

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



PHILOSOPHY LECTURES PROSPECTUS

MICHAELMAS TERM 2018

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

NOTES:

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

Lectures for the First Public Examination

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

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

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

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

Early Greek Philosophy

Dr Anna Marmodoro – F. 12 *except week 8*: W. 12, Schools

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

The discussion will be based on the fragments and *testimonia* of the Early Greek philosophers found in collections such as A. Laks and G. W. Most (eds.), *Early Greek Philosophy*. 9 vols. Loeb Classical Library, 524-532. Harvard University Press, 2016; G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven and M. Schofield (eds.), *The Presocratic Philosophers*, (2nd edition) Cambridge 1983 ('KRS'); and D. Graham, *The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy*, Cambridge 2010, 2 vols.

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

A general introductory reading

- Long, A.A. "The Scope of Early Greek Philosophy", Ch.1 in A. Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, CUP 1999

Lecture 1 and 2: **Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes**

- Algra, K. "The Beginnings of Cosmology", Ch. 3 in A. Long (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, CUP 1999.
- Hussey, E., *The Presocratics*, Duckworth 1972, chapter 2.

Lectures 3: **Heraclitus**

- Hussey, E., "Heraclitus", Ch. 5 in A. Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, CUP 1999.

- Wiggins, D., "Heraclitus' Conception of Flux, Fire and Material Persistence" in M. Schofield and M. Nussbaum (eds.), *Language and Logos*, CUP 1982, pp. 1-32.

Lectures 4: **Parmenides**

- Palmer, J., *Parmenides and Presocratic Philosophy*, OUP 2009, chapters 1-5.
- Sedley, D. "Parmenides and Melissus", Ch.6 in A. Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, CUP 1999.

Lecture 5: **Zeno**

- Hussey, E., *The Presocratics*, Duckworth 1972, chapter 5.
- McKirahan, R. D., "Zeno", Ch.7 in A. Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, CUP 1999.

Lecture 6: **Xenophanes and Empedocles**

- Leshner, J. H., "The Humanizing of Knowledge," in P. Curd and D. Graham (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Presocratic Philosophy*, OUP 2008, 458–84.
- Multiple authors in A. Marmodoro (ed.), *Empedocles's Metaphysics*, special issue of *Rhizomata. A journal for ancient philosophy and science*. Vol. 4, issue 1, 2016.
- Primavesi, O., "Empedocles: Physical and Mythical Divinity" in P. Curd and D. Graham (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Presocratic Philosophy*, OUP 2008.
- Sedley, D. "Empedocles" in *Creationism and Its Critics in Antiquity*, University of California Press 2007.

Lectures 7: **Anaxagoras**

- Graham, D.W. "Empedocles and Anaxagoras: Responses to Parmenides", Ch. 8 in A. Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, CUP 1999.
- *Anaxagoras of Clazomenae. Fragments and Testimonia*. A text and Translation with notes and essays by P. Curd, University of Toronto Press, 2010, chapters 3 and 4.
- Marmodoro, A., *Everything in Everything. Anaxagoras' Metaphysics*, OUP 2017.

Lecture 8: **Leucippus and Democritus**

- Barnes, J., *The Presocratic Philosophers*, Routledge reprinted 2000, Chapter 17.
- Furley, D., *The Greek Cosmologists*, CUP 1987, chapters 9-11.
- Taylor, C.C.W., "The Atomists", Ch.9 in A. Long, (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, CUP 1999.

Vlastos, G., 1945, "Ethics and Physics in Democritus", *Philosophical Review* 54: 578–592 and 55: 53–64.

Moral Philosophy: Mill, *Utilitarianism*

Dr Jeremy Fix – F. 12, Schools

These lectures offer an introduction to ethical theory organized around objections to utilitarianism, especially as presented by John Stuart Mill in *Utilitarianism*, and what they reveal about the theoretical and practical aims of ethical theory. We will start with an account of the explanatory structure of consequentialist ethical theory in general and the utilitarian version of consequentialism in particular. We will then discuss challenges which target one or another part of that explanatory structure. Questions will include: (1) Is happiness in fact the final end of our actions?; (2) Is the greatest happiness possible in fact the end of anyone's action?; (3) Does utilitarianism license violating the rights of individuals?; (4) Can a utilitarian specifically or a consequentialist generally be a true friend?; (5) Does rule-consequentialism avoid the problems with utilitarianism?; and (6) Do alternatives to consequentialism miss something that consequentialism captures?

General Philosophy

Prof Peter Millican – W. 12, Schools

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

Introduction to Logic

Prof Volker Halbach – M. 12, Schools

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

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

Lectures for the Honour Schools

101 Early Modern Philosophy: Descartes

Prof Paul Lodge – W. 10, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

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

101 Early Modern Philosophy: Hume

Prof Peter Millican – Th. 10, Schools

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

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

102 Knowledge and Reality: Epistemology

Prof Bernhard Salow – F. 10, Schools

These lectures will focus on the nature of knowledge (potential conditions on knowledge, such as reliability, safety, and sensitivity; the point and possibility of analysing knowledge; epistemic contextualism), the structure of justification (internalism vs externalism; coherentism vs foundationalism), and scepticism.

103 Ethics II: Metaethics

Prof Ralf Bader – M. 10, Schools

These lectures will cover some of the central topics in meta-ethics, focusing in particular on moral realism, subjectivism/objectivism, moral relativism, error theory and non-cognitivism.

