – Moral demands

Lecture two – ‘Commitment’ and the self

Lecture three – Self-indulgence and squeamishness

Lecture four – Authenticity: a non-moral ideal?

The Metaphysics and the Ethics of Consciousness

Mattia Cecchinato and Elisabetta Sassarini – F. 11 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

Phenomenal consciousness encompasses experiences like seeing a red rose or having a feeling of warmth—experiences which are such that there is something it is like to have them. It is of special significance in a number of ways. On the one hand, consciousness is at the centre of debates on the metaphysics of mind. The orthodox physicalist picture of the world is said to be threatened by the apparent impossibility of explaining conscious states in physical terms. Consciousness, it is claimed, is somehow exceptional, and its explanation constitutes

a “hard problem” for both metaphysics and the mind sciences. On the other hand, consciousness also plays a central role in ethics. Our wellbeing at least partly depends on the quality of our conscious experiences. And our obligations to non-human animals are often motivated by concern for their conscious life.

This series of lectures will examine a range of key contemporary arguments for and against the special significance of consciousness, from metaphysics to ethics.

This series of lectures is designed for undergraduate-level students and is open to everyone; it requires no prior familiarity with the specific debates.

Week 1: Phenomenal consciousness and the “explanatory gap” between phenomenal states and brain states

Week 2: The metaphysical consequences of the explanatory gap

Week 3: The importance of consciousness for well-being and moral status

Week 4: The unimportance of consciousness for well-being and moral status

Practical Population Ethics

Jakob Lohmar and Rhys Southan – F. 10 (*weeks 5 to 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

Population ethics is the study of how one ought to act when one’s actions affect who (and how many people) will ever be born. This lecture series introduces key issues in population ethics and explores these in the context of different fields of practical ethics, including disability, human enhancement, animals, and the long-term future. This practical application is meant to deepen the understanding of the theory of population ethics, while at the same time providing an often neglected perspective on the discussed practical questions themselves.

Lecture i.) Theory of Population Ethics: The first lecture is a general introduction to (the theory of) population ethics. Several important views, such as the total view and person-affecting views, will be introduced, and it will be discussed how they respond to key challenges and intuitions. These include the Non-Identity Problem—according to which actions that affect the wellbeing of future people usually also affect their identities; the Asymmetry—according to which we have moral reason not to create people with bad lives but no moral reason to create people with good lives; and the Repugnant Conclusion—according to which a large population of people with great lives is worse than some much larger population of people with lives that are barely worth living.

Optional Readings:

Parfit, Derek. *Reasons and Persons*, Oxford University Press, 1984, Part Four (“Future Generations”), pp. 351–443.

Greaves, Hilary. “Population Axiology”, *Philosophy Compass*, 12(11), 2017, pp. 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12442>.

Lecture ii.) Disability, Human Enhancement, and Population Ethics: The first half of this lecture will cover major debates in the philosophy of disability and human enhancement. The main topics will include: Elizabeth Barnes’s “mere difference account”—the claim that disability is a mere difference and is not better or worse than not having a disability—and the primary challenges to it; whether it is morally permissible or even morally required to genetically enhance humans; and what role parental autonomy plays in decisions about having disabled or enhanced children. The second half of the lecture will connect the philosophy of disability and enhancement to issues in population ethics. The non-identity problem and Derek Parfit’s “no-difference view”—according to which it is morally irrelevant whether or not harms and benefits are a necessary aspect of someone’s identity—are of particular relevance.

Optional readings:

Mosquera, Julia, et al. “Why Inflicting Disability Is Wrong: The Mere-Difference View and the Causation-Based Objection.” *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Disability*, Oxford University Press, 2020, pp. 158–173, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190622879.013.16>.

Bostrom, Nick, Julian Savulescu. “Introduction: Human Enhancement Ethics: The State of the Debate.” *Human Enhancement*, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 1–21 <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780199299720.003.0001>.

Mosquera, Julia. “Disability and Population Ethics.” *The Oxford Handbook of Population Ethics*, Oxford University Press, 2022, pp. 588–614, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190907686.013.9>.

Lecture iii.) Animals and Population Ethics: The first part of this lecture will focus on the so-called “Logic of the Larder”: the argument that farming and eating animals is permissible, or morally required, whenever it involves creating animals with good lives who would not have existed otherwise. The primary objection to this argument is that even if some farmed animals have good lives, it is wrong to kill them. This debate raises population-ethical questions such as whether individuals can be benefitted or harmed by coming into existence, to what extent an individual’s premature death counts against bringing them into existence, and whether the benefits of existence can justify life’s harms.

The second main objection to the logic of the larder is that if it is good to bring happy farm animals into existence, it could be even better to increase populations of smaller “pest” animals such as mice or insects. This objection leads to the second part of the lecture, which is concerned with how animals factor into the “best” populations. This connects with the non-identity problem and arguments for and against the repugnant conclusion.

