

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY  
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



# PHILOSOPHY LECTURES PROSPECTUS

TRINITY 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:**

- A paper number (eg “101”) indicates that the lecture is a Core Lecture for the Honour Schools paper with that number.
- The normal duration of an event is one hour. That is, for “W. 11”, the event is booked in the room on Wednesdays from 11 to 12. Where the class or lecture has a different duration, the start time and end time will be given.
- Unless otherwise specified, the lectures and classes are given for all of weeks 1 to 8.
- Lectures and classes begin at five minutes “past the hour”, and end five minutes before. (E.g: a lecture listed as “M. 10” will start on Mondays at 10.05am, and finish at 10.55am.)
- Students registered on Philosophy courses, and Faculty members, will need their University card to enter the Philosophy Centre at Radcliffe Humanities. Visitors should use the intercom on the front door to ask for access.
- There are several rooms used as lecture/class spaces at Radcliffe Humanities. The main rooms used by Philosophy are the Ryle Room (1<sup>st</sup> floor) and the Lecture Room (2<sup>nd</sup> floor). Other rooms sometimes used are the Colin Matthew Room, and Meeting Room 4 (ground floor) and Meeting Room 7 and the Seminar Room (3<sup>rd</sup> floor).
- There is lift and stair access to all floors. A list of rooms is found by the stairwell and lift on each floor.
- “Schools” refers to the Examination Schools (75 – 81 High Street), one of the main lecturing facilities in the University. If you visit the Schools for a lecture or class, please be sure to check the electronic notice boards in the lobby, which will tell you which room the lecture/class is in.
- Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this Prospectus is accurate at the start of term, but sometimes errors persist. If you think you have found a mistake, please contact James Knight ([james.knight@philosophy.ox.ac.uk](mailto:james.knight@philosophy.ox.ac.uk)).

# Lectures for the First Public Examination

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

*Computer Science and Philosophy*: Turing

*Mathematics and Philosophy*: Frege, *Foundations of Arithmetic*

*Physics and Philosophy*: The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence

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

## **Plato: *Euthyphro* and *Meno***

Prof Lindsay Judson – M. W. 11, Christ Church (Michael Dummett Lecture Theatre)

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

Brief description:

This is a course of 16 lectures, primarily for Classics Mods students offering these dialogues as their philosophy option; the lectures pay particular attention to introducing philosophical concepts, analysing arguments, and explaining how to read Platonic dialogues. The lectures will begin with an introduction to philosophy in general, as well as an introduction to Socrates and Plato: in particular, I shall say something about why Plato wrote dialogues and how we should approach them. I shall then look at the *Euthyphro* in some detail, exploring the two dialogues it contains – the one between Socrates and Euthyphro and the one between Plato and his readers. In the second half of the course I shall look at the *Meno*: topics discussed will include definition and the ‘Socratic fallacy’; the view that everyone always desires what is good; the paradox of enquiry and Plato’s response to it; hypotheses, knowledge and true belief.

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

## **The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence**

Prof Oliver Pooley and Dr Thomas Møller-Nielsen – M. 2 – 4 (*weeks 1 to 6*), Oriel College (Robert Beddard Room)

Audience: Physics and Philosophy students preparing for prelims.

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

### **Frege: *Foundations of Arithmetic***

Prof James Studd – T. 12, Maths Institute (L3 *except week 8*: L2)

These are the core lectures for first-year mathematic and philosophy students. In weeks 1-6, 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. The last two lectures (weeks 7-8) will focus on revision and exam technique.

### **Alan Turing on Computability and Intelligence**

Prof Peter Millican – T. W. 12 (*weeks 1 to 4*), 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 few 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.

# Lectures for the Honour Schools

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

Students should also refer to the sections *Other Lectures* following. Lectures listed there are not official core lectures, but nonetheless often cover topics of relevance to the Finals papers. Those listings this term are open to all, but might particularly interest students taking 103 Ethics, 115/130 Plato *Republic*, 116/132 Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics*, 118 Later Wittgenstein, 120 Intermediate Philosophy of Physics, 121 Advanced Philosophy of Physics, 124 Philosophy of Science, 128 Practical Ethics, and 133 Aristotle *Physics*.

## **101 Early Modern Philosophy: Locke and Berkeley**

Prof Anita Avramides – T. 10 (*weeks 1 to 4*) and T. W. 12 (*weeks 7 and 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures are intended for those studying for the Early Modern Philosophy paper (101). Others are welcome to attend. NB: the schedule below may be slightly revised at the first lecture.

Lecture 1: General introduction to Locke, the man and his work. Other issues to be discussed: the relationship between philosophy and the history of philosophy; the relationship between philosophy and science; Locke's corpuscularianism; Locke and his relationship to the Scholastics; Locke's empiricism.

Lecture 2: Locke's understanding of knowledge and its limits; Locke and scepticism: does Locke have a satisfactory response to the sceptical issues that plagued Descartes?

Lecture 3: Locke's reaction to innatism and his empiricist alternative.

Lecture 4: A general discussion of Locke on substance and real essence.

Lecture 5: Locke's idea of abstraction as a way of coming by generality is presented; Berkeley's criticism of the idea of abstraction and his alternative for achieving generality is then discussed.

Lecture 6: An overview of Berkeley's idealism

Lecture 7: Berkeley and Solipsism: can Berkeley avoid the charge?

Lecture 8: Scepticism: Locke and Berkeley

## 106b Philosophy of Social Science

Prof Alexander Prescott-Couch – Th. 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

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

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

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

The lecture plan is as follows:

- Lecture 1: Causal Explanation in Natural and Social Science
- Lecture 2: *Verstehen*, Meaning, and Rationality
- Lecture 3: Idealization and Modeling
- Lecture 4: Functional Explanation, Holism, and Methodological Individualism
- Lecture 5: Critical Theory, Ideology, and the “Emancipatory” Social Science
- Lecture 6: Historical Narrative and Genealogy
- Lecture 7: The Metaphysics of the Social World
- Lecture 8: The Role of Values in Social Science

### **108 The Philosophy of Logic and Language**

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

These lectures will cover selected topics in the philosophy of language. They are designed to complement a series of lectures given in Hilary Term that concentrated on the philosophy of logic. We will concentrate on truth, meaning (the nature of propositions, internalism and externalism about meaning), and reference (the semantics of names, demonstratives, and definite descriptions).