104 Philosophy of Mind I

Dr Umut Baysan – T. 10, Schools

The Philosophy of Mind lectures in Michaelmas Term will focus on the nature of mental states and the mind-body problem. The questions to be covered are: What distinguishes mental states from non-mental states? What are propositional attitudes? Are thoughts and experiences fundamentally different kinds of mental state? What is the mind-body problem? Are there any plausible materialist/physicalist solutions to the mind-body problem? Among the materialist/physicalist views on the mind-body problem, these lectures will focus on: behaviourism, identity theory, and functionalism. (Further topics and views---e.g., supervenience, consciousness and qualia, mental causation, anomalous monism, psycho-physical laws, theories of mental content, externalism---will be covered in Part 2 in Hilary Term.)

Most introductory texts in philosophy of mind cover these topics, but two particularly helpful texts are Jaegwon Kim's *Philosophy of Mind*: 3rd edition (Westview Press, 2011) (though the 2nd edition is equally good) and Pete Mandik's *This is Philosophy of Mind* (Wiley Blackwell, 2014). We will also work with original articles that these texts discuss, most of which are either collected in anthologies such as John Heil's *Philosophy of Mind: A Guide and Anthology* (OUP, 2004) or available online.

106a / 124 Philosophy of Science

Mr Tushar Menon – T. 12 (*all weeks*) and M. 12 (*weeks 2 to 4, 6*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

This is a twelve-lecture course. Topics to be discussed will include some of the following:

- the philosophy of logical positivism, including verificationism about meaning and the distinction between theoretical and observational vocabulary;
- the prospects for a formal account of inductive confirmation, along the lines of deductive logic;
- the feasibility of a scientific methodology free from all but deductive inference;
- the problems raised by the underdetermination of theory by data and the holistic nature of empirical confirmation;

- the problem of radical theory change (“scientific revolutions”) and its possible implications for scientific progress;
- the use of probability in science and scientific inference, especially Bayesianism;
- inference to the best explanation, also known as abductive inference
- the different species of scientific realism and anti-realism and the best arguments for and against them;
- laws of nature, what they are and how (if at all) we come to know them;
- explanation, what it is and its role in science.

The lectures are particularly intended for students reading philosophy with a scientific subject, but all are welcome. Experience of Prelims-level Logic (ie Halbach) will be assumed.

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

Helpful books and articles:

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

109 Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Criticism

Prof James Grant – F. 2 *except week 2*: Th. 2, Exeter College (Fitzhugh Auditorium)¹

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. Those who would like to do preparatory reading should consult the faculty aesthetics reading list on Weblearn. Further reading will be suggested in the lectures.

1. Defining Art.
2. The Ontology of Art.
3. Pictorial Representation.
4. Musical Expression.
5. Literary Interpretation.
6. Metaphor.
7. Beauty.
8. Art and Ethics.

110 Medieval Philosophy: Aquinas

Prof Cecilia Trifogli – Th. 12, Schools

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

113 Post-Kantian Philosophy: Nietzsche

Prof Peter Kail – Th. 10, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

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.

¹ The Fitzhugh Auditorium is found in Exeter's new Cohen Quad, which is on Walton Street ([Google map](#)).

113 Post-Kantian Philosophy: Sartre

Prof Joseph Schear – T. 12, Christ Church (Dummett Lecture Theatre)

This course of lectures will focus primarily on Sartre's 1943 *Being and Nothingness* ('BN'). (The week 3 lecture may also include consideration of the 1937 essay *Transcendence of the Ego*.) Anyone is welcome to attend, including graduate students in philosophy, French, or elsewhere. I will cite passages from Sarah Richmond's new translation of BN just published by Routledge. A provisional outline of topics is as follows:

1. Background: What is phenomenology? What is ontology? What is existentialism?
2. Sartre's project in *Being and Nothingness*
3. Consciousness and selfhood
4. Nothingness and anguish
5. Bad faith and the critique of Freud
6. Being-for-others I: the gaze
7. Being-for-others II: concrete relations with others
8. Freedom and existential psychoanalysis

114 Theory of Politics

Please consult the [website of the Department of Politics and International Relations](#).

118 The Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein / 129 The Philosophy of Wittgenstein²

Prof Bill Child – W. 10, University College (10 Merton Street Lecture Room *except week 4: Goodhart Seminar Room*)

Intended Audience: Undergraduates studying the Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein option (or its successor, The Philosophy of Wittgenstein); anyone else interested in Wittgenstein.

Topics to be covered include: Augustine's conception of language; meaning and use; rules and rule following; sensation language and the private language sections; the inner and the outer. The lectures will aim to introduce students to Wittgenstein's views, to discuss competing interpretations, and to offer some assessment of those views in the light of other philosophical treatments of the same themes. No previous familiarity with Wittgenstein will be assumed.

² Paper 117 Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein, and paper 118 The Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein will be examined for the last time at Finals 2019. From Finals 2020 a new paper, 129 The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, will exist. These lectures will provide coverage for students taking either 118 at Finals 2019 or 129 at Finals 2020 and thereafter.

120 Intermediate Philosophy of Physics: Quantum Mechanics

Prof Christopher Timpson and Dr Owen Maroney – M. T. 11, Radcliffe Humanities
(Lecture Room)

This will be a sixteen lecture course looking in detail at the central conceptual problems of quantum theory. While the application of the mathematical structure of quantum theory has been unambiguously successful, having predictive and explanatory success across vast range of phenomena, there is little consensus on its physical interpretation.