Optional readings:

McMahan, Jeff. "Eating Animals the Nice Way." *Daedalus*, vol. 137, no. 1, 2008, pp. 66–76, <https://doi.org/10.1162/daed.2008.137.1.66>.

Sebo, Jeff. "The Rebugnant Conclusion: Utilitarianism, Insects, Microbes, and AI Systems." *Ethics, Policy & Environment*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2023, pp. 249–264, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21550085.2023.2200724>.

Podgorski, Abelard. "The Diner's Defence: Producers, Consumers, and the Benefits of Existence." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 98, no. 1, 2020, pp. 64–77, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00048402.2018.1564777>.

Williamson, Patrick. "A New Argument Against Critical-Level Utilitarianism." *Utilitas*, vol. 33, no. 4, 2021, pp. 399–416, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0953820821000133>.

Kymlicka, Will, and Sue Donaldson. "Wild Animal Sovereignty." *Zoopolis*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 156–209, 2011.

Lecture iv.) The Long-Term Future: This lecture discusses the moral importance of the long-term future of humanity in light of population-ethical considerations. It asks whether a 'longtermist' view depends on total utilitarianism, and whether we have any reason to care about the long-term future of humanity on person-affecting views. A particular focus will be on the question whether the loss of good future lives contributes to the badness of human extinction, and whether there are other reasons to consider human extinction to be bad.

Optional Readings:

Mogensen, Andreas. "Moral Demands and the Far Future". *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 103.3, 2021, Section 2 ("The value of the future").

Steele, Katie. "Longtermism and Neutrality about More Lives", in Jacob Barrett, Hilary Greaves, and David Thorstad, eds., *Essays on Longtermism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming.

Frick, Johann. "On the survival of humanity." *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 47.2-3, 2017, pp. 344-367, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00455091.2017.1301764>.

Ord, Toby. *The Precipice: Existential Risk and the Future of Humanity*. London: Bloomsbury, 2020, Chapter 2 and Appendix B.

Greaves, Hilary, and William MacAskill. "The case for strong longtermism." *Global Priorities Institute Working Paper No. 5-2021*, 2021.

Topics in Political Philosophy

Prof David Enoch – W. 1 – 3 (*weeks 1 to 5, and 8*) and M. 1 – 3 (*week 2*) and Th. 1 – 3 (*week 8*), Faculty of Law (Seminar Room D)

I plan to discuss in detail the texts **in bold letters**. The others are mostly for background or further reading.

The reading material, as well as the handouts, will be available on Canvas.

Students who have no access – you may need me to add you to this course in order to gain access. To do this, please send me an email at David.Enoch@law.ox.ac.uk.

1. (Against) Public Reason

- **Jonathan Quong, “Public Reason”, *The Stanford encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/public-reason/>**
- **My “Against Public Reason”, *Oxford Studies in Political Epistemology* vol. 1 (2015), 112-142.**
- My “The Disorder of Public Reason”, *Ethics* 124, 1-41-176 (2013).
- Gaus, “On Dissing Public Reason: A Reply to Enoch”, *Ethics* 125, 1078-1095 (2015).

2. Public Reason and Epistemology

- **My “Political Philosophy and Epistemology: The Case of Public Reason”, *Oxford Studies in Political Philosophy* 3 (2017), 132-165.**
- Collis Tahzib (2022), Are Public Reason Liberalism’s Epistemological Commitments Indefensible?”, *The Philosophical Quarterly* 73, 602-624.
- Han van Wietmarschen, “Reasonable citizens and Epistemic Peers: A Skeptical Problem for Political Liberalism”, *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 26 (2018), 486-507.
- Paul Billingham (draft), “The Place of Epistemology in Public Reason”.

3. Ideal and Non-Ideal Theory

- **Laura Valentini, “Ideal vs. Non-Ideal Theory: A Conceptual Map”, *Philosophy Compass* 7/9 (2012), 654-664.**
- **My “Against Utopianism: Noncompliance and Multiple Agents”, <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/p/pod/dod-idx/against-utopianism-noncompliance-and-multiple-agents.pdf?c=phimp;idno=3521354.0018.016;format=pdf>**

4. Democratic Theory

- **Tom Christiano and Sameer Bajaj (2024), “Democracy”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/democracy/>, sections 1-2.**

