

PROSEMINAR

Ted Sider, Fall 2014
Goldwin Smith 164, Tuesdays 2:30–4:25

Description

Philosophy proseminar, restricted to first-year Ph.D. students in philosophy at Cornell. We will study some twentieth century classics, centered on questions about language.

Requirements

Weekly reading responses; one expanded reading response; two class presentations; participation in classroom discussion. No late assignments; no incompletes!

Each week I will distribute reading questions, but you needn't be bound to them in your presentations and reading responses.

Reading responses should be emailed to me by Mondays at 7am. They should be a paragraph or two (100–300 words), and should raise a single question or make a single point about the reading to be discussed that Tuesday. You may miss two.

The expanded reading response should be 1000–1500 words, and is due at 7am on the Monday after the original reading response was due. You may expand any reading response you like except for the one due 12/2.

The presentations should be around 15 minutes long. Don't try to do too much; just present some of the main issues clearly, and perhaps raise a question or two. The goal is to prepare the group for a fruitful discussion. A visual aid, such as a short handout, might be useful.

Readings

Course readings will be made available online. In addition to the course readings, I also highly recommend Bennett and Gorovitz's article "Improving Academic Writing".

Tentative schedule

Reference and modality

- 8/26 Frege, “On *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*”. (Optional: Frege, “Thought”, “Function and Object”; Russell, “On Truth and Falsehood”—chapter 12 of *The Problems of Philosophy*). No reading response due.
- 9/2 Russell, “On Denoting”; Strawson, “On Referring”. (Optional: Russell, “Descriptions”—chapter 16 of *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*)
- 9/9 Quine, “Reference and Modality”; Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, lecture 1. (Optional: Quine, “Three Grades of Modal Involvement”; Marcus, “Modalities and Intensional Languages”)
- 9/16 Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, lecture 2. (Optional: Evans, “The Causal Theory of Names”; Kaplan, “Demonstratives”; Marcus, “Modalities and Intensional Languages”)
- 9/23 Putnam, “Meaning and Reference”

Meaning and epistemology

- 9/30 Russell, *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*
- 10/7 Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic*, preface to the first edition, and chapters 1 and 4; Hempel, “Problems and Changes in the Empiricist Criterion of Meaning”
- 10/21 Quine, “Truth by Convention”. (Optional: Quine, “Carnap and Logical Truth”)
- 10/28 Quine, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism”; Quine, “Posits and Reality”
- 11/4 Ramsey, “Truth and Probability”
- 11/11 Goodman, “The New Riddle of Induction” (chapter 3 of *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast*)

Grounds of meaning

- 11/18 Quine, “Ontological Relativity” (Optional: Field, “Quine and the Correspondence Theory”)
- 11/25 Kripke, *Wittgenstein on Private Language*, chapter 2, chapter 3 pp. 70–78 and 86–93

12/2 Millikan, “Truth Rules, Hoverflies, and the Kripke-Wittgenstein Paradox”; Lewis, “New Work for a Theory of Universals”

References

- Ayer, Alfred Jules (1936). *Language, Truth and Logic*. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1946. 2nd edition.
- Bennett, Jonathan and Samuel Gorovitz (1997). “Improving Academic Writing.” *Teaching Philosophy* 20: 105–20.
- Evans, Gareth (1973). “The Causal Theory of Names.” *Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume* 47: 187–208. Reprinted in Evans 1985.
- (1985). *Collected Papers*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Field, Hartry (1974). “Quine and the Correspondence Theory.” *Philosophical Review* 83: 200–228.
- Frege, Gottlob (1952/1892). “On Sense and Reference.” In Peter Geach and Max Black (eds.), *Translations of the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- (1997a). *The Frege Reader*. Ed. Michael Beaney. Oxford: Blackwell.
- (1997b). “Function and Concept.” In Frege (1997a), 130–48.
- (1997/1918). “Thought.” In Frege (1997a), 323–45.
- Goodman, Nelson (1955). *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hempel, Carl (1965). “Empiricist Criteria of Cognitive Significance: Problems and Changes.” In *Aspects of Scientific Explanation*, 101–19. New York: The Free Press.
- Kaplan, David (1989). “Demonstratives.” In Joseph Almog, John Perry and Howard Wettstein (eds.), *Themes from Kaplan*, 481–563. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Kripke, Saul (1972). "Naming and Necessity." In Donald Davidson and Gilbert Harman (eds.), *Semantics of Natural Language*, 253–355, 763–9. Dordrecht: D. Reidel. Revised edition published in 1980 as *Naming and Necessity* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA).
- (1982). *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Lewis, David (1983). "New Work for a Theory of Universals." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 61: 343–77. Reprinted in Lewis 1999: 8–55.
- (1999). *Papers in Metaphysics and Epistemology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Marcus, Ruth Barcan (1961). "Modalities and Intensional Languages." *Synthese* 13: 303–22.
- Millikan, Ruth Garrett (1990). "Truth Rules, Hoverflies, and the Kripke-Wittgenstein Paradox." *Philosophical Review* 99: 323–53.
- Putnam, Hilary (1973). "Meaning and Reference." *Journal of Philosophy* 70: 699–711.
- Quine, W. V. O. (1936). "Truth by Convention." In O. H. Lee (ed.), *Philosophical Essays for A. N. Whitehead*, 90–124. New York: Longmans. Reprinted in Quine 1966b: 70–99.
- (1951). "Two Dogmas of Empiricism." *Philosophical Review* 60: 20–43. Reprinted in Quine 1953a: 20–46.
- (1953a). *From a Logical Point of View*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- (1953b). "Reference and Modality." In Quine (1953a), 139–59.
- (1953c). "Three Grades of Modal Involvement." In *Proceedings of the 11th International Congress of Philosophy*, volume 14, 65–81. Amsterdam: North-Holland. Reprinted in Quine 1966b: 156–74.
- (1960). "Carnap and Logical Truth." *Synthese* 12: 350–74. Reprinted in Quine 1966b: 100–125.

- (1966a). “Posits and Reality.” In Quine (1966b), 246–54.
- (1966b). *The Ways of Paradox*. New York: Random House.
- (1968). “Ontological Relativity.” *Journal of Philosophy* 65: 185–212.
Reprinted in Quine 1969: 26–68.
- (1969). *Ontological Relativity and other Essays*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Ramsey, F.P. (1931). “Truth and Probability.” In *The Foundations of Mathematics and other Logical Essays*, 156–98. London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ed. by R.B. Braithwaite.
- Russell, Bertrand (1905). “On Denoting.” *Mind* 14: 479–93.
- (1912). *The Problems of Philosophy*. London: Williams and Norgate. Paperback edition by Oxford University Press, 1959.
- (1919). *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*. London: Routledge.
Online edition available at <http://people.umass.edu/klement/russell-imp.html>.
- (1985). *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*. Ed. David F. Pears. La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1985.
- Strawson, Peter F. (1950). “On Referring.” *Mind* 59: 320–44.