The course will have a particular focus upon clearly distinguishing the operational content of the theory from the properties of physical models that have been proposed to account for quantum phenomena.

Topic to be covered include, but may not be limited to:

- The mathematical formalism of quantum mechanics, including quantum uncertainty, mixed states and decoherence;
- The phenomena of quantum interference and entanglement and why these raise problems for simple attempts to physically interpret the formalism;
- The measurement problem, and the principle interpretative responses to it;
- A more detailed examination of the advantages and weaknesses of the dynamical collapse and the hidden variable programs, with use of the Ghirardi-Rimini-Weber and de Broglie-Bohm theories as exemplars;
- The problem of quantum non-locality, including the Einstein Podolsky-Rosen paradox, and Bell's theorem.

The lectures are primarily aimed at 3rd year undergraduates studying Physics & Philosophy, and at graduate students studying the MSt in Philosophy of Physics. Others are welcome, but some familiarity with quantum mechanics and its mathematical framework will be assumed.

121 Advanced Philosophy of Physics: see entry for graduate class [Philosophy of Physics](#)

122 Philosophy of Mathematics

Prof Joel David Hamkins – Th. 12, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

This series of self-contained lectures on the philosophy of mathematics is intended for students preparing for exam paper 122, although all interested parties are welcome. The lectures will be organized around mathematical themes, in such a way that brings various philosophical issues naturally to light.

Lecture 1. Numbers. Numbers are perhaps the essential mathematical idea, but what are numbers? Our various number systems — natural numbers, integers, rational numbers, real numbers, complex numbers, hyperreal numbers, surreal numbers, ordinal numbers, and more — provide a background for classical arguments on incommensurability, the irrationality of the square root of two, the infinitude of primes and transcendental numbers, leading to discussions of platonism, Frege's number concept, Peano's numbers, Dedekind's categoricity arguments, and the philosophy of structuralism.

Lecture 2. Rigour. We shall treat the problem of mathematical rigour in the development of the calculus. Informal limit concepts and the use of infinitesimals ultimately led to formal concepts of limit and continuity, as well as a capacity for refined notions such as uniform continuity, accompanied by increasing abstraction in the function concept, which we shall illustrate with the Devil's staircase, space-filling curves and the Conway base 13 function.

Lecture 3. Infinity. Beginning with Zeno's paradox and classical ideas on potential versus actual infinity, as well as Galileo's paradox, we shall follow the allegory of Hilbert's hotel to the equinumerosity relation and the notion of countability. Cantor's diagonal arguments, meanwhile, reveal uncountability and a vast hierarchy of orders of infinity. Some arguments give rise to the distinction between constructive and non-constructive proof. Time permitting, we shall count into the transfinite ordinals.

Lecture 4. Geometry. We shall discuss classical Euclidean geometry, accompanied by the Euclidean proof concept and the ideal of straight-edge and compass construction, which leads to the concept of constructible numbers. The impossibility of certain constructions, such as duplicating the cube or trisecting the angle, serves as a counterpoint. The rise of non-Euclidean geometry, especially in light of scientific observations and theories suggesting that physical reality may not be Euclidean, challenges previous accounts of what geometry is about. We shall discuss formalizations of geometry, including Russell on Euclid, Russell and Tarski on betweenness, and the significance of the Tarskian decision procedure.

Lecture 5. Proof. What is proof? What is the relation between proof and truth? After clarifying the distinction between syntax and semantics, we shall introduce formal proof systems and highlight the importance of soundness, completeness and effectivity in any

such system. We shall discuss the increasing significance of computer-aided and computer-verified proof, taking the four-color theorem as an illustrative example.

Lecture 6. Computability. What does it mean for a function to be computable? While Gödel's early approach via primitive recursive functions fell short, Turing's machine concept proved extremely robust, forming a foundation ultimately for the contemporary computer era. We shall discuss the Church-Turing thesis, in both weak and strong forms, as well as the undecidability of the halting problem. Turing's oracle concept leads to a rich mathematical theory of information content. Time and space permitting, we shall carry out a supertask computation, transcending the Turing limit.

Lecture 7. Incompleteness. The Hilbert program, seeking to secure the consistency of higher mathematics by finitary reasoning about the formal system underlying it, was dashed by Gödel's incompleteness theorems, which show that no consistent formal system can prove even its own consistency, let alone the consistency of a stronger system. We shall describe several proofs of the first incompleteness theorem, via the halting problem, via self-reference, and via definability. After this, we'll discuss the Rosser variation, the second incompleteness theorem, and Tarski on the non-definability of truth. Ultimately, one is led to the inherent hierarchy of consistency strength underlying all mathematical theories.

Lecture 8. Set theory. We shall discuss the emergence of set theory as a foundation of mathematics. An initially naive theory, challenged fundamentally by the Russell paradox, grew into Zermelo's formal set theory, founded on the idea of a cumulative universe of sets and providing a robust general context in which to undertake mathematics, while also enabling the clarification of fundamentally set-theoretic issues surrounding the axiom of choice, the continuum hypothesis and an increasingly diverse hierarchy of large cardinal concepts. The development of forcing solved many stubborn questions and illuminated a ubiquitous independence phenomenon, feeding into philosophical issues concerning the criteria by which one should add new axioms to mathematics and the question of pluralism in mathematical foundations.