- My (2009) "On Estlund's *Democratic Authority*", *Iyyun* 58, 35-48.
 - Estlund's reply: (2009), "Reply to Commentators", *Iyyun* 58, 73-78.
 - Niko Kolodny, "Rule Over None: Social Equality and the Value of Democracy":
 - o Part I, *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 42 (2014), 195-229.
 - o Part II, *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 42 (2014), 287-336.
5. Epistemic Democracy and Standpoint Epistemology
- **Heidi Grasswick (2018), "Feminist Social Epistemology", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminist-social-epistemology/> section 2.**
 - **Lidal Dror (2023), "Is There an Epistemic Advantage to Being Oppressed?", *Nous* 57, 618-640.**
 - Hélène Landemore (2012), *Democratic Reason: Politics, Collective Intelligence, and the Rule of the Many* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
6. Rethinking Freedom of Speech?
- **Jeffrey W. Howard (2024), "Freedom of Speech", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/freedom-speech/>**
 - Seana Shiffrin (2014), *Speech Matters: On Lying, Morality, and the Law* (Carl G. Hempel Lecture Series), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
 - Langton (1993), "Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts", *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 22, 293-380.
7. Contd.
8. "My" vision for the right kind of liberalism

Hopefully a draft of mine.

Graduate Classes

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

BPhil Pro-Seminar: Practical Philosophy (*restricted to 1st year BPhil students*)

Various class-givers and times

The Pro-seminar introduces students to study, practice, and standards in graduate-level philosophy. Every starting BPhil student will attend four sessions with one class-giver, then change group midway through term for four sessions with another class-giver. Seminars in Hilary Term will cover key material in practical philosophy. Class-givers will contact their groups, specifying readings and confirming the class time, in advance of term.

Themes in Aristotle's Ethics: Justice, Practical Wisdom, Weakness of Will, Pleasure

Prof Karen Margrethe Nielsen and Prof Terence Irwin – T. 2 – 4, Keble College (Seminar Room 1)

These topics are 'central' in two ways:

1. They are theoretically central in Aristotle's moral philosophy, in so far as they clarify some of his main claims about the virtues: (a) One type of justice is said to be 'complete virtue', because the other virtues would be incomplete if they did not include the concern for others that is characteristic of justice. (b) Practical wisdom (*phronêsis*) is both a primary virtue of intellect, and the intellectual virtue that is necessary for virtue of character. (c) Weakness of will (*akrasia*) and strength of will (*enkrateia*) are two intermediate conditions between virtuous and vicious character. (d) The right sort of pleasure is said to a necessary feature of virtue of character.

2. They are discussed in the middle books of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (V, VI, VII), which are also books of the *Eudemian Ethics* (IV, V, VI). Since they belong to both works, these three books are often called the 'Common Books'. Can we tell whether they fit better into one work or the other? Does it make any difference whether we read them as part of one work or the other?

Our primary aim is to discuss the philosophical questions that make these books theoretically central, to see what we can learn from them about the strengths or weaknesses of Aristotle's ethics. Our secondary aim is to try to decide where these books really belong. Success in the first aim is a precondition for success in the second aim; if we understand the philosophical point of these books in relation to the rest of the

Nicomachean and Eudemian Ethics, we can perhaps see where they belong in Aristotle's developing thought on ethics.

Our main texts, therefore, will be the *Nicomachean* and *Eudemian Ethics*. But we will also consider the third major ethical text in the Aristotelian Corpus, the *Magna Moralia*. The status of this work is disputed. Some believe it is a post-Aristotelian work. Others believe it is the first of Aristotle's three ethical works. In either case, it may contribute to our understanding of the other two ethical works; the nature of its contribution depends on its relation to them.

Here is a tentative syllabus:

1. Phronesis; the relation between character and intellect.

- (1) Aristotle distinguishes virtues of character from virtues of intellect. How is this division to be understood?
- (2) In *EN* vi 13 he argues that (i) every genuine virtue requires *phronêsis*, and that therefore (ii) every virtue of character is inseparable from all the others. Does he present a good case for either of these two claims, or for the connexion that he sees between them?
- (3) Aristotle sometimes says that virtue makes the end correct, and *phronesis* makes the means correct. What division of labour does he refer to here? Does it result in a coherent account of the virtues of character?

2. Thought and truth about action

- (1) Aristotle has often been thought to articulate a notion of 'practical truth' in *EN* vi 2. If Aristotle has a notion of practical truth, do practical and theoretical truth differ *in kind*? If so, how? If they don't differ in kind, but in what they are *about* (their respective domains), how should we understand Aristotle's remarks about truth and action in vi 2?
- (2) Excellent decision (*spoudaia prohairesis*) presupposes 'truth agreeing with correct desire'. What does this 'agreement' involve?
- (3) What does the deliberative part of the soul grasp when it grasps the truth about action?
- (4) What is good deliberation (*euboulia*)?

