FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

PHILOSOPHY LECTURE PROSPECTUS

TRINITY 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

Alan Turing on Computability and Intelligence
Prof Peter Millican – T. 11 – 1 (*weeks 2 to 5*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture 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 – W. 11 – 1 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These are the core lectures for first-year mathematics 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)

The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence
Prof Christopher Timpson – F. 12 (*weeks 1 to 4*) and F. 12 – 2 (*week 5*), Radcliffe
Humanities (Lecture Room)

This course will introduce the centuries-old debate about the nature of space and time. One main question will be whether space is absolute or relative; and indeed what are the various meanings of these two words. A key text in this debate is the correspondence between Samuel Clarke---representing the ideas of Isaac Newton---and Gottfried Leibniz. We will start with the background to the debate in the works of Galileo and Descartes. We will then see how both Newton and Leibniz responded to this background; and finally, we will contrast their arguments, while investigating Leibniz's metaphysical views in more detail. The course is primarily aimed at Physics & Philosophy students, but all are welcome.

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.

> **104 Philosophy of Mind**
> Prof Michael Martin – Th. 11 – 12.30 (*weeks 1, 3 to 7*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

The Role of Acquaintance
These six lectures are concerned with the relation between minds and objects in the world; and more specifically with the notion of acquaintance.
We'll first look at debates about acquaintance, originally at the beginning of the twentieth century; in the revival of the debate in the 1970s; and then more recent contributions.
We'll then look at the alleged explanatory role of perception in perception, imagination, and memory and ask whether acquaintance plays a central role in explaining their commonalities and differences.
The format of the lectures involves a 90-minute period for each lecture. The lecture period on each occasion will be broken up into smaller segments to allow for discussion; and the final lecture will close with a long discussion period about the topics of the course as a whole.

Lecture I: History – Bertrand Russell and William James
Lecture 2: Revival – Gareth Evans and the Varieties of Reference
Lecture 3: Modern Variations – Sainsbury, Jeshion, and Recanati
Lecture 4: Perceptual Acquaintance
Lecture 5: Memory and Acquaintance I: The Nature of Sensory Imagination
Lecture 6: Memory and Acquaintance II: Memory v Imagination

Reading

Lecture I:
Essential Reading
Russell, Bertrand. "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description." Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society ri (i9io): io8–z8. http://www.jstor.org/stable/45438o5.
Further Reading:
Russell, Bertrand. "On Denoting." Mind 14, no. 56 (1905): 479–93.
http://www.jstor.org/stable/ZZ4838I.
Strawson, PF, "On Referring." Mind 59, Vol.59 (235), p.320-344,

https://www.jstor.org/stable/zz51176
John Hawthorne and David Manley. 2012. The Reference Book, Oxford: Clarendon Press, Ch. I
https://academic.oup.com/book/8456/chapter/i54250372/chapter-ag-pdf/4496Io87/book_8456_section_I54250372.ag.pdf
Lecture z:
Essential Reading
Evans, M Gareth, ed. John McDowell, The Varieties of Reference. Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press xiii, 418 p. ; 22. cm. Chs. r, 2.

Further Reading:
Evans, M Gareth, ed. John McDowell, The Varieties of Reference. Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press xiii, 418 p. ; 22 cm. Chs. 3 & 6
McDowell, John, "De Re Senses." The Philosophical quarterly, 1984-07, Vol.34 (136), p.283-294 https://www.jstor.org/stable/zzi8761

Lecture 3:
Essential Reading
Sainsbury, R Mark zozo "Varieties of Singularity". In Singular Thought & Mental Files, Goodman, Genone, Kroll, edd. Oxford: Clarendon Press https://academic.oup.com/book/36874/chapter/3zzo8z688/chapter-ag-pdf/44485407/book_36874_section_322082688.ag.pdf
Further Reading
Jeshion, Robin, zoio, 'Singular Thought: Acquaintance, Semantic Instrumentalism & Cognitivism", in New Essays in Singular Thought, ed. Jeshion, Oxford: Clarendon Press https://academic.oup.com/book/6407/chapter/I5018149i/chapter-ag-pdf/44982795/book_64o7_section_i5018149i.ag.pdf
Recanati, Francois, zoio, "Singular Thought: In Defence of Acquaintance", in New Essays in Singular Thought, ed. Jeshion, Oxford: Clarendon Press https://academic.oup.com/book/6407/chapter/I50184432/chapter-ag-pdf/44982796/book_64o7_section_i5018443z.ag.pdf

Lecture 4:
Essential Reading
Snowdon, PF, 1992, 'How to Interpret "Direct Perception"', reprinted in Essays on Perceptual Experience, PF Snowdon, ed. Stephen Blatti, Oxford: Clarendon Press 2024 https://academic.oup.com/book/5794i/chapter/4756i646z/chapter-pdf/5930450i/workid-ukpmx9iimsmn-book-part-5.pdf
Further Reading
Burge, Tyler, 1993, 'Vision and Intentional Content', In: John Searle and his Critics, edited by R.
v. Gulick and E. LePore Basil Blackwell 1993
https://philosophy.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/zoi8/o8/Burge-I99i-Vision-and-Intentional-Content.pdf

Siegel, Susanna, 'Subject and Object in the Contents of Visual Experience', Philosophical Review ii5 (3):355--88 (zoo6)
https://www.jstor.org/stable/20446911

Lecture 5:
Essential Reading
Williams, Bernard 1973, "Imagination and the Self", in Problems of the Self, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. z6 – 45
https://www-cambridge-org.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/core/books/problems-of-the-self/imagination-and-the-self/Dz5CA35⬚969DBD43iDF8349B8D99A47i
Peacocke, Christopher i985, 'Imagination, Experience, and Possibility: A Berkeleian View Defended' in Essays on Berkeley: A Tercentennial Celebration, Foster and Robinson, eds., Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 19 – 36
Soteriou, Matthew. "The Epistemological Role of Episodic Recollection." Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 77, no. z (zoo8): 472–92. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4oo4I244.