124 Philosophy of Science: *see 106a/124 Philosophy of Science, [above](#)*

131 Plato on Knowledge, Language and Reality in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*
Prof Michail Peramatzis – Th. 12 (*weeks 1 to 6*), Worcester College

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

The lectures cover some of the most fascinating and rewarding arguments in Plato's late epistemology, philosophy of language, and metaphysics on the basis of his dialogues

Theaetetus and *Sophist*. The first six lectures will focus on the *Theaetetus*, Plato's dialogue about the nature of knowledge, and will discuss the claim that knowledge is perception; being and becoming; the self-refutation of relativism; the refutation of the proposed definition of knowledge as sense perception; knowledge as true belief; false belief; Socrates' dream; knowledge as true belief plus an 'account' (*logos*).

The next six lectures (to be given in TT19) will focus on the *Sophist*, the dialogue where Plato attempts to define what a sophist is, and will examine the method of definition by division; the view that it is impossible to say or think 'what is not'; the discussion of the number and nature of what there is; the view of the so-called 'Late-Learners'; the communion of kinds; the analysis of negative predication; the 'fragmentation' of the kind difference; negative properties; and the analysis of falsehood.

In discussing these topics, we will examine issues of interpretative and philosophical significance.

Greek Text:

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

Suggested English Translation:

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

Sophist, tr. White (Hackett, 1993).

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

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

133 Aristotle on Nature, Life and Mind

Dr Janine Gühler – W. 12, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

The 8 lectures will cover some of Aristotle's most fascinating but also more challenging ideas. We will study his natural philosophy as well as what we nowadays call philosophy of mind. The main texts are Aristotle's *Physics*, *De Anima* and *Partibus Animalum*. We will start off by discussing what Aristotle means by 'nature' and what relevance it has for his investigation. We will then delve into topics of Aristotle's natural philosophy, such as change, the four causes, time, the infinite, matter and form (their relation known as hylomorphism). Hylomorphism plays an important role in Aristotle's understanding of the nature of soul and we will investigate how he makes use of it in *De Anima*. Further topics of *De Anima* are perception and thinking.

Knowledge of Ancient Greek will not be expected but might be useful. These lectures will be of particular interest for Lit Hum Finals students and MSt Ancient Philosophy students but everyone with an interest in Ancient Philosophy is welcome. Handouts and bibliography will be handed out in the lectures.

134 Knowledge and Scepticism in Hellenistic Philosophy (Sextus Empiricus)

Prof Luca Castagnoli – M. 2 – 4, Oriel College

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

- some of the main sources for philosophical scepticism from the fourth century BC to the 3rd century AD, and for the ‘empiricist’ epistemologies of Stoicism and Epicureanism;
- the variety of different positions encompassed by the term ‘Sceptic’;
- the Sceptics’ attacks on ‘dogmatic’ epistemology and the various strategies adopted by the ‘dogmatists’ to defend the possibility of knowledge;
- the ‘dogmatic’ counter-attacks against the Sceptical positions, and the Sceptics’ attempts to defend themselves;
- how the issue of epistemology impacted on the field of ethics: do we need knowledge to live a good and happy life? Is it possible and desirable to *live* one’s Scepticism in a consistent way?

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

This course is primarily intended for those undergraduate students who will sit paper 134 (Sextus Empiricus) in 2019, for all the undergraduate students who plan to sit papers 134, 136 or 139 (Knowledge and Scepticism in Hellenistic Philosophy) in 2020, and for Ancient Philosophy MSt students who plan to write their Option A essay in the area of Hellenistic epistemology and scepticism, but anyone with an interest in ancient Greek philosophy,

philosophical scepticism and the history of epistemology is welcome to attend (knowledge of ancient Greek or Latin is not required).

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

W1. An introduction to Hellenistic philosophy and epistemology.

Epicurean epistemology.

W2. Stoic epistemology.

W3. Scepticism in Plato's Academy I.

W4. Scepticism in Plato's Academy II.

W5. Early Pyrrhonism: Pyrrho and Aenesidemus.

W6. Sextus Empiricus' Pyrrhonism: beliefs, appearances, and the aim of Pyrrhonian scepticism.

W7. The modes of the suspension of judgement: Aenesidemus and Agrippa.

The self-refutation charge and the possibility of Pyrrhonian inquiry.

W8. The Pyrrhonian attack on logic: criteria of truth, signs and proofs.

The Pyrrhonian attack on physics: causes, motion and time.

The Pyrrhonian attack on ethics and the possibility of a Pyrrhonian life.

Main Texts

- A. A. Long, D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, 2 vols., Cambridge: CUP, 1987. Vol. I: esp. sections 1-3 (Pyrrho); 15-19 (Epicureans); 39-42 (Stoics); 68-70 (Academics); 71-72 (Aenesidemus).
- Cicero, *Academic Books*, transl. by C. Brittain, Indianapolis: Hackett, 2006.
- Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Scepticism*, trans. by J. Annas and J. Barnes, Cambridge: CUP, 2000.

Introductory readings

- K. Vogt, 'Ancient Skepticism', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/skepticism-ancient/>.
- D. Sedley, 'The Protagonists', in M. Schofield, M. Burnyeat, J. Barnes (eds.), *Doubt and Dogmatism: Studies in Hellenistic Epistemology*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980, 1-19.