### **113 Post-Kantian Philosophy: Sartre**

Prof Joseph Schear – W. 11 (*not on in week 7*), Christ Church (Lecture Room 2)

This course of lectures is primarily about Jean-Paul Sartre's 1943 book, *Being and Nothingness*. Undergraduates studying the post-Kantian philosophy paper are my primary audience. Anyone, however, is welcome to attend. Students of French literature with an interest in Sartre are especially welcome.

1. Introduction to Sartre (Phenomenology, Intentionality, Ontology)
2. *Being and Nothingness*: What is the Project?
3. Consciousness, Nothingness, and the Pre-reflective Cogito
4. Bad Faith
5. Being-for-Others
6. Concrete Relations with Others, and Merleau-Ponty's Criticism of Sartre
7. *No lecture*
8. Freedom

### **135 Latin Philosophy**

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

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

In the eight lectures this term, we will examine fundamental issues in Stoic ethics, as they are presented in Cicero (*De Finibus* III, *De Officiis* I) and Seneca (*Letters* 92, 95, 121; *De Constantia*; *De Vita Beata*). This task will occasionally require forays into Stoic logic and physics, given the systematic character of Stoic philosophy.

In particular, we will be focusing on the following topics: the Stoic account of happiness and the goal of human action; the role of nature in ethics, and the Stoic theory of 'natural appropriation' (*oikeiôsis*); the Stoic distinction between being good and being preferred, and whether it is tenable; Stoic arguments for why only virtue is good, and why virtue is sufficient for happiness; the analysis and evaluation of emotions (*pathê*); and whether Stoic

ethics is impossibly demanding. Throughout, we will keep in mind philological and literary questions arising from Cicero and Seneca's re-packaging of Greek philosophy for a Roman audience.



## Other Lectures (suitable for all audiences)

### **The 2018 John Locke Lectures: *Learning and Doing: Toward a Unified Account of Rationality in Belief, Desire, and Action***

Prof Peter Railton (Michigan) – W. 5 – 7 (weeks 2 to 7), Mathematical Institute

The Faculty of Philosophy is delighted to welcome Prof Railton as the 2018 John Locke Lecturer. The lectures will take place on Wednesdays in weeks 2 to 7, and there will be discussion sessions in the Faculty on *some* Thursdays from 9 to 11 following the lectures: details of the schedule of discussion sessions will be announced by the lecturer.

Series abstract:

We can think of *rationality* both narrowly and broadly. In the narrow sense, rationality is about proper *reasoning*, and about thinking or acting in accord with such reasoning. In the broad sense, rationality is about *reasons-responsiveness*, which incorporates a wider array of capacities that enable us to respond aptly to reasons—in perception, belief, inference, motivation, and action. Even narrow rationality ineliminably involves attitudes and dispositions that cannot themselves be exercises of reasoning, on pain of regress. But how, if not by reasoning, can such attitudes and dispositions become *well-attuned* or *sensitive* to reasons?—A question posed by, among others, Aristotle, Hume, and Kant.

Each of these figures took seriously the idea that ‘What I can’t build, I don’t understand’, and sought to ‘build’ accounts of desire, belief, or action that permitted us to see rationality in the broad sense at work—even in reasoning. We will proceed likewise, taking advantage of recent work in both philosophy and psychology to move the project forward and increase its descriptive (and potentially explanatory) depth. This in turn can help us make progress in large-scale debates in philosophy that often depend upon conceptions of desire, belief, and action—e.g., disputes over the nature of normative judgment and the possibility of realism in the normative domain. On these questions, I will be using the account developed of desire, belief, and action to defend cognitivism and realism, and, at the end, to respond to recent criticisms of moral cognitivism and realism on psychological, neuroscientific, and evolutionary grounds—the weight of the evidence, I suggest, lies on the vindicative rather than debunking side of these debates.

Lecture 1 (*Wednesday 2 May 2018*): ‘Desire, value, and learning’

Lecture 2 (*Wednesday 9 May 2018*): ‘Belief, expectation, and affect’

Lecture 3 (*Wednesday 16 May 2018*): ‘Action without regress’

Lecture 4 (*Wednesday 23 May 2018*): ‘Guidance by norms and values without regress’

Lecture 5 (*Wednesday 30 May 2018*): ‘Guidance by moral norms and values’

Lecture 6 (*Wednesday 6 June 2018*): ‘Moral learning and social change’

**2018 H L A Hart Memorial Lecture: *Primary Rules as Social Norms: a Genealogy***

Prof Phillip Pettit (Princeton, ANU) – Th. 5 (*week 8*), University College (10 Merton St)

Details will be published in due course at <https://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/event/the-2018-h.l.a.-hart-memorial-lecture>.

**2018 Gareth Evans Memorial Lecture: *How the Liquid Self Corrodes Ethical Life***

Prof Mark Johnston (Princeton) – T. 5 (*week 7*), Merton College (T S Eliot Theatre)

Over the last half-century or so, much has been said about the corrosive effect on ethics of “scientism” or scientific naturalism; the view that the ontology of a completed basic natural science, say future physics, will provide an “alphabet of being” with respect to which everything present in space and time is a word or a sentence or a paragraph or a novel or a library built up from that alphabet, by modes of combination which the natural science in question can make fully intelligible. Scientism has been charged with deracinating the meaning of human life; with entrenching skepticism about the authority of traditional values, including truthfulness itself; and with obliterating teleology from history and so from our informed understanding of history, thereby leaving us in a condition of liquid post-modernity in which all meta-narratives appear as laughably unempirical and defensive stories that serve to mask the arbitrary evolution of material events and of technological and financial power.