3. Craft vs. phronesis

- (1) Aristotle observes that *phronêsis* differs from craft knowledge in several ways. One difference concerns the capacity for misuse. While craft knowledge can be used well or badly, *phronêsis* cannot be misused. What is the significance of this difference?
- (2) Unlike *phronêsis*, cleverness (*deinotês*) can be used for good or bad ends. What does the distinction between cleverness and *phronêsis* reveal about *phronêsis* as a virtue?
- (3) Aristotle's rejection of a craft-conception of *phronêsis* responds to a puzzle articulated by Socrates in the *Hippias Minor*. Aristotle discusses the puzzle in *Metaphysics* 1025a1-14, *EN* vi 5 and *EE* viii 1. How, if at all, do these responses differ, and what do they reveal about the accounts of *phronêsis* in *EN* vi and *EE* viii?

4. Nous, particulars and universals

- (1) In the course of seeking the highest good that is achievable in action, Aristotle warns in *EN* i 3 and 7 that ethics is an inexact science. In what way(s) is ethics an inexact science, and

how is this point reflected in the analysis of *phronêsis* in *EN* vi?

(2) Aristotle explains that the *phronimos* must grasp both universals and particulars: 'Nor is *phronêsis* about universals only. It must also acquire knowledge of particulars since it is concerned with action and action is about particulars' (vi 7). What role does *nous* play in grasping universals and particulars in the practical sciences?

(3) What does Aristotle's answer tell us about the division of labour between virtue of character and virtue of intellect?

5. Justice.

(1) The virtue of character that Aristotle discusses at greatest length is justice. Why does it receive such prominent treatment? Is justice, as Aristotle conceives it, an important virtue?

(2) Aristotle distinguishes 'universal' (or 'general') from 'particular' justice. How should we understand this division?

(3) Aristotle takes universal justice to be identical to, or closely related to, virtue as a whole. What relation has he in mind? What do we learn from it about the nature of virtue of character?

(4) At some points *MM* differs quite sharply from *EN* V. How is this difference to be explained?

6. Weakness of will (incontinence, *akrasia*).

(1) Aristotle is confident that Socrates was wrong to say that we cannot choose the course of action that we know to be worse. He takes Socrates to deny the reality of incontinence, and he seeks an account that will show how incontinence is possible.

(2) Different readers disagree about whether Aristotle succeeds, and about how far he really disagrees with Socrates. Comparison of his different accounts of incontinence (in *MM* and in *EN* VII) may throw some light on the central questions, as Aristotle understands them.

(3) Aristotle says that both the incontinent and the continent person have a 'decent' (*epieikês*) 'election' (or 'decision'; *prohairesis*). Does it follow that they have exactly the same *prohairesis* (i) as each other, (ii) as the *phronimos*?

(4) Do Aristotle's attempts to describe incontinence by using a syllogistic structure illuminate or obfuscate the questions?

(5) He distinguishes the 'impetuous' (or 'rash') from the 'weak' incontinent. How are we to understand this distinction in the light of the description of how incontinence happens?

7. Pleasure

1. Since the importance of forming the right kinds of pleasures is emphasized in the account of virtues of character, it is reasonable that Aristotle discusses the nature and value of pleasure at length.

2. We have three accounts of pleasure. The discussion in *MM* is quite puzzling, and we need to think about what Aristotle is trying to do. Our text of *EN* contains a discussion both in Book VII and in Book X 1-4.

3. These two treatments suggest a plausible argument for the view that *EN* VII is really *EE* VI. Could Aristotle himself ever have intended these two treatments (with no cross-references) to be parts of a single work?

4. To answer this question, we need to ask (i) what the two accounts of pleasure (vii and x)

are meant to do, and (ii) whether they express the same view, conflicting views, or complementary views. *MM* may help us to answer (i).

5. It has sometimes been said that Aristotle, especially in *EN* vii, is a hedonist of some sort, or comes close to hedonism. Is this judgment defensible?

8. The Common Books and the three ethical works

1. Have we learned anything from study of the three Common Books that suggests they belong to one or the other of *EE* and *EN*?

2. *MM* is normally more similar to *EE* than to *EN*. In the parts that correspond to the Common Books, *MM* differs more from the Common Books than it usually differs from *EE*. Does this feature of *MM* tell us anything about the relation of the Common Books to *EE* and *EN*?

The Stoic System

Prof Marion Durand and Prof Simon Shogry – T. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

The Stoics divide philosophy into three parts: physics, logic, and ethics. Physics studies the principles and nature of the cosmos, god, causation, fate, bodies, qualities, and matter, among other ontological topics. Stoic logic comprises not only what we would today call formal logic – a theory of what makes an argument valid or invalid – but also epistemology: what justifies our perceptual and non-perceptual beliefs, and how do we employ the criteria of truth? Semantic theory also falls under Stoic logic, along with related questions in philosophy of language. Stoic ethics lays out an account of the human *telos* or goal – namely, happiness, which consists in ‘living in agreement with nature’ – and defends virtue as the sole human good; it also provides a particularist account of right action and a cognitivist analysis of the emotions.