198 Special Subject: Feminist Philosophy

Prof Mari Mikkola – T. 10, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures provide introductions to some central feminist debates in metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of language. The topics covered are as follows:

Feminist metaphysics

- Social construction and social kinds
- The nature of gender
- Compatibility of feminism and metaphysics

Feminist Epistemology

- The problem of bias and feminist epistemology
- Epistemic values and norms from a feminist perspective
- Epistemic injustice

Feminist Philosophy of Language

- Speech act analyses of silencing
- Conceptual engineering and amelioration

Other Events (suitable for all audiences)

Sex, Gender and Practical Ethics

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

This seminar looks at current controversies about sex and gender by way of an enquiry into methods of reasoning and argument in practical ethics. The aim is to investigate the topics not by looking directly at general academic theories and disputes in the area, but via familiar ground-level controversies about how individuals should behave and what institutional policies there should be: questions about such matters as what should count as discrimination, responses to #MeToo accusations, how we should treat individual preferences about the use of pronouns, and so on. The method will in general be to work backwards from particular policy recommendations, considering what arguments might be offered in defence of them, assessing their logic, working out what presuppositions would need to be accepted to make them work, and then reconsidering the the wider questions in the light of those analyses.

The course will start with an analysis of the 19th-century debate about The Woman Question, and use conclusions about confusions at the time to try to clarify the ways current debates are framed. After the introductory sessions, the topics discussed will at least to some extent depend on the interests of the class.

Advance reading is not essential, but reference will be made to *The Subjection of Women*, by John Stuart Mill, and the equality section of *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* by James FitzJames Stephen.

The class is intended primarily for graduate students, but undergraduates are also welcome.

Minds and Machines

Mr Sam Clarke – F. 11 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures will provide an introduction to, and critical engagement with, the computational theory of mind—the view that the mind is (in some significant sense) *computational*. This is a fundamental assumption behind much work in the philosophy of mind, psychology, and the cognitive sciences more generally. However, it is somewhat obscure and far from uncontroversial. Thus:

- Lecture 1 will consider what it means to say that the mind is a computer, before situating answers to this question within broader debates in the philosophy of mind.
- In Lecture 2 we will consider Jerry Fodor's Language of Thought Hypothesis, which is closely aligned with traditional formulations of the computational theory of mind. I'll introduce arguments in its favor, and consider ways in which these might be resisted.

- In Lecture 3 we will examine Connectionism. This is widely taken to be *the* leading alternative to classical computationalism and is often seen to present a challenge to the language of thought hypothesis. I'll introduce the view's distinctive features, examine its virtues, and ask whether it actually provides a viable alternative to classical approaches.

- In Lecture 4 we will close by considering *the frame problem*. This is sometimes deemed the single biggest problem facing the computational theory of mind. But is there one frame problem or many, and which of these (if any) actually undermine computationalism?

I will not set reading for these lectures. However, there are many introductory textbooks which interested students are encouraged to consider. My favourites are *Mindware* by Andy Clark and *The Mechanical Mind* by Tim Crane.

Philosophical Issues related to maximising happiness

Mr Michael Plant – F. 9.30 – 11 (*weeks 5 to 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

All plausible moral theories hold we have a *pro tanto* obligation to maximise happiness: we should do so unless this would violate some moral constraint, it would be overly demanding or we could do something even better. Many questions in ethics turn on what happiness is, whose happiness matters and which outcome has more of it. Despite the significance of happiness-maximisation to practical philosophy, the topic remains curiously under-explored. I propose a series of four lectures which covers some of more the crucial issues.

1. Happiness: what is it? why does it matter? how can it be measured?

The first lecture starts with some essential motivation and theoretical background. I set out the different definitions for happiness and well-being and note all plausible moral theories agree there is a *pro tanto* duty to maximise it. I then move onto the measurement of happiness. I explain how this is done in the social sciences, highlight various methodological concerns we might have and argue happiness can be meaningfully measured, although it's not possible to assuage all our doubts on this question.

2. Should we save lives or improve lives? The Meat Eater problem

If we want to maximise happiness, one obvious concern is whether it would be better to focus on *improving lives* (increasing the quality of life whilst people live) or *saving lives*. I make a few clarificatory comments about different accounts of the badness of death and then present the 'Meat Eater problem'. I argue those who accept factory farming is wrong because it causes suffering should recognise this should also cause a (very) substantial reduction in the value of saving lives compared to improving lives: the longer people live, the more meat they will eat. Implications and objections are discussed.

3. Is reducing global poverty the most cost-effective way to improve happiness?

Proponents of Effective Altruism, such as Singer and MacAskill, seem to claim that if your aim is to *improve lives* of those alive today, where improvement is understood in terms of happiness, your charitable donations do the most good when targeted at global poverty. I identify the implicit assumptions this conclusion seems to rest on, for instance that income is a good proxy for happiness, and argue they are mistaken. I provide some conceptual

distinctions that help us think about how to maximally improve happiness and suggest where we might get more change for our pound than global poverty.

4. Population ethics: should we be focusing on existential risks?

A recent, prominent line of thought holds that, once we have accepted how many future people there could be, if we want to maximise happiness it would be better to focus on reducing existential risks than improving the happiness of those alive today. One group of theories that avoids this conclusion are Person-Affecting views ('PAV') of population ethics; they hold, in slogan form, we are interested in making people happy and indifferent about making happy people. As existential risk reduction largely concerns 'making people' it is thus deemed relatively unimportant. PAV have widely been regarded as implausible due to the Non-Identity Problem. I discuss this, as well as other objections, and argue PAV are much more plausible than they seem (specifically, I advocate a PAV called 'Necessitarianism').