By and large, Anglophone academic ethics has remained calm in the face of such claims, even though many of its practitioners either endorse scientific naturalism or see no viable alternative to it.

As a matter of temperament, I also prefer calm. But I have discovered a series of arguments that begin with the variety of naturalistic conceptions of the self and proceed to demonstrate that with the exception of hedonistic utilitarianism and its ilk, *ethics is bunk if scientific naturalism is true*. In the lecture I explain some of these arguments, and invite you to help me with my resultant disquiet.

## **The Foundations of General Relativity**

Mr James Read – W. 10 (*weeks 1 to 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

In these lectures, I will introduce four topics in the philosophy of general relativity. The course will be aimed at undergraduates taking, or considering taking, the Advanced Philosophy of Physics paper, as well as at MSt and BPhil students. However, all are welcome.

### Lecture 1: Background independence

In this lecture, I will introduce the relevant formalism of general relativity, before posing the question: what's so special about this theory? Various answers have been given over the past century, including the theory's 'diffeomorphism invariance', 'general covariance', lack of 'absolute objects', or 'background independence'. I will review these proposals, and their various demerits.

#### Reading:

Oliver Pooley, "Background Independence, Diffeomorphism Invariance, and the Meaning of Coordinates", in D. Lehmkuhl, G. Schieman and E. Scholz (eds.), *Towards a Theory of Spacetime Theories*, Birkhäuser, 2017.

### Lecture 2: Gravitational energy

The notion of gravitational energy is notoriously problematic in general relativity. In this lecture, I will address two questions: (i) In what sense can gravitational energy be regarded as existing in this theory?; (ii) How does the status of gravitational energy in general relativity compare with its status in other spacetime theories, such as Newtonian mechanics or special relativity?

#### Reading:

Carl Hoefer, "Energy Conservation in GTR", *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Modern Physics* 31(2), 2000.

### Lecture 3: The dynamical approach to spacetime theories

According to the 'dynamical approach' to spacetime theories as developed in the context of special relativity by Harvey Brown and Oliver Pooley, the Minkowski metric field is a "glorious non-entity"—it is merely a codification of the symmetries of the dynamical laws governing matter fields. In this lecture, I will discuss how the story told by advocates of the dynamical approach changes once one moves to general relativity, and will consider the extent to which this view is a defensible one in that theory.

Reading:

Harvey R. Brown and James Read, "The Dynamical Approach to Spacetime", in E. Knox and A. Wilson (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Physics*, London: Routledge, 2018. (Forthcoming.)

Lecture 4: Spacetime functionalism

According to 'spacetime functionalism', the object which qualifies as 'spatiotemporal' in one's physical theory is picked out by the functional role that it plays. According to the specific brand of spacetime functionalism advanced by Eleanor Knox, spacetime is picked out as "that structure which defines a structure of local inertial frames". In this lecture, I will appraise this brand of spacetime functionalism, and explore the extent to which it overlaps with the dynamical approach to spacetime theories discussed in the previous lecture. I will also reflect upon the general merits of functionalist approaches to the definition of physical quantities and concepts.

Reading:

Eleanor Knox, "Effective Spacetime Geometry", *Studies in History and Philosophy of Modern Physics* 44, pp. 346-356, 2013.

### **Key topics in Wittgenstein's later philosophy**

Mr Sebastian Greve – M. 10 (*weeks 4 to 7*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

These lectures are primarily intended for students taking the Wittgenstein paper. Each of the four lectures will cover one key topic in Wittgenstein's later philosophy, including its wider philosophical significance and some of the main exegetical issues in the secondary literature.

Week 4: The Augustinian picture of language

Week 5: Rules and rule-following

Week 6: Philosophy of philosophy

Week 7: Private language

### **Practical Ethics: Methods of reasoning and argument**

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

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

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

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

### **Aristotle's philosophy of science**

Dr Naoya Iwata – T. 3, Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

What is science? How is a field of science related to another? And what is the relation between science and ethics? Aristotle was the first to tackle these questions by defining what knowledge is. In this course we first survey his theory of scientific knowledge and then examine its major individual fields (metaphysics, physics and psychology) and the relation between them and ethics. The common view is that different fields of knowledge are autonomous of each other because they have their own first principles, which cannot be demonstrated by them or any other knowledge. But there has been a recent trend among scholars towards reconsidering that fractionalized view of scientific knowledge and getting closer to such a unified view as Plato's. By looking into relevant Aristotelian passages and some of Plato's doctrines, we aim to evaluate those competing views.

This course should be useful for students who take any papers on Aristotle as well as Plato, especially *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Republic*. Graduate students are also very welcome.

#### Text and Secondary Literature

Barnes, J., (1984), *The Complete Works of Aristotle: the Revised Oxford Translation*, 2 vols. Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Irwin, T., (1988), *Aristotle's First Principles*, Clarendon, Oxford.

Henry, D. and Nielsen, K. M., eds., (2015), *Bridging the Gap between Aristotle's Science and Ethics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

#### Course Schedule

Week 1. Introduction: Division of Knowledge

*Nicomachean Ethics* VI and *Metaphysics* E

Week 2. The Structure of Scientific Knowledge

*Posterior Analytics* I. 1–6

Week 3. Scientific Learning

*Posterior Analytics* II. 8–10

Week 4. Problems about First Principles

*Posterior Analytics* I. 9–11, II. 19 and *Topics* I. 1–2

Week 5 First Philosophy and Principle of Non-contradiction

*Metaphysics* Γ.

Week 6. Principle of Physics

*Physics* I. 9 and II. 1–2

Week 7. Inquiry into Soul and Definition of Soul

*De Anima* I. 1–2 and II. 1–4

Week 8. Ethical Inquiry and Human Happiness

*Nicomachean Ethics* I.