The Stoics insist that the three parts of philosophy make up an integrated and coherent system of thought. To this end they offer a number of suggestive analogies: e.g. philosophy as a whole is compared to a farm, in which ethics is the crop, physics the soil, and logic the protective fence (*DL* 7.40). Such images raise a number of interesting questions:

- Are physics and logic subordinate to ethics, so that we are justified in undertaking physical and logical inquiries only insofar as they contribute to acting rightly?
- In what sense is knowledge of physics connected to knowledge of ethics? Can one act rightly and be happy without possessing knowledge of cosmic and human nature?
- Can we theorise in ethics without taking a stand on controversial issues in physics?
- Is there an ethical benefit to knowledge of formal logic?
- What way does the world have to be in order for criteria of truth to exist?

With these larger questions in mind, this seminar will explore the nature, scope, and depth of the interconnections of the parts of the Stoic system. We will begin with a survey of each

of the three canonical parts, following the order of study recommended by the Stoic founders, before exploring a selection of case studies, starting with the question of the relationship of Stoic physics and Stoic ethics: to what extent is Stoic physics indispensable, or foundational, for Stoic axiology (i.e. the claim that only virtue is good) and for the Stoic account of happiness? Further possible topics include: is knowledge of Logic necessary for happiness and, if so, why? To what extent and how do details in metaphysics bear on questions in the philosophy of language? Is Stoic metaphysical theory presupposed in their defence of the existence of criteria of truth? Does the Stoic critique of the passions make sense in a non-providential universe? In exploring these case studies, our aim is to better understand Stoic philosophy and illuminate the potentially surprising ways in which dialogue between apparently distinct areas of philosophy can be fruitful.

Weekly readings will be posted on Canvas. No previous knowledge of Greek, Latin, or ancient philosophy required. Student presentations are highly encouraged. We will be studying the Stoic sources using Long and Sedley's *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (CUP, 1987).

Provisional schedule:

Week 1 – introduction to Stoicism and its three parts. Text: Long and Sedley, chapter 26 ('The philosophical curriculum'). Recommended background readings:

- Sedley, D. "Stoicism" in the Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy (<https://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/thematic/stoicism/v-2>);
- Durand, M., Shogry, S. and Baltzly, D. "Stoicism" in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/stoicism/>);
- Barnes, J. *Logic and the Imperial Stoa*. Brill, 2007. (See Chapter One, 'The Decline of Logic'.)

Week 2 – introduction to Stoic logic and epistemology

Week 3 – introduction to Stoic physics and theology

Week 4 – introduction to Stoic ethics

Week 5 – does Stoic ethics make sense without Stoic physics?

Weeks 6-8 – exact topics TBD, depending on student interest

Universals

Prof Cecilia Trifogli – T. 2 – 4, 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.

Topics in the Philosophy of Time and Persistence

Prof Alex Kaiserman and Prof Ofra Magidor – Th. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

We will discuss a series of contemporary papers in the philosophy of time and persistence. While participants are not strictly required to do so, they are strongly encouraged to read the papers in advance and prepare one question (clarificatory or substantive) on each's week's reading. Students are welcome to e-mail us the questions in advance of each week's class to help shape the discussion, and those who have done so will be given priority in the class discussion.

Week 1: Deasy, D., 'What is presentism?', *Nous* 51 (2017): 378-397.

Week 2: Russell, J. 'Temporary safety hazards', *Nous* 51 (2017): 152-174.

Week 3: Glazier, M. 'Maybe some other time', *AJP* 101 (2023): 197-2012.

Week 4: Magidor, O., 'Endurantism vs. perdurantism?: a debate reconsidered', *Nous* 50 (2016): 509-532

Week 5: Builes, D. & Teitel, T., 'Lawful persistence', *Phil Perspectives* 36 (2022): 5-30.

Week 6: Dorr, C. & Hawthorne, J., 'Personites, Plenitude, and Intrinsicity',
<https://philpapers.org/archive/DORPPA-6.pdf>

Week 7: Fernandes, A., 'Freedom, self-prediction, and the possibility of time travel', *Phil Studies* 177 (2020): 89-108.

Week 8: Kaiserman, A., 'The Logic of past-alteration', *OSM* 13 (2023): 283-314.

Logic and the philosophy of logic

Prof Volker Halbach and Prof Timothy Williamson – M. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities
(Ryle Room)

For a list of the topics, readings, and up-to-date information please go to the web page:

<https://users.ox.ac.uk/~sfop0114/lehre/bphil25.html>

Knowledge of Meaning

Prof Ian Rumfitt – T. 9 – 11, All Souls College (Old Library)

The class is intended primarily for graduate students, though interested undergraduates are welcome.

No advanced preparation is required, although the handouts will include suggestions for reading.