All four lectures cover or touch on topics in the Undergraduate Syllabus. Lecture 1 is relevant for *Mill's Utilitarianism* and *General Philosophy*. Lecture 2 pertains to *103 Applied Ethics* and *128 Practical Ethics*. Lecture 3 is a topic in MacAskill's *Utilitarianism* lectures, as is lecture 4. Lecture 4 would be useful for *128 foundational issues in effective altruism* and *103 Ethics 1: Normative Ethics*.

Applied Ethics Discussion Group

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

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

Graduate Classes

Pro-seminar for first-year BPhil students

Various class-givers – T. 2 – 4, various locations

Practical Philosophy groups: Prof James Grant / Prof Adrian Moore – Exeter College / St Hugh's College

Theoretical Philosophy groups: Prof Anita Avramides / Prof Ofra Magidor – Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room) / Radcliffe Humanities (Meeting Room 4)

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

The Ontology of Action: Aristotle and after

Prof Ursula Coope – W. 4 – 6, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

Questions to be discussed include:

- what kind of entities are actions (events, processes, or some other kind of entity)?
- what is the relation between acting and causing?
- what is the significance of aspect in the philosophy of action?

We shall approach these questions as follows.

(i) We shall study some relevant texts of Aristotle (texts often appealed to in modern discussions). Our key texts will be *Physics* III.1-3 and *Metaphysics* Theta 6, though we shall also consult some other parts of Aristotle's *Physics*.

(ii) We shall look at some modern discussions of action that attempt to make use of distinctions originally introduced in these Aristotelian texts (e.g. authors such as Ford, Stout, Hornsby, Mourelatos, Thompson, Steward, Charles).

(iii) We shall look at two responses to these Aristotelian texts from late antiquity: in Plotinus's *Enneads* VI.1.15-22 and VI.3.21-28 and in Simplicius's *Commentary on Aristotle's Categories*, chapter 9.

The Stoics on the Emotions

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

This seminar focuses on a topic of recurring interest in ancient moral psychology: the Stoic theory of emotions (πάθη). The Stoics were notorious in the Hellenistic period and beyond for their claim that the happy life contains no emotions. To defend this counter-intuitive view, the ancient Stoics advanced a sophisticated and subtle analysis of emotion, which can be roughly described as ‘cognitivist’: to experience any emotion, on the Stoic analysis, involves endorsing some false practical proposition concerning what is fitting to do in one’s circumstances. The details of this account, however, remain the subject of ongoing scholarly dispute. Is this act of endorsement sufficient to experience an emotion or merely necessary? Through what kind of representational vehicle does the emotional agent entertain this false practical proposition? Where does phenomenology -- e.g. the ‘burning’ of anger or the downcast feeling of sadness -- fit in the Stoic account? One aim of the seminar will be to introduce students to these interpretative debates, and to enable them to arrive at their own informed views on how the Stoic view is best construed.

One difficulty plaguing the study of Stoic moral psychology -- and of Hellenistic philosophy more generally -- is the paucity of sources. No single, complete text authored by a founding Stoic figure has survived into 21st century. Consequently, to reconstruct Stoic doctrine we have to rely on second-hand reports of various degrees of reliability, as well as isolated fragments of the original texts. A second aim of the seminar will be to provide students with guidance on how to assess and make use of doxographical and fragmentary source material.

While I will take the lead in presenting the necessary background material, this seminar is not a lecture course. The goal is to help you develop your own philosophical and textual skills. Active participation in each session from all participants is required. There will also be opportunities for students to lead discussion / make a presentation on a topic of interest.

This seminar presumes no prior study of Stoicism. Some familiarity with Platonic and Aristotelian ethics and moral psychology will be helpful. It is primarily aimed at graduate students in ancient philosophy at all levels (D.Phil., B.Phil., M.St.), but other interested parties are welcome to attend.

We will try to consult our sources as much as possible in the original Greek and Latin.

By attending and participating in this seminar, MSt students in Ancient Philosophy fulfill their mandatory course requirement for Michaelmas term.

Provisional schedule of topics:

Week 1: Basic elements of Stoic psychology + Socratic background

Week 2: Basic elements of Stoic ethics

Week 3: Four-fold classification of emotions

Week 4: Out of control impulses (Chrysippus's Runner Analogy)

Week 5: Opinion and emotion

Week 6: Posidonius on the emotions

Week 7: Pre-emotions and strategies of emotional therapy

Week 8: Eros and the eupatheia of the Sage

Depending on time and interest, students may also present a related topic in Platonic / Aristotelian thought, or on parallels between Stoicism and contemporary theories of the emotions.

Main texts:

Detailed reading assignments will be provided at the first meeting. We will be focusing mainly on selections from the following ancient works:

Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 3-4

Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 7.39-160

Galen, *On the Doctrines of Plato and Hippocrates* 4-5

Seneca, *On Anger*

Introductory readings:

Brennan, T. 2005. *The Stoic Life*. Oxford: OUP. Parts I-II

---. 2003. "Stoic Moral Psychology" in *Cambridge Companion to Stoicism* (ed. B. Inwood). Cambridge: CUP.

Graver, M. 2007. *Stoicism and Emotion*. Chicago: U. of Chicago Press. Ch. 1-2.

Inwood, B. 1985. *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism*. Oxford: OUP. Ch. 3, 5.