**Undergraduate thesis: research training**

Philosophy and Theology Faculties Library staff – Th. 2.30 – 4.15 (*week 4*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

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

## Graduate Classes

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

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

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

### **Plato's Political Philosophy**

Prof Dominic Scott – T. 11 – 1 (*except weeks 2, 4: F. 9 – 11*), Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This course will look at Plato's views on political leadership in some of the dialogues, focusing on the *Gorgias*, *Republic*, *Statesman*, and *Laws*. The emphasis will be on the models, analogies or paradigms that he uses to illustrate good (and sometimes bad) leadership. The provisional outline of the course is as follows:

1. Politics and the art of medicine: the evidence of the *Gorgias*
2. The ship of state in *Republic VI* and the model of leader as navigator
3. Philosopher-rulers and the model of the political artist in *Republic VI*
4. Lessons from the cave allegory (*Republic VI*): the leader as educator
5. Bad leadership: corruption and tyranny in the *Republic*
6. The model of the weaver in the *Statesman*: a new paradigm
7. Legislation, coercion and persuasion in the *Laws*: the medical analogy returns.
8. Plato's own leadership: the *Phaedrus* on education, and the evidence of the Seventh Letter.

### **Leibniz: *Discourse on Metaphysics***

Prof Gonzalo Rodriguez-Pereyra – T. 4 – 6, Oriel College (Basil Mitchell Room)

The classes will be based on a book I am writing on Leibniz's *Discourse on Metaphysics*. I will provide parts of the book draft to be discussed, as well as other material.

## **Indian Philosophy**

Dr Jessica Frazier and Prof Jan Westerhoff – W. 9 – 11, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

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

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

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

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

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

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

If you would like to attend these classes please get in touch with Jan Westerhoff directly at [jan.westerhoff@lmh.ox.ac.uk](mailto:jan.westerhoff@lmh.ox.ac.uk) by Friday, 20th April 2018. Readings for the first class will be circulated as soon as possible after this date.

## **Early Analytic Philosophy**

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

In this class, we will study selected short texts by three of the leading figures of early analytic philosophy: Frege, Russell, and Ramsey. Some of the texts will be chosen in the light of the particular philosophical interests of class members, but participants should prepare for the first class by reading the Preface and Chapter I of Frege's *Begriffsschrift* (1879). There is a good translation by T.W. Bynum published under the title *\*Frege's Conceptual Notation and Related Articles\** (OUP, 1972, repr. 2000). There is another good translation in J. van Heijenoort, ed., *\*From Frege to Godel: A Source Book in Mathematical Logic, 1879-1931\** (Harvard UP, 1967). Either translation is fine for present purposes.



## Aesthetics

Prof Alison Hills – M. 9 – 11, St John's College (New Seminar Room)

This class will introduce some recent work in analytic aesthetics. Topics include: the relationship between aesthetics and science, disagreement, aesthetic virtue, fictional characters, aesthetic appreciation. Participants will be expected to read 1-3 papers per week. Students will be encouraged to give presentations.

### **Week 1:** Introduction

**Week 2** Meskin, Aaron; Phelan, Mark ; Moore, Margaret & Kieran, Matthew (2013). Mere Exposure to Bad Art. *British Journal of Aesthetics* 53 (2):139-164.

Further reading: Robson, Jon (2014). A social epistemology of aesthetics: belief polarization, echo chambers and aesthetic judgement. *Synthese* 191 (11):2513-2528.

Cova, Florian ; Garcia, Amanda & Liao, Shen-yi (2015). Experimental Philosophy of Aesthetics. *Philosophy Compass* 10 (12):927-939.

**Week 3:** Kieran, Matthew (2010). The vice of snobbery: Aesthetic knowledge, justification and virtue in art appreciation. *Philosophical Quarterly* 60 (239):243-263.

Further reading: Alison Hills, Moral and Aesthetic Virtue

**Week 4** John, Eileen (2014). XI—Literature and Disagreement. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 114 (3pt3):239-260.

Further reading: Christensen, David (2009). Disagreement as evidence: The epistemology of controversy. *Philosophy Compass* 4 (5):756-767.

**Week 5:** Thomasson, Amie L. (2003). Fictional characters and literary practices. *British Journal of Aesthetics* 43 (2):138-157.

Further reading: Friend, Stacie (2007). Fictional characters. *Philosophy Compass* 2 (2):141–156.

**Week 6:** Hopkins, Robert (2017). Imaginative Understanding, Affective Profiles, and the Expression of Emotion in Art. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 75 (4):363-374.

Further reading: Holliday, John (2018). Emotional Intimacy in Literature BSA Prize Essay, 2016. *British Journal of Aesthetics* 58 (1):1-16.

**Week 7:** Levinson, Jerrold (2017). Artist and Aesthete: A Dual Portrait. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 75 (4):479-487.

Further reading: Carroll, Noël (2016). Art Appreciation. *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 50 (4):1-14.

**Week 8:** Huddleston, Andrew (2014). "Consecration to Culture": Nietzsche on Slavery and Human Dignity. *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 52 (1):135-160.

Further reading: Katsafanas, Paul (2015). Fugitive Pleasure and the Meaningful Life: Nietzsche on Nihilism and Higher Values. *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* 1 (3):396--416.

Townsend, Simon (2017). Beyond the Myth of the Nietzschean Ideal-Type. *European Journal of Philosophy* 25 (3):617-637.

### **Justification and Limits of Defensive Harming**

Prof Jeff McMahan – M. 2 – 4, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

The most widely recognised exceptions to the moral prohibitions of harming and killing people are individual defense and war. But not all instances of defensive harming are permissible. To know when the exceptions apply, one must understand the reasons for them. In this seminar we will consider what justifications there may be for harming some people as a means or side effect of defending others from harm. We will be concerned primarily with issues of individual defense. Among the questions we will attempt to answer are these:

#### *Culpable threateners*

- What account of defensive harming best explains the permissibility of defensive harming in the paradigm case involving a culpable threatener and an innocent victim?
- Does a culpable threatener have a right of counter-defense against *impermissible* defensive action (for example, action that is unnecessary or disproportionate)?