Lecture 6:
Essential Reading
Russell, Bertrand, Theory of Knowledge 1913 Manuscript, Chs. ⬚ & 6
https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/oxford/detail.action?docID=ii44463&pq-origsite=primo#
https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/oxford/detail.action?docID=ii44463&pq-origsite=primo#
Further Reading
Campbell, John "The Structure of Time in Autobiographical Memory." i997 European Journal of Philosophy ⬚:2 ISSN 0966–8373 pp. i0⬚–ii8 https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/doi/epdf/i0.iiii/i468-0378.0003i
Debus, Dorothea, "Thinking About the Past and Experiencing the Past." Mind & Language, 20i3-02, Vol.28 (i), p.20-54
https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/doi/epdf/i0.iiii/mila.i2006

125 Philosophy of Cognitive Science
Dr Theodor Nenu – M. 10 – 12 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures will provide an introduction to the philosophy of cognitive science. Topics will be drawn from those on the Faculty of Philosophy reading list for the FHS Finals paper Philosophy 125. We will spend comparable amounts of time on (1) foundational issues in cognitive science that in one way or another are in the background of most areas of research and (2) the question of how experimental results relate to philosophical issues like consciousness and free will. Various concepts will be illustrated with examples from the scientific literature, but no previous experience with psychology or empirical cognitive science is assumed.

Other Lectures (suitable for all audiences)

2025 John Locke Lectures: *From A Point of View*
Prof Richard Pettigrew (Bristol) – W. 5 (*weeks 1 to 6*), *Weeks 1 and 2:* H B Allen Centre, 25 Banbury Road, and *weeks 3 to 6*: Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

For more information, please see here: https://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/john-locke-lectures

Probability and philosophy
Prof Alexander Paseau – W. 9.30 – 11 (*weeks 1 to 4, 7, 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

This course consists of six one-and-a-half-hour lectures on the philosophy of probability. I will lecture for about an hour and leave the rest of the time for discussion. Undergraduate students taking the FHS papers *Philosophy of Science* or *Philosophy of Science and Social Science* or the FPE paper *Philosophical Topics in Logic and Probability* are strongly encouraged to attend, and the material will also be relevant to those taking *Knowledge and Reality*. All students, undergraduate and graduate, interested in epistemology and the philosophy of probability are more generally welcome. The course has no prerequisites as such but some mathematical fluency will be helpful.

The course will mainly be about credences (degrees of belief). Topics covered in the first four lectures include: the probability axioms; the ratio formula and conditional probability; the classical theory of probability; Expected Utility Theory; Dutch Book arguments and their converses; empirical violations of Expected Utility Theory such as the Allais Paradox and the Reflection Effect; the Conjunction and Base Rate Fallacies; credal eliminativism; thick credences; and finite vs countable additivity. The last two lectures will be on Bayesianism and its discontents (exact topics to be confirmed).

Objective Modalities
Florent Dumont – F. 11 (*weeks 5 to 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

The objective modalities are those that concern contingency in worldly circumstance —how things could have genuinely otherwise been. They come in many varieties. For instance, physical modality,—possibili-ty and necessity given the laws of physics; historical modality—possibility and necessity given how history unfolded up to a certain point; and practical modality—possibility and necessity given our current means—are all varieties of non-epistemic, objective modality. Some varieties of objective modality are broader than others. Intuitively, the broader the modality, the more possibilities it quantifies over. Thus physical

modality is broader than practical modality, since all the practical possibilities are physically possible but there are physical possibilities that are not practically possible. This lecture series introduces attendees to key topics in the metaphysics of modality, examining different notions of objective necessity and their interactions. It will be useful for those taking the Philosophy of Logic and Language and Knowledge and Reality modules.

Lecture 1 - The Broadest Necessity

Philosophers often assume the existence of a maximal objective modality, sometimes called 'metaphysical modality.' Metaphysical modality concerns all objective possibilities, as opposed to, say, only those that are compossible with the laws of physics. However, paradoxes of modal recombination threaten this assumption of maximality. This lecture introduces attendees to one such paradox and outlines several possible responses.

Lecture 2 - Two Notions of Alethic Necessity

It is widely held that paradigmatic metaphysical necessities such as 'gold has atomic number 79' enjoy the necessity of the broadest objective modality. This lecture introduces attendees to a prominent argument for these conclusions, along with a recent response by Nathan Salmón. According to Salmón, metaphysical modality is a restriction on logical modality, in a way analogous to that in which physical modality is a restriction on metaphysical modality.