The class will focus on a single thesis from Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*: 'To understand a declarative sentence is use means to know what is the case if it is true' (4.024). I will offer an elaboration and defence of this thesis, while explaining where previous attempts to develop truth-conditional theories of understanding go wrong. I will also consider how the thesis may be extended to cover some non-declarative sentences, specifically interrogatives.

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Week One (Tuesday 21 January) | The scope of the thesis: what is a declarative sentence? |
| Week Two (Tuesday 28 January) | The negation test for declaratives: are indicative conditionals declaratives? |
| Week Three (Tuesday 4 February) | Understanding a sentence type versus 'taking up' an utterance of one |
| Week Four (Tuesday 11 February) | Erroneous truth-conditional theories: D. Davidson and D. Lewis |
| Week Five (Tuesday 18 February) | A truth-conditional theory which solves Foster's Problem and Carston's Problem |
| Week Six (Tuesday 25 February) | Reasons for switching to a bilateral version of the Tractarian thesis |

Week Seven (Tuesday 4 March) Interrogative sentences and the speech act of asking questions

Week Eight (Tuesday 11 March) Logical possibilities and the semantics of interrogatives

Philosophy of Science

Dr Sophie Allen – M. 2 – 4, St Peter's College (Theberge Room)

In this BPhil seminar, we will discuss a variety of topics from the contemporary literature. The seminars are intended primarily for students doing the BPhil in Philosophy and the MSt in Philosophy of Physics, but all interested and engaged participants are welcome. Each week, the topic will be introduced with a short presentation given by one of the participants (with the convenor presenting for the first week).

Below are the proposed topics for the term in the anticipated order. Readings and topics might be adjusted to reflect the abilities and research interests of the class, but please do not skip seminars because you think that it will be on an area of science you know nothing about: specialisation is not required to come along and discuss philosophical problems. Updates will be posted to Canvas as we progress through term.

Those attending the class should be sure to have read the essential reading(s) for each session in advance as the aim is to take a critical approach to topics raised in the readings below. Some background reading and some further reading might also be suggested. These seminars will be held in person at St Peter's College but please make sure that the convenor has your email address in case we need to go online at short notice.

1. Reference over theory-change

Essential readings:

- Stein, H. 1989. Yes, but... Some skeptical remarks on realism and anti-realism. *Dialectica* 43: 47–65. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42970610>
- Myrvold, W. 2019. “—It would be possible to do a lengthy dialectical number on this;” Preprint (2019), available at: <http://philsci-archive.pitt.edu/16675/>

2. Varieties of reduction

Essential readings:

- Lewis, D. K., ‘How to define theoretical terms’, *Journal of Philosophy* 67 (1970), pp. 427–446. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2023861>
- Dizadji-Bahmani, F., Frigg, R. & Hartmann, S. 2010. Who’s afraid of Nagelian reduction?. *Erkenntnis* 73: 393–412. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10670-010-9239-x>

Background:

- Schaffner, K. F. 1967. Approaches to reduction. *Philosophy of science* 34: 137–147. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/186101>

3. Data vs. phenomena

Essential readings:

- Bogen, J. & Woodward, J. 1988. Saving the phenomena. *The Philosophical Review* 97: 303–352. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2185445>
- Glymour, B. 2000. Data and Phenomena: A Distinction Reconsidered. *Erkenntnis* 52: 29–37. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20012966>

4. Theoretical equivalence

Essential readings:

- Glymour, C. 1970. Theoretical realism and theoretical equivalence', *PSA: Proceedings of the biennial meeting of the philosophy of science association*. Vol. 1970. (D. Reidel Publishing, 1970). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/495769>
- Coffey, Kevin (2014). Theoretical Equivalence as Interpretative Equivalence. *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 65 (4): 821-844. <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1093/bjps/axt034>

Additional Reading

- Barrett, T. W. and Halvorson, H. 2016. Glymour and Quine on theoretical equivalence. *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 45(5): 467-483. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10992-015-9382-6>
- Teitel, Trevor. 2021. What Theoretical Equivalence Could Not Be. *Philosophical Studies* 178 (12): 4119-4149. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11098-021-01639-8>

5. Structural Realism

Essential Reading:

- Ainsworth, P M. 2010. What is Ontic Structural Realism? *Studies in History and Philosophy of Modern Physics* 41: 50–57. <https://doi-org.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/10.1016/j.shpsb.2009.11.001>
- Chakravartty, Anjan. 2004. Structuralism as a form of Scientific Realism. *International Studies in the Philosophy of Science* 18: 151-171. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0269859042000296503>

Background:

- Worrall, J. 1989. Structural Realism: The Best of Both Worlds? *Dialectica* 43: 99-124. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42970613>
- Ladyman, James and Don Ross (with John Collier and David Spurrett). 2007. *Every Thing Must Go*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Especially chapters 2 and 3. https://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/permalink/f/1lj314/TN_cdi_proquest_ebookcentral_EBC693945