#### *Responsible but blameless threateners*

- Can a person who is blameless but nevertheless morally responsible for a threat of wrongful harm be liable to defensive harm? If not, is there an alternative justification for defensive action against him?
- Can one be liable when one poses a threat because one *reasonably* but mistakenly believes that one is *morally required* to harm a person who is in fact innocent?

#### *Nonresponsible threateners*

- Can a person who bears no moral responsibility for a threat she poses be liable to defensive harm? If not, is there an alternative justification for defensively harming her?

#### *Justified threateners*

- If an innocent person is threatened by morally *justified* action, so that her right not to be harmed is *overridden*, can the justified threatener be liable to be harmed, or does justification exclude liability? If the latter, is there an alternative basis for the permissibility of defensively harming the threatener?

- Can there be instances in which each party to a conflict is objectively justified in attacking the other, or others?

#### *Causation and liability*

- Can one be liable to be harmed as a means of preventing harm to another if one is no part of the cause of the threat to the other? Might one, for example, be liable for *allowing* the threat to continue, or because one is engaged in a culpable *attempt* to harm the victim, or because one is a member of a group whose other members are causally and morally responsible for the threat?

#### *Constraints on defensive harming 1: Necessity*

- Does determining whether an act of defense satisfies the requirement of necessity require trade-offs between the probability and degree of successful defense and the amount of harm inflicted on innocent or nonliable people?

#### *Constraints on defensive harming 2: Proportionality*

- Is proportionality sensitive to probabilities? If so, is it also sensitive to people's *evidence* about probabilities?
- Are necessity and proportionality 'internal' to liability, in the sense that a person cannot be liable to harm that is unnecessary or disproportionate?

#### *Constraints on defensive harming 3: proportionality in the harming of many threateners*

- When each of a large number of people makes only a small contribution to a great harm to a single individual, or makes only small contributions to great harms to many individuals, how much harm would it be proportionate to inflict on each to prevent her contribution or contributions?
- When the acts of a number of threateners overdetermine the harm to the victim, so that none of their contributions makes a difference on its own, can each still be liable to defensive harm?
- Is there a limit to the number of culpable threateners – or responsible but blameless threateners – that it can be permissible to kill in defense of the life of a single innocent victim?

#### *Self-defense and other-defense*

- What are the relevant differences between self-defense and defense of others? For example, might a person be permitted to engage in self-defense against a blameless threatener when it would be impermissible for a third party to defend her? Might self-defense always be morally optional while other-defense is sometimes morally required?

#### *Defense and compensation*

- If a person is morally liable to compensate a victim whom he has harmed, does it follow that she was antecedently liable to defensive harming to prevent him from inflicting the harm?  
Is corrective justice, which many theorists think underlies the liability rules of tort law, just the ex post mirror image of preventive justice in defensive harming?

## **Bradley: *Ethical Studies***

Prof Roger Crisp and Prof Terence Irwin – Th. 11 – 1, St Anne's College (Seminar Room 5)

John Stuart Mill (1806-72) and Henry Sidgwick (1838-1900) are the two best-known moral philosophers of later 19th-century Britain. The most powerful criticism of their utilitarian doctrines is presented by the idealists T.H. Green (1836-82), and F.H. Bradley (1846-1924). This term we will discuss Bradley's major work on ethics, *Ethical Studies* (ES). The first edition of this book was first published in 1876, and was very severely reviewed by Sidgwick. It was then ahead of its time. Bradley started revising it nearly 50 years later, just before he died. By that time it was regarded as behind the times. In the intervening 50 years, Bradley wrote extensively on metaphysics, but very little on ethics.

Though Bradley's ethical views are certainly connected to his metaphysics (as the last part of ES makes clear), ES is none the less fairly self-contained, and it contains more than enough to discuss in one term. We will concentrate on it, without reference to the rest of Bradley's philosophy.

Bradley's work develops the attitude to Kantian ethics and to ethics more generally that comes from Hegel (1770-1831). The structure of ES is partly similar to that of *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, and Bradley acknowledges Hegel's influence (see, e.g., ES 173)

One Hegelian feature of ES should be mentioned at the start. Its structure is dialectical, in so far as it proceeds through various one-sided solutions to a more adequate solution. Bradley's method rests on the assumption that we can understand and appreciate the correct solution only by seeing why the one-sided solutions are attractive, and seeing how the correct solution maintains the attractive features of the one-sided solutions. This is why (i) his initial discussion of freedom begins with a confrontation between the 'vulgar' and 'scientific' conceptions; (ii) he examines utilitarian and Kantian views on the way to formulating the morality of 'my station and its duties; and (iii) he presents a one-sided statement of the morality of my station and its duties, in order to correct it in the later essay on ideal morality.

If we recognize this feature of Bradley's method, we avoid the mistake of supposing that his criticisms of utilitarianism and Kantian ethics are entirely negative, or that he takes them to be unanswerable, or that his position is to be identified with the morality of my station and its duties. ES is not a textbook in which the chapters set out Bradley's views on different issues. It presents a process of discovery that Bradley believes we need to pursue if we are to see the point of his answers. The argument starts out with a simple idea that is developed and complicated in the course of the discussion. The simple idea is this: Bradley conceives morality as self-realization, and he believes that this conception of morality corrects the conceptions of utilitarians and Kantians.

### **1. The Vulgar Conception of Responsibility**

Bradley begins with an account of the self and the presuppositions about it that underlie our views about responsibility. Like Kant and Hegel, Bradley thinks this is an important and

relevant issue for understanding morality; but he thinks his non-idealist predecessors have mistaken the nature of the self in ways that have undermined their theories. He considers the vulgar notion of responsibility because, in his view, the vulgar notion rests on a conception of the self that is not recognized in either of the standard accounts of the basis of responsibility. Their failure to recognize this conception of the self is a serious objection to both accounts, since this conception contains the outline of the truth.