Lecture 3 - Agentive Possibility

The options an agent faces—what she can do in a given situation—are often described in terms of what is possible for her to do. However, Jack Spencer (2017) has argued that there are cases in which ordinary agents can perform actions that are metaphysically impossible. If Spencer is right, then agentive possibility is not a species of objective modality. This lecture introduces attendees to Spencer's argument and questions whether the 'can' of ability modals is amenable to analysis in terms of possible worlds.

Lecture 4 - The Ground of Necessity

Can we explain why some propositions are necessary? Blackburn (1987) formulates a dilemma for any attempted explanation of necessity. An account of the ground of necessity is a statement of the form 'It is necessary that A if and only if some fact, F, obtains.' Blackburn argues that in any explanation of that form, either the explanans F is itself necessary, or it is contingent. The dilemma is fatal, according to Blackburn, because in both cases the modal status of the explanans prevents the explanation from achieving what we want. If Blackburn is correct, then necessary truths are explanatorily irreducible: nothing explains why necessary truths are necessary. The lecture introduces Blackburn's dilemma and considers whether Descartes's account of the ground of necessity offers a way out.

Sexual Exploitation and Sex Ethics
Rose Brugger – F. 11 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

Is there something "special" about sex, morally speaking? The modern liberal consensus seems to be a resounding "no." The idea of a specifically sexual morality is a relic of a bygone era and backward culture intent on irrational repression of human sexuality. Casual sex is fine, so long as all parties consent to it, and one cannot do sex wrongfully except insofar as one's actions fall under more general norms of justice or charity. And yet, there are a variety of ways in which we hold moral intuitions that appear to treat sex as in some ways distinctive. For instance, we hold rape to be intrinsically evil, and seriously so, even when all harms and risks are avoided, we think that sexual crimes are especially weighty, that the sexual nature of a crime is an aggravating factor other things being equal, we hold higher standards of consent and freedom in sex than we do in other areas, and many have intuitively felt that sex work is degrading or objectifying in some special sense.

Are these intuitions consistent with a modern liberal permissive sexual ethic? This question was first posed by David Benatar, who famously argued for a dichotomy between a "casual" view of sex, which allows for promiscuity but cannot condemn rape or pedophilia, and a "significance" view, which condemns rape and pedophilia but also casual sex. Yet others resist this dilemma, attempting to explain the serious wrongfulness of sexual crimes in a way that is non-committal with regards to the ethics of casual sex.

This lecture series surveys prominent accounts of sexual ethics with an eye on this question of the specialness of sex. We will begin, in lecture 1, by setting out the question and Benatar's dilemma, and considering the views of those who bite the bullet and deny any specialness of sex at all. Lectures 2 and 3 cover more moderate views, whereby theorists ascribe some specialness to sex, but attempt to explain this in terms of something more general, like autonomy, desire satisfaction, potential for psychological harm, or social significance. Finally, we turn in lecture 4 to views that embrace the idea that there is something irreducibly special about sex. We here consider the work of some radical feminists like Catherine MacKinnon alongside conservatives like Roger Scruton and the Natural Law tradition.

Rights and wrongings
Prof Thomas Sinclair and Prof Sandy Steel (Law) – F. 11 – 1, Wadham College (Dr Lee Shau Kee Scholars' Room)

This seminar explores philosophical and legal questions about the nature of rights and their associated duties. Each week there will be one or at most two set readings, introduced by the convenors. There will be no student presentations. All graduate students and faculty members in Law and Philosophy are welcome.

The provisional schedule is as follows:

Week 1: Directionality
Week 2: Correlativity
Week 3: Rights and reasons
Week 4: The limits of rights
Week 5: Rights and defensive liability
Week 6: Rights and compensatory liability
Week 7: The right to do wrong
Week 8: Enforceability

Philosophy, AI, and Innovation
Prof Philipp Koralus and Brendan McCord – T. 4 – 6, St Catherine's College (Porter's Lodge, top floor)

Description: The seminar will explore issues at the intersection of philosophy, AI, and technological innovation, co-taught by a philosopher and a technologist. The seminar will welcome a variety of visiting discussants from philosophy, computer science, and the technology industry throughout term. The focus will be on how a concern for human flourishing can be embedded in the global technology development pipeline, and on exploring how broader bridges can be built between philosophy and technology. The seminar is primarily aimed at philosophy graduate students and computer science graduate students but participants from other levels and areas are welcome. Topics include: truth-seeking AI, privacy, collective intelligence, decentralization in science and AI, and approaches to human autonomy. The seminar culminates in a clinic to facilitate grant applications for independent summer projects on the themes of the seminar.

Fast grants: New for this year, Cosmos Ventures has established a dedicated funding pool that seminar participants can apply to for independent summer building projects on related themes.

Prerequisites: please email HAI Lab philipp.koralus@philosophy.ox.ac.uk no later than April 27th with a (very) brief explanation of your interest in the seminar to reserve a spot, and the subject line "TT Seminar". Space limited to maintain quality of discussion.