6. Natural Kinds, Interactive Kinds and Property Clusters

Essential reading:

- Boyd, R. 1991. Realism, anti-foundationalism, and the enthusiasm for natural kinds. *Philosophical Studies* 61: 127–148. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4320174>
- Khalidi, M. A. 2010. Interactive kinds. *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 61: 335–60. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40664352>

7. Evolution

Essential reading:

- Lewens, Tim. The Extended Evolutionary Synthesis: what is the debate about, and what might success for the extenders look like?, *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society*, Volume 127, Issue 4, August 2019, Pages 707–721, <https://doi.org/10.1093/biolinnean/blz064>

8. Nancy Cartwright: Fundamentalism vs the Patchwork of Laws

Essential reading:

- Cartwright, Nancy 1999. Fundamentalism vs the Patchwork of Laws, which is chapter 1 in: *The Dappled World: A Study of the Boundaries of Science*. Cambridge University Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4545199>

Additional Reading:

- Strevens, Michael. 2017. Dappled Science in a Unified World. In *Philosophy of Science in Practice*. Springer Verlag. (PDF available at: <http://www.strevens.org/research/lawmech/dappelation.shtml>)
- McArthur, Dan. 2006. Contra Cartwright: Structural Realism, Ontological Pluralism and Fundamentalism About Laws. *Synthese* 151 (2): 233-255.

- Hofer, Carl. 2003. For fundamentalism. *Philosophy of Science* 70 (5):1401–1412.

Social Epistemology

Dr Adrian Kreutz – W. 2 – 4, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

- Overview:** Those seminars explore that happens when social and political matters intersect with the epistemic domain. We will commence with some classic texts on ‘values and objectivity’. We then transition to the contemporary literature on doxastic wrongs, pragmatic encroachment, and epistemic advantage before eventually exploring the politics of social epistemology itself.
- Week 1:** Peter Railton: Marx and the Objectivity of Science, 1984.

Rebecca Kukla: Objectivity and Perspective in Empirical Knowledge, *Episteme* 3, 2006, 80-95.
- Week 2:** Helen E. Longino: *Science as Social Knowledge: Values and Objectivity in Scientific Inquiry*, Princeton University Press, 1990, chapters four, five, and ten.
- Week 3:** Jason Stanley: *Knowledge and Practical Interests*, Oxford University Press, pp. 1-15. Stephen Grimm: On Intellectualism in Epistemology, *Mind* 120, 2011, pp. 705-733
- Week 4:** Robin McKenna: Pragmatic Encroachment and Feminist Epistemology, in *Social Epistemology and Epistemic Relativism*, 2020.

Jacob Ross and Mark Schroeder: Belief, Credence, and Pragmatic Encroachment, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 88, 2014, pp. 159-288.
- Week 5:** Sophia Dandelet: Doxastic Wronging and Evidentialism, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 1, 2021, pp. 82-95.

David Enoch and Levi Spectre: There is no such thing as doxastic wronging, *Philosophical Perspective*, forthcoming.
- Week 6:** Lidal Dror: Is there an epistemic advantage to being oppressed?, *Nous* 57, 2023, pp. 618-640.

Nicole Dular: Standpoint Moral Epistemology: The Epistemic Advantage Thesis, *Philosophical Studies* 181, 2024, pp. 1813-1835
- Week 7:** Amia Srinivasan: Radical Externalism, *Philosophical Review* 129, 2020, pp. 395-431.

Richard Pettigrew: Radical epistemology, structural explanations, and epistemic weaponry, *Philosophical Studies*, 179, 2023, pp. 289–304.

Week 8: Enzo Rossi: What Can Epistemic Normativity Tell Us About Politics? Ideology, Power, and the Epistemology of Radical Realism, *Topoi*, 1-12, 2024.

David James Barnett: What's the matter with epistemic circularity? *Philosophical Studies* 171, 2014, pp. 117-205.

Philosophy of Physics

Prof James Read – Th. 9 – 11 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

There will be four seminars, on the philosophy of spacetime and symmetries. Topics covered will be:

1. Introduction to the philosophy of symmetries
2. The hole argument of general relativity
3. The Aharonov-Bohm effect
4. The local validity of special relativity in general relativity

Moderate and radical non-consequentialism

Prof Hilary Greaves and Dr Tomi Francis – M. 2 – 4, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

Consequentialist moral theory is centrally based on the notion of *axiology* - an overall betterness relation on states of affairs. According to consequentialism, what one ought to do is *entirely determined* by axiological matters. In response to standard objections to consequentialism, many philosophers advocate (what we will call) *moderate non-consequentialism*: the thesis that what one ought to do is determined *partly* by non-axiological factors, but axiology also plays an important role. A more radical departure from consequentialism is the thesis that axiological considerations play *no* role in determining what one ought to do. Assuming (at least for the sake of argument) that consequentialism itself is false, this seminar will examine the distinction between moderate and radical non-consequentialism, and will consider which of the two is the more plausible.