Libertarians, as Bradley understands them, believe that I must be free not only to do what I choose, but also to choose what to choose or to will what to will; and they suppose that if any antecedent conditions determine my will, my will is not free. And so, if a will is free, no reason or consideration can determine it one way or the other. Bradley objects that this view makes choice and decision entirely arbitrary.

He argues that determinism that it removes any central role for the self in willing. It supposes that our actions can be predicted from facts and conditions about us that do not mention our self-expressing will and decision. Whether the determinists' story mentions environment, impulses, sensations, or physiological states, it leaves out (according to Bradley) will and character; and so the essential components of decision and free action are lost. In his view, a predictive and explanatory science that explained everything needing explanation about human action, but included no essential reference to the causal influence of human selves and characters, would be a serious threat to responsibility.

ES ch. 1

## **2. Why Should I be Moral?**

A true conception of the self supports (in Bradley's view) an apparently restrictive thesis about the nature of morality, that morality consists in self-realization. Bradley holds that, once we understand the character of the self and of self-realization, we can see that his thesis about morality is not inappropriately restrictive (it does not imply that morality is only concerned with states of oneself). His thesis is intended to provide a criterion of adequacy. He believes we can see that prevailing conceptions of morality fail to display the connexion between morality and self-realization, and that an adequate conception will reveal the right connexion.

B states his general view of self-realization as follows: 'let us try to show that what we do do is, perfectly or imperfectly, to realize ourselves, and that we can not possibly do anything else; that all we can realize is (accident apart) our ends, or the objects we desire; and that all we can desire is, in a word, self'' (66) Here he is describing something that we do aim at. But he thinks that when we understand this better, we will also see that this tells us what the true moral system is.

ES ch. 1-2

## **3. Pleasure for Pleasure's Sake**

Bradley's views claim about the connexion between self-realization and morality requires a closer discussion of the character of morality. The idealists believe that we could not connect self-realization and morality if either the utilitarians or Kant were right about

morality. But once we see the errors in these rival views of morality, we can also form a clearer idea of how morality fits into self-realization.

We reach a hedonist conception of the good from a one-sided conception of the self whose good it is supposed to be. The hedonist treats the self as a mere collection of desires for different particular objects, and develops a strategy for maximizing the satisfaction of these particular desires. This outlook overlooks the fact that the satisfaction of the self is something beyond the total satisfaction of impulses. The hedonist makes this error because he does not notice that the self endorses the different impulses to different degrees, and finds its satisfaction partly in a specific way in which its various impulses are satisfied.<sup>1</sup>

Bradley presents his objections to Sidgwick and Mill not only in *ES* ch. 3, but also in his long essay 'Mr Sidgwick's Hedonism' (repr. in *Collected Essays*. Sidgwick discusses these criticisms in his review of Bradley (*Mind* 1876), to which Bradley replies in *Mind* 1877. Sidgwick replies to Bradley, also in *Mind* 1877.

#### **4. Duty for Duty's Sake**

According to Bradley, partly following Hegel, Kantian morality makes the opposite mistake to the mistake made by the utilitarians. The utilitarians treat the self as simply a collection of particular impulses, and they neglect the rational agency that we value for its own sake. Kantian morality, however, considers rational agency alone, without reference to the desires and goals that belong to rational agents. Both conceptions of morality ignore the essential elements of self-realization.

Once we agree that we aim at the realization of the whole self, we can see what is wrong with Kant. He does not aim at the realization of the whole self, and does not regard morality as a way of realizing the whole self; for, in his view, different aspects of the self are so antagonistic that we can form no reasonable plan for their harmonious realization. In Bradley's view, Kant is right to suppose that Kantian morality requires the rejection and suppression of one side of the self, but he is wrong to suppose that this is a correct conception of morality or of the self. This basic error is the source of Kant's more specific errors.

To identify these specific errors, Hegel and Bradley allege two main faults in Kant. They object to the emptiness of Kantian morality. In their view, when Kant separates the form of a maxim from its content, he really leaves nothing that says enough to give us the basic

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<sup>1</sup> Bradley claims that the self to be realized is 'a whole which is in its parts, as a living totality, as a universal present throughout, and constituted by its particulars' (95). The hedonist conception of the good mistakenly identifies the self with 'the mere feeling self, the series of particular satisfactions'. This is why Bradley says that the hedonist 'has taken the universal in the sense of all its particulars' (98).

The hedonist is right to believe that pleasure is closely connected with the achievement of the end. If we identify the end with self-realization, we can see an important place for pleasure, since it is 'the felt assertion of the will or self' or 'felt self-realizedness' (*ES* 131). Bradley remarks that there may be no exercise of function (which he takes to be a part of self-realization) apart from some pleasure: 'The function brings its own pleasure, however small, though the whole state may be painful' (132). Because of this association between self-realization and pleasure, the anticipation of self-realization also results in the anticipation of pleasure, and this anticipation leads us to take anticipatory pleasure in the anticipated self-realization and in the pleasure associated with it.

principle of morality. But they also object to the characteristic dualism of Kant's account of morality. They claim that Kant's position involves the repression of the non-rational by the rational self, and the suppression of self-interest by duty, and that these dualistic aspects involve a conflict between the moral and the non-moral that distorts the character of morality.

ES ch. 4

### **5. My Station and its Duties.**

Bradley offers a more adequate and balanced account (in his view) of morality, taking account of those aspects of the self and its relation to other selves that are neglected by the moral theories he rejects, and at the same time incorporating what is true in the other theories. We achieve our self-realization in the good will, which aims at the common, non-competitive good. According to Bradley, we realize this non-competitive common good in the social roles ('my station and its duties') that form one's conception of oneself, and hence one's conception of the self to be realized. Since one's social role includes moral demands, rights, and expectations, morality forms the self to be realized. We cannot therefore realize the socially-defined self without accepting the moral outlook that defines our stations and their duties. Morality gives us different ends, and therefore a different conception of ourselves from the one we would have without morality. The moral aspect of different social roles determines how occupants of those roles conceive themselves. People who have certain roles characteristically come to take pleasure and feel shame in certain situations apart from their instrumental benefits; they come to conceive themselves as soldiers, police officers, teachers, parents, members of clubs, and so on. Part of what is involved in conceiving oneself as an occupant of a certain role is wanting to carry out the obligations that go with it. So this is what's meant by thinking of morality as involving stations and duties.