Long and Sedley. 1987. *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, vol. 1. Cambridge: CUP. Sections 39-42, 53, 60, 65

Nussbaum, M. 1994. *Therapy of Desire*. Princeton: PU Press. Ch. 10

Ancient background reading:

Plato, *Gorgias* 466-472

Plato, *Meno* 77-79

Plato, *Protagoras* 352-358

Plato, *Republic* IV

Universals

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

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

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

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

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

Introductory reading:

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

Compassion and Morality

Dr Cressida Gaukroger – M. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This course will focus on the relationship between compassion and ethical theories. The first part of the course will concern the cases for and against compassion being important for ethics. We will use the topic of compassion to contrast theories that reject emotions as the basis for ethical behaviour (deontology and utilitarianism), with those that see emotional reactions as a fundamental to human goodness (virtue ethics and feminist ethics). We will analyse what compassion is and how it relates to empathy, altruism, moral motivation and moral character. The second part of the course will look at the question of when it is appropriate to feel compassion. Questions we will discuss include:

- What is the role of compassion in moral theories?
- Are we morally required to feel compassion? And if so, does this violate "ought implies can"?
- Could feeling compassion actually get in the way of doing good?
- Who deserves our compassion? Does mere suffering require compassion, or only particular kinds of suffering? Should we have compassion for someone suffering due to punishment for a crime? Or for Hollywood actresses who receive less pay than their male counterparts, but still earn more than most people?
- Is compassion necessarily biased in favour of those closer to us? And if so, is this a problem?

Each seminar will discuss two to three core readings. Students will be expected to volunteer to start the seminar with a brief presentation of the week's core readings. All students should also come to each seminar with one question, comment, or problem regarding that week's readings.

An introductory background in Ethics will be assumed (for example, familiarity with standard positions in normative ethics – deontology, utilitarianism, virtue ethics). The readings will include some works in moral psychology, though these will be accessible without a psychology background.

Philosophy and Literature

Prof Stephen Mulhall and Prof Alice Cray – Th. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This class will not focus primarily on what is generally called 'the philosophy of literature', although various topics central to that field (eg the status of fictional entities, the relationship between author and reader, the significance of authorial intention) will surface along the way. Our interest lies rather in the relationship between literature and philosophy more broadly conceived, and in particular upon the ways in which literature (contrary to its fateful Platonic banishment from the just city) might claim the right to make pertinent contributions not only to specific branches of philosophy (ethics, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind) but to revising philosophy's conception of its own nature – its goals, its methods, and its resources.

The course will begin by examining the ways in which some philosophers have recently argued that literary texts should be seen as having a particularly important role to play in our thinking about ethics. The work of Nussbaum and Diamond will be discussed in relation to some of their most prominent philosophical critics (McMahan, O'Neill), and in relation to specific literary texts by Henry James and Iris Murdoch. These discussions quickly broaden out to encompass questions about the nature of rationality, its relation to emotion and embodiment, and the implications of these matters for our understanding of philosophy's own presuppositions as an intellectual enterprise. The primary reference point here will be Coetzee's Tanner Lectures, *The Lives of Animals*, which have prompted rich responses from a number of philosophers (Singer, McDowell, Diamond and Cavell), a full understanding of which will require not only an engagement with the moral standing of non-human animals but also a broader excursion into the nature of realism and modernism in the arts, particularly as interpreted by the art historian, critic and theorist Michael Fried. The final weeks of the course will then follow out some of the implications of this material, either by looking in detail at more recent work by Coetzee (the 'Jesus' novels) or by exploring the ways in which European thinkers such as Auerbach, Lukacs and Bakhtin have theorized realism and modernism in relation to philosophy and to the broader culture of modernity. The class participants will be able to choose which of these paths is taken.

The class will presuppose no prior understanding of the material to be discussed, and so will be accessible to students at any stage of the B. Phil programme (although it may of course be of particular relevance to students intending to write on topics in ethics and aesthetics). Graduate students in other programmes (in the philosophy faculty and in other faculties) will also be welcome to attend, with the class-givers' permission.

A full reading list for the course is available on the faculty [Weblearn site](#).

Population Ethics

Prof Ralf Bader – F. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This seminar will focus on population ethics. Questions to be discussed include: How should well-being be aggregated? Is it possible to avoid the repugnant conclusion? What makes the repugnant conclusion repugnant? How should we understand the notion of a life worth living? Is existence axiologically comparable with non-existence? Is it possible to defend the asymmetry? (Recommended background readings: Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, Part IV; Broome, *Weighing Lives*.)

Formal Semantics

Prof Paul Elbourne – W. 9 – 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

Much work by contemporary philosophers of language uses the tools of formal semantics. This course trains students in the craft of doing formal semantics. It introduces Frege's hypothesis that functional application is the mechanism by which the meaning of a complex phrase is composed from the meanings of its constituent parts. It applies this insight to the analysis of a variety of core semantic phenomena, including argument structure, adjectival modification, definite descriptions, relative clauses, binding, and quantification. Emphasis throughout is on training students to be able to produce explicit detailed analyses of novel data.

We will be using the following textbook: Irene Heim and Angelika Kratzer, 1998, *Semantics in Generative Grammar*, Blackwell. Students intending to follow this course should acquire a copy.

Before the first session, participants are requested to read the first three chapters of the textbook and do Exercises 3a and 3d on pages 32-4; for Exercise 3a, please use the lambda notation as defined on pages 34-8.

Metaphysics

Prof Alexander Kaiserman and Prof Timothy Williamson – M. 2 – 4, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

In this class we will discuss eight recent papers in metaphysics, which students will be expected to read in advance. The schedule will be as follows:

Week 1: Kit Fine, 'Counterfactuals Without Possible Worlds', *Journal of Philosophy* (2012).