Week 1 (April 29) Philipp Koralus (HAI Lab) and Brendan McCord (Cosmos Institute). **Truth-seeking AI**

Readings:
- Mill, *On Liberty*, Ch. 2, "Of Liberty of Thought and Discussion" (excerpts)
- Plato, *Theaetetus*, excerpts (149A-152A; 189A-190A)
- Koralus, "The Philosophic Turn for AI Agents: Replacing Centralized Digital Rhetoric with Decentralized Truth-Seeking"
- Sarkar, "AI Should Challenge, Not Obey," (link)

Week 2 (May 6) Philipp Koralus and Jules Desai (HAI Lab). **The Inquiry Complex**

Readings:
- Plato, *Meno* (excerpt on Meno's paradox)
- TBD

Week 3 (May 13) Helen Nissenbaum (Cornell) and Carina Peng (Apple). **Privacy and the Future of AI**

Readings:
- Constant, "The Liberty of Ancients Compared with That of Moderns" (excerpts)
- Nissenbaum, reading on privacy, TBD

Week 4 (May 20) (May 20) Vincent Weisser (Prime Intellect). **Decentralization in Science & AI**

Readings:
- Polanyi, "Republic of Science" (link)
- INTELLECT–1: The First Decentralized Training of a 10B Parameter Model." (link)
- Accelerating Scientific Breakthroughs with an AI Co-Scientist (link)
- The AI Scientist: Toward Fully Automated Open-Ended Scientific Discovery (link)
- DeepSeek-R1: A Decentralized AI Research Platform. (link)

Week 5 (May 27) Ivan Vendrov (Midjourney). **Collective Intelligence**

Readings:
- Hayek, "The Creative Powers of a Free Civilization"
- Stray, Vendrov, Nixon, Adler, Hadfield-Menell, "What are You Optimizing For? Aligning Recommender Systems with Human Values." (link)

Optional:
- Christiano, "What Failure Looks Like." (link)
- Jordan, "Dr. AI or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Economics." (link)

Week 6 (June 3) Chris Summerfield (Oxford and AI Security Institute), MH Tessier (Google

Deep Mind). **The Habermas Machine**

Readings:
- Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (short excerpt)
- Summerfield, et al., "AI Can Help Humans Find Common Ground in Democratic Deliberation." (link)

Optional:
- Summerfield, et al, "How Will Advanced AI Systems Impact Democracy?" (link)

Week 7 (June 10) Brendan McCord (Cosmos Institute) and Bethanie Drake-Maples (Stanford HAI). **AI and Human Autonomy**

Readings:
- Humboldt, *The Sphere and Duties of Government*, Ch. 2, "Of the Individual Man and the Highest Ends of his Existence"
- Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Volume 2, Part 4, Ch. 6, "What Kind of Despotism Democratic Nations Have to Fear"
- Maples, "Designing for Human Autonomy in an Age of AI" (presentation of research and framework for design)

Week 8 (June 17) Brendan McCord (Cosmos Institute), Philipp Koralus, HAI Lab team. **Project Clinic**.

Structured group discussion for those who plan to submit an application for an independent summer building project on related themes, in collaboration with Cosmos Ventures.

Preparation:
- Draft a Cosmos Ventures application for feedback

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: History of Philosophy (*restricted to 1st year BPhil students*)
Various class-givers – F. 11 – 1, various locations

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 Trinity Term will cover key material in history of philosophy (four weeks on ancient, four on the early modern period). Class-givers will contact their groups, specifying readings and confirming the class time, in advance of term.

Indian Philosophy
Prof Monima Chadha – T. 2 – 4, Lady Margaret Hall (Lavinia Talbot Room)

Questioning Narrative Identity from a Buddhist point of view

A fierce critic of contemporary thinking about narrative identities, Appiah (2018), points out errors in thinking about identities of gender, creed, country, colour, class and culture and argues that they must be reformed. But there's no dispensing with identities. So, Appiah ends up closing the book with an identity that binds us all, call it that of a "cosmopolite" or just "human". But why are identities indispensable? Is it necessary for us to strive to construct an identity for ourselves? In this course we will address these questions from a Buddhist point of view.

Readings

Week 1:

Kwame Anthony Appiah (2018) "The Lies that Bind" Chapter 1 and Coda.

Week 2:

Korsgaard, Christine (1989). Personal identity and the unity of agency: A Kantian response to Parfit. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 18 (2):103-31.

Schechtman, Marya (2005). Experience, agency, and personal identity. *Social Philosophy and Policy* 22 (2):1-24.

Week 3:

Dennett, Daniel C. (1992). The self as a center of narrative gravity. In Frank S. Kessel, P. M. Cole & D. L. Johnson, [Book Chapter]. Lawrence Erlbaum. pp. 4--237.

Velleman, James David (2005). "The Self as Narrator" in *Self to Self: Selected Essays*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Week 4:

Strawson, Galen (2004). Against Narrativity. *Ratio* 17 (4):428-452

Baker, Lynne Rudder (2016). Making sense of ourselves: self-narratives and personal identity. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 15 (1):7-15.

Week 5:

Callard Agnes, 2018 Aspiration: *The Agency of Becoming* New York: Oxford Univ. Press, Chapters 5 & 6

Week 6:

Kapstein, Matthew 2001 Excerpts from *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* Chapter 9 Vasubandhu on Agency and Responsibility pp. 372-375

Meyers Karin 2017 "The Dynamics of Intention, Freedom and Habituation According to Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*." In Jake H. Davis, ed. A Mirror is For Reflection: Understanding Buddhist Ethics. New York: Oxford University Press.