From this point of view, we can see what is wrong with a Kantian conception of morality.. Contrary to Kant, we need not assume any sharp conflict between morality and self-interest. For the 'interest' we aim at is not just the satisfaction of this or that non-moral desire. On the contrary, we aim at self-realization, and that involves the realization of our capacities in some organized system. Moral relations actually make us aware of new capacities, and new possibilities of fulfilment.

Are the distinctive features of this account of morality justified by Bradley's claims about the self and self-realization? And do those claims determine anything very specific about the nature of morality.

ES ch. 5

### **6. Ideal Morality**

The morality of my station and its duties does not represent Bradley's conception of an adequate morality. He does not believe that all morality is social; he argues for its development beyond the area of social morality.

He does not claim that all self-realization belongs, eo ipso, to morality. An artistic production or scientific discovery might realize the agent's capacities, but we do not say that the agent is morally good 'just in so far as, and because, what he produced was good of its

sort and desirable in itself' (214). Nor, however, does Bradley believe that morality is concerned only with the aspects of a person's conduct that affect the interests of others. If that were right, then a person's moral character could be assessed simply by examining that part of his life and actions that affect others. Bradley believes, however, that this sort of assessment is inadequate, since morality is concerned with the whole of someone's life, including its non-social aspects. Bradley infers that morality has a non-social aspect. Moral excellence 'does not lie in mere skill or mere success, but in single-mindedness and devotion to what seems best as against what we merely happen to like' (229).

ES ch. 6

### **7. Selfishness and Self-Sacrifice**

Bradley returns to the questions that he considered in his earlier discussion of self-realization, and he now tries to explain more fully why morality implies self-realization rather than self-sacrifice. His argument is partly psychological; the genesis of the 'bad self' explains why we form the mistaken view that morality is sometimes contrary to our interests. The belief that morality sometimes requires self-sacrifice is not wholly mistaken, but it gives a misleading picture of the relation between morality and the self. We can now give a fuller answer to the question, 'Why should I be moral?' originally raised in ch.2. We see why the very same self that is described in 'The Vulgar Notion of Responsibility' should be the very same self that is realized by morality. Kant also believes that our conception of ourselves as responsible agents (negative freedom, i.e. having the capacity to be determined by practical reason) gives us a clue to the kind of rational agency that is realized in morality (positive freedom, i.e. actualizing this capacity, and so being determined by practical reason). Bradley emphasizes that the self that we seek to realize is the self as a rational agent, not just a collection of desires. Morality contains the principles that are appropriate for rational agents who want to be treated as rational and responsible - not just as means to be exploited - in their relations to each other. That is why the self we recognize in our convictions about responsibility is the self that is realized in morality. In Bradley's view, the 'good self', the self that identifies itself with the concerns of morality, can achieve a degree of unity and comprehensiveness that the bad self cannot achieve.

ES ch. 7.

### **8. Concluding Remarks**

Bradley argues that ethics, fully understood, leads beyond itself and into religion. This is because morality is concerned with what ought to be and is not; hence it commits us to demand something that cannot be: 'Not only is nothing good but the good will, but also nothing is to be real (so far as willed) but the good; and yet the reality is not wholly good' (313). Since morality demands the reality of the good, it demands a form of religious or metaphysical belief according to which the good is ultimately real.

A short reply to Bradley might say that his argument rests on an equivocation. If 'nothing but the good is to be real' meant 'nothing but the good is real', the claims of morality would conflict with the fact that evil exists. If it meant 'nothing but the good will be real', morality would predict the abolition of evil. But when morality says that 'nothing but the good is to be real', 'is to be real' seems to mean only 'ought to be real', which does not conflict with



the reality of evil. Bradley, therefore, seems to interpret 'is to be real' as 'will be real', contrary to the most plausible interpretation of what morality is committed to. Can any better argument be given for his claims about morality?

### **Metaphysics of Mind**

Prof Mike Martin – M. 11 – 1 (*not on in week 2*), Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

Recent debates about the nature of action and about sensory experience make much of the ontological categories in which action and experience fall: various philosophers claim that it is important to recognize that experiences are events or processes as opposed to states; others that the fundamental category for understanding action is activity or process. We'll start out from Donald Davidson on the role of events in the theory of causation and action; and then Anthony Kenny, Zeno Vendler, and Alexander Mourelatos on a supposedly Aristotelian tradition concerning activity. In the second half of term, we'll look at some recent applications of these ideas.

There will be a key piece of reading for each week; and there will be the opportunity to give a presentation.

Principal readings and further readings will be made available on the course site and a gspace folder.

#### Work for Events

1. 23 April First Week: Donald Davidson, 'Causal Relations'
2. 30 April Second Week: *No Meeting*
3. 7 May Third Week: Donald Davidson, 'Agency'

#### Drawing on an Ancient Tradition

4. 14 May Fourth Week: Anthony Kenny, *Action, Emotion & Will*, Ch. 1 & Zeno Vendler, 'Verbs & Times'
5. 21 May Fifth Week: Alexander Mourelatos, 'Events, Processes, & States'
6. 28 May Sixth Week: Helen Steward, 'Processes, Continuants, & Individuals'

#### Actions & Experiences

7. 4 June Seventh Week: Jennifer Hornsby, 'Actions in Their Circumstances'
8. 11 June Eighth Week: Matthew Soteriou, 'Perceiving Events'

## **Philosophy of Mathematics**

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

This class will take up some recent work in the philosophy of mathematics (but won't presuppose any prior knowledge in this field). We'll begin in week 1 with some much-discussed epistemological problems:

Benacerraf, Mathematical Truth, *Journal of Philosophy* 70 (1973), 403–20.