Week 2: Daniel Nolan, 'It's a Kind of Magic: Lewis, Magic and Properties', *Synthese* (forthcoming).

Week 3: Cian Dorr, 'Against Counterfactual Miracles', *Philosophical Review* (2016).

Week 4: Carolina Sartorio, 'Sensitivity to Reasons and Actual Sequences', *Oxford Studies in Agency and Responsibility* (David Shoemaker ed., 2015).

Week 5: Amie Thomasson, 'How can we Come to Know Metaphysical Modal Truths?', *Synthese* (forthcoming).

Week 6: Jonathan Schaffer, 'What Not to Multiply Without Necessity', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* (2015)

Week 7: Ofra Magidor, 'Endurantism vs. Purdurantism?: A Debate Reconsidered', *Nous* (2016).

Week 8: Mark Johnston, 'Personites, Maximality and Ontological Trash', *Philosophical Perspectives* (2017).

Philosophy of Physics

Prof Adam Caulton, Dr Owen Maroney, Dr James Read – Th. 9 – 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This series of classes will cover contemporary topics in the philosophy of physics, with emphasis on thermal physics, symmetries and spacetime.

The primary intended audience is MSt students in Philosophy of Physics and fourth year Physics & Philosophy undergraduates studying the Advanced Philosophy of Physics paper. Others (especially BPhil students with a Philosophy of Physics interest) are welcome. The provisional schedule is:

Weeks 1-4 Dr O Maroney

Week 1 What is statistical mechanics? Boltzmann vs Gibbs

Week 2 The reduction of thermodynamics to statistical mechanics

Week 3 The problem of entropy and the Past Hypothesis

Week 4 Fluctuations and Maxwell's Demon

Weeks 5-6 Dr A Caulton

Week 5 Noether's Theorems

Week 6 The ontology of the Aharonov-Bohm effect

Week 7-8 Dr J Read

Week 7: The hole argument in general relativity

Week 8: Chronogeometry in spacetime theories

The Structure of Thought

Dr James Quilty-Dunn – F. 9 – 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This graduate seminar will be about the nature and structure of concepts. The ability to think thoughts like CATS ARE FUZZY and TOM OWNS A CAT requires the ability to think about cats as such. Thinkers who have this ability thereby have the concept CAT. In the cognitive science literature, concepts are typically understood to be mental representations with a number of characteristic roles:

- (1) They compose with other concepts to form complex concepts (e.g., BLACK CAT) and propositional structures (e.g., FELIX IS A CAT);
- (2) They apply to things in the world (e.g., CAT applies to cats, THERESA MAY applies to an individual);
- (3) They underlie categorization (e.g., the ability to categorize something as a cat and to distinguish cats from non-cats);
- (4) They underlie inference (e.g., thinking FELIX IS A CAT licenses an inference to FELIX IS A MAMMAL);
- (5) They are expressed in language and function as (representations of) the meanings of words (e.g., one expresses thoughts about cats using the word 'cat' and understands instances of the word 'cat' by deploying the concept CAT).

Roles 1 and 2 are often taken to fit best with an "atomistic" theory of concepts as unstructured mental symbols (or complexes that comprise unstructured mental symbols). Roles 3 and 4 are more central in psychology and push toward the widespread view that concepts are "bodies of knowledge"—complicated networks of information such as prototypes, exemplars, causal models, theories, and other sorts of mental structures. The significance of role 5 is less clear; it is often taken as a bedrock assumption in philosophy and psychology, but it has recently been called into question by some semanticists.

We will explore the literature on concepts in search of a unified theory. Readings will be taken from philosophy, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, psycholinguistics, semantics, and neuroscience. Questions we will consider include: What are desiderata for a theory of concepts? Are concepts prototypes? What is the relation between concepts and theories? Are concepts bodies of information or unstructured symbols? Do concepts always determine extensions? Are concepts word meanings? How are concepts acquired? What role, if any, do concepts play in visual perception?

Weekly readings, including readings for Week 1, will be posted online at goo.gl/i5moVj.

The course will not meet at the regularly scheduled time in Week 6; a make-up class may be scheduled later in the term.

Regular Faculty Seminars

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

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

- Monday* **Moral Philosophy Seminar**
Usual schedule: weekly, 4.30 to 6.30, Lecture Room
Webpage: http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/lectures/moral_philosophy
- Philosophy of Mathematics Seminar**
Usual schedule: weeks vary; 4.30 to 6.30, Ryle Room
Webpage: <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~philmath/pomseminar.html>
- Tuesdays* **Post-Kantian European Philosophy Seminar**
Usual schedule: even-numbered weeks, 5 to 7, Ryle Room
Webpage: http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/lectures/the_postkantian_seminar
- Thursdays* **Workshop in Ancient Philosophy**
Usual schedule: weekly, 4.30 to 6, Ryle Room
Webpage: http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/lectures/workshop_in_ancient_philosophy
- Philosophy of Physics Seminar**
Usual schedule: weekly, 4.30 to 6.30, Lecture Room
Webpage: <http://www.philosophy-of-physics.ox.ac.uk/tag/thursday-seminars/>
- Fridays* **Jowett Society / Philosophical Society**
Usual schedule: weekly, 3.30 to 5.30, Lecture Room
Webpage: <https://jowettsociety.wordpress.com/>

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