Week 7:

Gold, Jonathan C. (2023). Wholesome Mind Ethics: A Buddhist Paradigm. *Journal of Value Inquiry* 57 (4):607-624.

Gold, Jonathan, 2018. "Freedom through Cumulative Moral Cultivation: Heroic Willpower (Vīrya)" Journal of Buddhist Ethics

Week 8:

Meyers Karin 2020 'Mental Freedom' and 'Freedom of the Loving Heart' (ceto-vimutti): The Roles of Habituation, Affection, and Somatic Disposition in the Cultivation of Noble (ārya) Freedom." Zygon 55:2

Oren Hanner, 2024 "Selfless Agency and the Cultivation of a Moral Character" in *Moral Agency in Eastern and Western Thought* (pp. 216–235). Routledge.

Metaphysics
Prof Timothy Williamson – T. 2 – 4, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

The class will concern a series of linked structural issues in contemporary metaphysics, including the metaphysics of morals. Each meeting will be based on the readings specified for it below.

Week 1, 29th April

Kit Fine, 'Essence and modality' *Philosophical Perspectives*, 8 (1994): 1-16.

TW, 'Essences, heuristics, and metaphysical illusions', will be available for downloading from TW's Faculty webpage.

Week 2, 6th May

TW, 'Metametaphysics and semantics', *Metaphilosophy*, 53, 2-3 (2022): 162-175; reprinted as chapter 5 of TW, *Overfitting and Heuristics in Philosophy* (OUP, 2024).
https://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/files/metaphilosophy2021pdf

Week 3, 13th May (this meeting will be given by Harry Andrews on alien structure)
The primary text is: Eklund, M. (2024). *Alien Structure: Language and Reality*. OUP.
We will discuss these sections of Eklund's book. If you're pressed for time, focus on those highlighted.
- **§1.1** + **§1.2** + §1.3 (pp.1-17)
- §2.5 (pp.43-45)
- **§4.1** + §4.2 + **§4.4** + **§4.5** + §4.6 (pp.74-83; pp.86-96)
- §6.1 + **§6.2** + §6.3 (pp.116-125)

Background reading:
- Davidson, D. (2001). 'On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme.' *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*, OUP, pp.183–198.
- Ramsey, F. P. (1925). 'Universals.' *Mind*, *34*(136), pp. 401-417.

Week 4, 20th May

Jonas Olson, *Moral Error Theory: History, Critique, Defence* (OUP, 2014), chapter 6.
TW, 'Moral anti-exceptionalism' (omitting section on Street), in P. Bloomfield and D. Copp (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Moral Realism* (OUP, 2023), of which chapter 1 of TW, *Good as Usual: Anti-Exceptionalist Essays on Values, Norms, and Action* is an expanded version. Earlier version:
https://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/files/moralaepdf-0.

Week 5, 27th May

Sharon Street, 'A Darwinian dilemma for realist theories of value', *Philosophical Studies* 127 (2006): 109-66.
TW, 'Moral anti-exceptionalism' (omitting section on Olson), as above.

Week 6, 3rd June

TW, 'Modal science', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 46, 4-5 (2016): 453-492, and in Mark McCullagh and Juhani Yli-Vakkuri (eds.), *Williamson on Modality*, London: Routledge, 2017: 1-40.

Week 7, 10th June
Bryan Pickel, 'Against second-order primitivism', in Peter Fritz and Nicholas Jones (eds.), *Higher-Order Metaphysics* (OUP, 2024).
TW, 'Pickel against second-order primitivism', in Fritz and Jones.

Week 8, 17th June
Christopher Menzel, 'Pure logic and higher-order metaphysics', in Peter Fritz and Nicholas Jones (eds.), *Higher-Order Metaphysics* (OUP, 2024).
TW, 'Menzel on pure logic and higher-order metaphysics', in Fritz and Jones.

Philosophy of Mental Health and Mental Illness
Prof Edward Harcourt – W. 11 – 1 (*not on in week 7*), Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

The main purpose of the class will be to introduce and evaluate key themes from the anti-psychiatry movement and its intellectual descendants, including contemporary champions of service user voice, mad pride and related tendencies. We will ask to what extent the practice of psychiatry is vitiated by asymmetries of power and prestige; to what extent such asymmetries are inescapable (for example if psychiatry's mainstream self-conception as treating diseases of the brain is correct); and to what extent they float free of any particular conception of mental illness. The starting point will thus be located more in ethics and epistemology than in the metaphysics of mind, with coverage of concepts such as epistemic injustice and expertise by experience. So certain familiar topics such as 'are delusions beliefs?' will not be dealt with, though others – e.g. are mental disorders diseases of the brain? – will be.

Expression and the Expressive
Prof Matt Parrott and Prof Joseph Schear – T. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

We are all familiar with a variety of ways of expressing our thoughts and feelings, from smiling when we are happy to telling someone what we intend to do tomorrow. We are no less familiar with the range of expressive behaviours displayed by others, especially friends and family. The aim of this seminar is a deeper philosophical understanding of the phenomenon of expression. What is it to express oneself or one's state of mind, and more broadly, what it is for something to be expressive? How exactly do we come to understand or know the thoughts and feelings of others through their expressions? And how, more generally, should we understand the place and status of expression in the nature of human mindedness? Among other topics, we will discuss the role of the expressive in philosophical discussions of self-knowledge, knowledge of others' minds, the nature of emotions, art, and social/political

philosophy. Readings will be drawn from historical and contemporary writers, including Wittgenstein, Husserl, Edith Stein, R. G, Collingwood, Richard Wollheim, David Finklestein, Mitchell Green, and Anil Gomes. A schedule of topics will be published on Canvass.