(\*) Linnebo, Epistemological Challenges to Mathematical Platonism, *Philosophical Studies* 129 (2006), 545–574.

Potter, What is the Problem of Mathematical Knowledge, in Leng et al (eds) *Mathematical Knowledge* (OUP, 2007), 16–32

If you only have time for one article, read the one marked (\*).

In weeks 2–8, we'll focus primarily on two ostensibly very different approaches to the ontology and epistemology of mathematics: (i) the neo-logicist programme developed especially by Hale and Wright and (ii) fictionalist approaches to mathematics, variously advocated by Field, Azzouni, and others.

## **Causation and Modality**

Prof Alexander Kaiserman and Prof Simona Aimar (UCL) – W. 2 – 4, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

In this course, we will examine the relationships between causation and modality. Should we analyse causation in terms of modality, modality in terms of causation, or neither (or both)? How do these concepts relate to other concepts, like laws of nature and dispositions? And how might reflecting on the connections between modality and causation help to illuminate debates about each of them individually, like whether they come in degrees or whether the language used to talk about them is context-sensitive?

The schedule is as follows:

Week 1: Reducing causation to counterfactuals

Week 2: Reducing counterfactuals to causation

Week 3: Causation, counterfactuals and laws of nature (Guest speaker: Michael Strevens)

Week 4: Dispositions and modality (Guest speaker: Barbara Vetter)

Week 5: Dispositions and causation (Guest speaker: Ralf Bader)

Week 6: Casual contextualism and modal contextualism

Week 7: Degrees of causation and degrees of possibility

In week 8 we plan to run a mini-conference, in which students will be invited to present their own work on topics related to the themes of the class, or to act as commentators -

more details to follow.

An annotated reading list for each class will be available in early 0th week on Weblearn and at <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~ball2732/>

### **Arbitrary Reference**

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

Two ubiquitous rule of reasoning in both formal and informal logic are Universal Generalisation (UG) and Existential Instantiation (EI). According to the first, if we let  $a$  be an arbitrary  $F$  and prove that  $a$  is  $G$ , we can infer that all  $F$ s are  $G$ s. According to the second, if we prove that there are some  $F$ s, we can let  $a$  (arbitrarily) be one of the  $F$ s, and infer that  $a$  is  $F$ . Despite being ubiquitous, it is surprisingly difficult to figure out how so called ‘arbitrary reference’ works and what is the semantics underlying these two rules of inference (together called ‘instantial reasoning’).

In addition to accounting for instantial reasoning, it has been suggested that something like arbitrary reference takes place in a range of other cases: the semantics of pronouns and variables; determining what our mathematical language refers to; the semantics of conditionals; reference to indiscernible objects; and the semantics of vagueness.

We will explore a range of suggestions on how to account for the semantics of instantial reasoning (including work by Kit Fine, Jeff King, Stewart Shapiro, and myself), and some of the potential applications of these ideas to additional problems in philosophy. No previous knowledge of the topic will be assumed.

### **Epistemology**

Prof Tim Williamson and Prof John Hawthorne – F. 9 – 11 (*weeks 2 to 8*), Radcliffe Humanities (Lecture Room)

Week 2	Knowledge and Strength of Belief I (Williamson)
Week 3	Knowledge and Strength of Belief II (Williamson)
Week 4	Norms of belief (Williamson)
Week 5	Phenomenal conservatism (Hawthorne, joint work with Maria Lasonen-Aarnio)
Week 6	Normality approaches to knowledge (Hawthorne, joint work with Jeremy Goodman)
Week 7	Knowledge by induction (Hawthorne, joint work with with Andrew Bacon)
Week 8	Imprecise credences and non-measurable sets (Hawthorne, joint work with with Al Hajek and Yoaav Isaacs)

## **Self-Consciousness, Agency, and Time**

Prof Anil Gomes and Prof Jennifer Hornsby – F. 11 – 1, Radcliffe Humanities (Ryle Room)

This graduate seminar will explore some issues relating to self-consciousness, agency, and time, both individually and in respect of their connections. There will be a piece of background reading set each week which will provide some context to the material to be discussed that week. Readings for the first six weeks are listed below.

### Week 1: Self-Consciousness and Objects

P.F. Strawson. *The Bounds of Sense*. The whole of Part II 'Objectivity and Unity' is relevant, but you can focus on the section 'Unity and Objectivity', pp.97-112.

### Week 2: Self-Consciousness and the Body

Quassim Cassam. *Self and World*. pp.117-129, and pp.136-142, from Ch.4 'The Identity Argument'.

### Week 3: Self-Consciousness and Activity

Stuart Hampshire. *Thought and Action*. pp.40-54, from Ch.1 'Persons and their Situation'.

### Week 4: Self-Consciousness and Action

Sebastian Rödl. *Self-Consciousness*. pp.1–mid-34. (i.e. Ch1: 'The First Person' AND start [roughly one third of] of Ch.2: 'Action and the First Person'.)

### Week 5: Actions and Events

Sebastian Rödl. *Self-Consciousness*. pp.44–63 (i.e. final 20 pp. of Ch.2: 'Action and the First Person')

John McDowell. 'Some Remarks on Intention in Action'. *The Amherst Lecture in Philosophy*. 6 (2011): 1–18. <<http://www.amherstlecture.org/mcdowell2011/>>.

### Week 6: Actions and Processes

Helen Steward. 'Making the Agent Reappear: How Processes Can Help'. In Altshuler and Sigrist (eds.), *Time and the Philosophy of Action*.

## 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](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](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](http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/lectures/workshop_in_ancient_philosophy)
- Philosophy of Physics Seminar**  
Usual schedule: weekly, 4.30 to 6.30, Lecture Room  
Webpage: <http://www.philosophy-of-physics.ox.ac.uk/tag/thursday-seminars/>
- Fridays*      **Jowett Society / Philosophical Society**  
Usual schedule: weekly, 3.30 to 5.30, Lecture Room  
Webpage: <https://jowettsociety.wordpress.com/>

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