Readings for the first week's seminar will be posted on Canvas at least a week in advance.

Week-by-week outline (provisional - later topics especially are subject to change)

Week 1: Introduction

We will review the standard concerns about consequentialism, and how a “moderate non-consequentialism” - a non-consequentialist ethical theory that (however) retain a central role for axiology - might naturally arise in response to those objections, by way of relatively minimal modification of consequentialism.

Week 2: The linguistic objection to axiology

We will examine arguments for the claim that the whole idea of axiology is incoherent, because the way that terms like “good” and “better” work in ordinary language precludes having the sort of notion of overall betterness among states of affairs that is centrally involved in axiology.

Week 3: Axiology via aggregation

We will see how axiology can naturally arise in the course of settling tradeoffs between competing interests of different people, and relate this to concerns that (1) the idea of axiology objectionably requires the idea of an “aggregate person” or treats people as mere “containers” of value, and (2) that talk of overall goodness, in addition to the grounds of goodness, risks double-counting of reasons.

Week 4: Non-standard formal structures

We will examine the possibility that the most axiology-like component of a moral theory fails to have the formal features that are normally associated with axiology (for example, transitivity), and the extent to which, if so, this would undermine moderation in non-consequentialism.

Week 5: Impartiality

We will consider the place of impartiality in moral theory, and how this relates to the debate around moderate vs. radical non-consequentialism.

Week 6: Public ethics

We will consider the idea that an adequate ethical treatment of certain aspects of public life (for example, public policy choice) more centrally, or more certainly, requires that axiology be given an important role, compared to the case of private ethics.

Week 7: Ethics completely without axiology

We will examine what a completely axiology-free approach to ethics might look like, and whether there are any distinctive features that such an approach can be expected to have as a result of eschewing any role for axiology.

Week 8: Foundations

We will consider how the idea that moral theory has a two-level structure - a first-order moral theory, supported by a foundational account of why that is the correct first-order theory - bears on the discussion around moderate and radical non-consequentialism.

Sex and Love

Prof Jeremy Fix – W. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This seminar breaks down into two interconnected halves. In the first half, we will look at accounts of the consent in sexual relationship and, briefly, arguments against “centering”

consent in our accounts of sexual ethics. In the second half, we will look at contemporary accounts of love and loving relationships between adults. Our aim will be to think about the structure of interpersonal relationships and, in particular, the way that they involve navigating the independence of individuals, as captured in the function of consent, with the mutual dependence, or interdependence, of individuals, as captured in the nature of loving relationships between adults. (Please see the canvas website for this seminar for a syllabus, including readings for the first week.)

The Ontology of Art

Prof Catharine Abell – F. 9 – 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This graduate class will critically evaluate a variety of arguments concerning the kinds of things that artworks are. It will consider such issues as whether and how paintings and carved sculptures differ ontologically from works of music and literature, how the value and appreciation of art bears on its ontology, the identity and individuation conditions for works in different art forms, and whether artworks need always be created by artists, as well as methodological issues such as whether an adequate ontology of art is constrained by actual critical and appreciative practice or whether it can be revisionary of such practice. In addition to philosophers, this seminar may appeal to students in other faculties who are studying the fine arts, performing arts or literature who also have some background in analytical philosophy.

Week 1: Singular versus Multiple Artworks

Required reading:

Richard Wollheim, *Art and Its Objects* (any edition), sections 3 to 19 and 35 to 39.

Week 2: Allographic versus Autographic Artworks

Required reading:

Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art*, Chapter 3

Week 3: Ontological Monism

Required reading:

P.F. Strawson (2008) "Aesthetic Appraisal and Works of Art" in *Freedom and Resentment and Other Essays*, Routledge.

Week 4: Norm Types

Required reading:

N. Wolterstorff (1975), 'Towards an Ontology of Artworks', *Noûs*, 115-142.

Week 5: Indicated Types

Required reading:

Jerrold Levinson (1980), 'What a Musical Work Is', *Journal of Philosophy* 77: 5-28.

Week 6: Action Types

Required reading:

Gregory Currie (1989), *An Ontology of Art*, Palgrave Macmillan, chapters 1 and 3.

Week 7: Artworks as Historical Individuals

Required reading:

Guy Rohrbaugh (2012) "Artworks as Historical Individuals", *European Journal of Philosophy*, 11(2): 177-205.

Week 8: The Ontology of Avant Garde and Contemporary Art

Required reading:

Amie Thomasson (2010) "Ontological Innovation in Art", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 68:2, pp.119-130.

Sherri Irvin (2022), *Immaterial*, Oxford University Press, Chapter 1.