Logic for Philosophy Graduate Students
Prof Alexander Paseau – M. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This is a logic course for non-specialists, intended to give graduate students in philosophy (BPhil, MSt, DPhil) mostly working in other fields greater familiarity with logical methods and rigorous proofs. We will cover topics in propositional logic including: mathematical prerequisites (proofs, set theory, finite vs countably infinite vs uncountable); syntax and semantics of propositional logic; duality; expressive adequacy; the Compactness Theorem; soundness and completeness; Lindenbaum Algebras; rudiments of abstract/universal logic; modal propositional logic; intuitionistic propositional logic; infinitary propositional logic. Readings will be set from *Propositional Logic*, the lecturer's draft textbook to be published by MIT Press and available on Canvas. The first seminar will cover chapters 1 and 2 of that book.

Genericity
Dr James Ravi Kirkpatrick – W. 2 – 4, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

Overview
This seminar will provide an introduction to the main philosophical questions concerning generic generalisations (i.e., generalisations expressed by sentences like 'The raven is black', 'A duck lays eggs', and 'Zarpies are violent'). Generics expresses generalisations, but unlike explicitly quantified sentences, they do not seem to carry information about how many members of a kind have the property in question. Consequently, generics exhibit puzzling exception permitting-behaviour. This has led to a proliferation of increasingly sophisticated semantic theories and has prompted theorists to make interesting connections between generics and a wide range of philosophical topics, such as stereotypes and the spread of social prejudice, the nature of explanation, default reasoning and cognition, metalinguistic negotiation, and the nature of ethics.

All are welcome, even those without prior background in philosophy of language. This class aims to provide a practical introduction to semantics through the study of generics.

The first five weeks we will look at various proposals for the semantics of generic generalisations, focusing on the most prominent accounts in the literature. In the last three weeks, we turn to consider how genericity interacts with other areas of philosophy, specifically stereotypes and social prejudice, explanation, and ethics/epistemology.

Week 1 (30 April)   *Overview*
                           F. Jeffry Pelletier and Nicholas Asher. 1997. 'Generics and defaults'. In
                           J. van Benthem & A. ter Meulen (eds.) *Handbook of Logic and*

Language, pp. 1125–1177. Cambridge, MA. The MIT Press. **(read: pp. 1127–1146)**

Krifka, Manfred, Francis Jeffry Pelletier, Alice ter Meulen, Gennaro Chierchia, and Godehard Link. 1995. 'Genericity: An Introduction'. In *The Generic Book*, edited by Gregory N. Carlson and Francis Jeffry Pelletier, 1–124. Chicago, IL.: Chicago University Press. **(covers similar ground to Pelletier & Asher)**

Gregory N. Carlson. 1977. 'A Unified Analysis of the English Bare Plural'. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 1 (3): pp. 413–57.

Week 2 (7 May)   *Kind-predicational theories*

David Liebesman. 2011. Simple generics. *Noûs*, *45*(3), pp. 409–442.

Sarah-Jane Leslie. 2015. 'Generics oversimplified', *Noûs*, 49(1), pp 28–54.

Week 3 (14 May)   *Probability-based theories*

Ariel Cohen. 1999. 'Generics, Frequency Adverbs, and Probability'. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 22 (3): 221–53.

M. H. Tessler and Noah D. Goodman. 2019. 'The Language of Generalization.' *Psychological Review* 126 (3): 395.

Week 4 (21 May)   *Normality-based theories*

Regine Eckardt. 2000. 'Normal Objects, Normal Worlds and the Meaning of Generic Sentences'. *Journal of Semantics* 16: 237–78.

Bernhard Nickel. 2009. 'Generics and the Ways of Normality'. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 31 (6): 629–48.

Week 5 (28 May)   *Cognition-based theories*

Sarah-Jane Leslie. 2007. 'Generics and the Structure of the Mind'. *Philosophical Perspectives* 21 (1): 375–403.

Sarah-Jane Leslie. 2008. 'Generics: Cognition and Acquisition'. *The Philosophical Review* 117 (1): 1–47.

Eleonore Neufeld, Anne Bosse, Guillermo Del Pinal, and Rachel Sterken. 2025. 'Giving Generic Language Another Thought'. *WIREs Cognitive Science* 16 (1): e70000. https://doi.org/10.1002/wcs.70000.

Week 6 (4 June)   *Generics, stereotypes, and social prejudice*

Sarah-Jane Leslie. 2017. 'The Original Sin of Cognition: Fear, Prejudice, and Generalisation'. *The Journal of Philosophy* 114 (8): 393–421.

Sally Haslanger. 2014. 'The Normal, the Natural and the Good: Generics and Ideology'. *Politica & Società* 3:365–92.

Week 7 (11 June)   *Generics and explanation*
                     TBC

Week 8 (18 June)   *Generics and ethics/epistemology*
                     TBC

Critical Epistemology
Prof Natalia Waights Hickman – W. 9 – 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This class will explore some of the fundamental concepts and reframing interventions of critical and Feminist epistemology. The first few weeks are dedicated to the notions of situated knowledge and ignorance, epistemic standpoint and epistemic oppression; turning then to Miranda Fricker's better-assimilated concepts of testimonial and hermeneutical injustice. Finally we will consider the possibility and importance of ideologically mediated epistemic vices, and the nature of conspiracy theories.

Students will be expected to read 2-4 articles/chapters in advance of each class, and should be ready to discuss target readings in detail. In three of eight weeks students will have the opportunity to present and lead discussion, singly or in pairs.

Digital Minds
Dr Patrick Butlin, Dr Andreas Mogensen, Dr Brad Saad – M. 2 – 4, Radcliffe Humanities
(Ryle Room)

According to an open letter signed by leading researchers in the fields of AI and neuroscience, "it is no longer in the realm of science fiction to imagine AI systems having feelings and even human-level consciousness." (Association for Mathematical Consciousness Science 2023). The prospect that digital minds might come on-line within the next few decades raises a host of pressing challenges, many of which are severely neglected at present. This class will introduce you to key topics in the philosophy of mind, cognitive science, and ethics relevant to thinking about the potential for mind, consciousness, and moral standing in near-future digital systems.

Each week, we'll make the readings available as shared PDFs with comments enabled. We've found commenting in this way to provide a very fruitful basis for subsequent in-person discussion. You can use comments to note points you strongly agree or disagree with, passages you don't understand, objections you've got, and so on. We'll also have a separate editable document, where you're encouraged to write up at least one general comment or question about the material we'll be reading for a given week or the general theme or topic.

If you'd like to join the class, please try to ensure that you add your annotations to the PDF copies and at least one comment in the accompanying document 24 hours before the class begins. You should also feel encouraged to look over comments and annotations left by other students, and to add comments in reply and/or upvote comments and annotations you strongly agree with or otherwise want to see discussed in class by commenting with '+1' in reply. We'll review the comments and annotations in the hours before the class begins and use these to set the agenda.

The topic in week 1 will be the possibility of artificial consciousness, and the assigned readings will be (excerpts from) chapters 7 and 9 in Chalmers (1996) *The Conscious Mind*, as well as (excerpts from) chapter 1 in Chalmers (2010) *The Character of Consciousness.* You can find an annotatable PDF copy of the readings in the folder here, as well as a document for recording more general comments and questions. (To add comments, simply highlight the relevant portion of text you want to comment on and click on the icon that should appear on the right hand side of the document viewer. You will need to set up a Google account, if you do not already have one.)

If you would like to join this class, please write to Andreas Mogensen (andreas.mogensen@philosophy.ox.ac.uk), who will add you to the email list.

Social Choice Theory
Prof Jean Baccelli – Th. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This graduate class will introduce to selected topics in the axiomatic theory of collective decision-making.

1. Arrow

Wulf Gaertner. *A Primer in Social Choice Theory* (Revised Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Chapter 2 ("Arrow's Impossibility Theorem").

Marc Fleurbaey and Peter Hammond. Interpersonally Comparable Utility. In Barbera, Hammond, and Seidl (eds.), *Handbook of Utility Theory, II*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Press, 2004. Section 3 ("Social Choice Without Interpersonal Comparisons").

2. Rights

Wulf Gaertner. *A Primer in Social Choice Theory* (Revised Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Chapter 4 ("Individual Rights").

Amartya Sen. *Collective Choice and Social Welfare* (Expanded Edition). Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017. Selection from Chapter A5 ("The Impossibility of the Paretian Liberal", "Social Choice and Game Forms", and "Nozick's Conception of Liberty and Game Forms").

Donald Saari. *Decisions and Elections*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Section 3.2 ("Sen's Theorem").

3. Interpersonal Comparisons

John Weymark. Social Welfare Functions. In Adler and Fleurbaey (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Well-Being and Public Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. [Skip Sections 5.12-5.13.]

Marc Fleurbaey and Peter Hammond. Interpersonally Comparable Utility. In Barbera, Hammond, and Seidl (eds), *Handbook of Utility Theory, II*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Press, 2004. Section 4.4 ("Interpersonal Comparisons of What?").

Jacob Nebel. Recent Developments in Welfarist Social Choice. In Pivato and Guerdjikova (eds.), *Handbook of Utility Theory, III*. Berlin: Springer, forthcoming. Section 4 ("Informational Invariance").

4. Bargaining

Wulf Gaertner. *A Primer in Social Choice Theory* (Revised Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Chapter 8 ("Cooperative Bargaining").

Amartya Sen. *Collective Choice and Social Welfare* (Expanded Edition). Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017. Section 8.1 ("Bargaining Advantages and Collective Choice").

John Roemer. *Theories of Distributive Justice*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1996. Selection from Chapter 2 ("Axiomatic Bargaining Theory"; read p. 78-82, 89-93).

5. Risk

Philippe Mongin and Marcus Pivato. Social Evaluation under Risk and Uncertainty. In Adler and Fleurbaey (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Well-Being and Public Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. Section 24.3 ("The Social Aggregation Theorem").

Marc Fleurbaey. Welfare Economics, Risk and Uncertainty. *Canadian Journal of Economics*, 51(1):5–40, 2018. Sections 1-4 and 7 ("Introduction", "Harsanyi's Theorem", "Ex Ante Egalitarianism", "Ex Post Egalitarianism", and "The Separability Conundrum").

6. Veil of Ignorance

Philippe Mongin and Marcus Pivato. Social Evaluation under Risk and Uncertainty. In Adler and Fleurbaey (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Well-Being and Public Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. Section 24.2 ("The Impartial Observer Theorem").

Simon Grant, Atsushi Kajii, Ben Polak, and Zvi Safra. Generalized Utilitarianism and Harsanyi's Impartial Observer Theorem. *Econometrica*, 78 (6):1939–1971, 2010. Introduction.

Marc Fleurbaey. Welfare Economics, Risk and Uncertainty. *Canadian Journal of Economics*, 51(1):5–40, 2018. Section 10 ("Veil-of-ignorance Arguments").

John Roemer. Egalitarianism Against the Veil of Ignorance. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 99(4):167–184, 2002. Selection from the Conclusion (read p. 182-184).

7. Uncertainty

Philippe Mongin and Marcus Pivato. Social Evaluation under Risk and Uncertainty. In Adler and Fleurbaey (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Well-Being and Public Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. Section 24.4 ("Subjective Probability and the Problem of Ex Ante versus Ex Post Welfare").

Marc Fleurbaey. Welfare Economics, Risk and Uncertainty. *Canadian Journal of Economics*, 51(1):5–40, 2018. Section 8 ("Aggregating Beliefs and Preferences").

Gabrielle Gayer, Itzhak Gilboa, Larry Samuelson, and David Schmeidler. Pareto Efficiency with Different Beliefs. *The Journal of Legal Studies*, 43(S2): S151–S171, 2014. (Skip S159-162, 169-170.)

Aesthetic Realism
Prof James Grant and Prof Louise Hanson – M. 1 – 3, Exeter College (Cohen Quad, Walton St: Maddicott Room *except week 4*: Eltis Room *and week 6*: Kloppenburg Room)

In contemporary philosophy, the possibility that beauty is robustly independent of our responses and attitudes has generally not been taken seriously. This marks a striking contrast both with the history of philosophy before the early modern period, when robust aesthetic realism was taken seriously, and with contemporary meta-ethics, where robust moral realism is now treated as a live possibility. In recent years, however, a robustly realist view of beauty has started to receive more attention, including from the convenors of this class. The aim of the class is to introduce this burgeoning literature on robust aesthetic realism and its alternatives.

The readings for each week are as follows:

1. Louise Hanson, Moral Realism, Aesthetic Realism, and the Asymmetry Claim
https://doi.org/10.1086/698732

2. James Grant, Why It Would be Good if Beauty Is Objective
https://t.ly/Vda_V

3. Michael Watkins and James Shelley, Response-Dependence about Aesthetic Value
https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0114.2012.01429.x

4. Daan Evers, Aesthetic Non-Naturalism https://doi.org/10.1093/aesthj/ayad047

5. Dominic McIver Lopes, *Being for Beauty*, ch10
https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198827214.003.0011

6. Vid Simoniti, Aesthetic Properties as Powers
https://doi.org/10.1111/ejop.12224

7. Hannah Ginsborg, Kant on the Subjectivity of Taste
https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199547975.003.0002

8. Neil Sinclair and Jon Robson, Speculative Aesthetic Expressivism
https://doi.org/10.1093/aesthj/ayac036

Topics in Political Philosophy
Prof Hilary Greaves and Dr Teru Thomas – Th. 1 – 3, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room) *except week 3*: Th. 2 – 4, Radcliffe Humanities (Seminar Room)

This is a survey class, aiming to be fully accessible to those with no prior knowledge of political philosophy. The emphasis will be on understanding important and central lines of thought in this subdiscipline, rather than trying to reach the research frontier. The class will cover a selection of topics, potentially including, for instance: political authority and legitimacy, equality, liberalism, libertarianism, democracy, cosmopolitanism, feminism and immigration. Mandatory readings for the first week will be posted on Canvas at least a week before the first meeting of the class.

Moral Status
Prof Gonzalo Rodriguez-Pereyra and Dr Umut Baysan – T. 3 – 5, St Anne's College

This class will explore the philosophical problem of moral status. Among others, we will seek answers to the following questions: What is it to have moral status? What kinds of things have moral status? What properties can be seen as grounds of moral status? Does moral status come in degrees? Are psychological capacities, such as sentience or agency, either sufficient or necessary for moral status? Can the potentiality to have such capacities ground the moral status of a being? Do the future capacities of a being play a role in determining its present moral status? What role, if any, does species-membership play in determining the moral status of a being? Do non-human animals have moral status? If so, which ones? Do all humans have moral status? For example, does a human foetus or a human being who is no longer able to have any psychological capacities have moral status? Would a philosophical zombie have moral status? What about a creature that has conscious experiences but is not capable of feeling pain or pleasure?

Among others, we will read parts of Mary Anne Warren's *Moral Status: Obligations to Persons and Other Living Things* (Oxford University Press, 2000) and Shelly Kagan's *How to Count Animals, More or Less* (Oxford University Press, 2019). Those who are willing to attend the first class (Week 1) are expected to read the first chapters of these two books. For background reading, see "The Grounds of Moral Status" entry by Agnieszka Jaworska and Julie Tannenbaum in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Additional readings for subsequent classes will be posted.