

MA General Class: 2000-2001

Teachers (First Term): Jerry Valberg, UCL

Aims

The General Paper is designed for students who have not undertaken significant previous study of philosophy and aims to:

- a) Introduce the student to basic philosophical methods, techniques and terminology.
- b) Provide the student with an acquaintance with some of the most important and influential writings in the subject.

Objectives

Each student will:

- a) Follow a course in elementary formal logic.
- b) Attend a weekly seminar in which a set of key readings in the subject will be introduced and discussed.
- c) Take a three hour written examination, in which there will be questions in the following areas:
 - i) Logic and Metaphysics
 - ii) Epistemology and Methodology
 - iii) Ethics
 - iv) Political Philosophy
 - v) Formal Logic

Students may not answer questions in sections which overlap with their other MA options. They must answer questions in at least two areas.

In each term the MA class will cover topics from the first four areas listed above. In total there will be 5 classes in each area.

Week 1 October 1: J.L. Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong* (Penguin, 1977)

Further readings:

Gilbert Harman, *The Nature of Morality* (Oxford, 1977), Ch 1.

Michael Smith, 'Realism', in *A Companion to Ethics* ed. Peter Singer (Blackwell 1991)

Essays on Moral Realism ed. Geoffrey Sayre-McCord (Cornell, 1988)

Week 2 October 8: Bernard Williams, A Critique of Utilitarianism in

Utilitarianism For

Against pp. 77-118

Further Readings:

J.J.C. Smart's contribution to *Utilitarianism For and Against*; the remainder of

Williams

essay.

John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*

Roger Crisp, *Mill on Utilitarianism* (Routledge, 1997), Ch 6.

Week 3 October 15: Judith Jarvis Thomson, 'A Defence of Abortion', in Peter Singer (ed.) *Applied Ethics* (Oxford 1986) pp. 37-56.

Further Readings

Michael Tooley, 'Abortion and Infanticide', in Peter Singer (ed.) *Applied Ethics* (Oxford 1984) pp. 57-86.

Rosalind Hursthouse, 'Virtue Theory and Abortion', in *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1997, and Daniel Statman (ed) *Virtue Ethics a Critical Reader* (Edinburgh 1997), pp. 227-244.

Ronald Dworkin, *Life's Dominion* (HarperCollins 1993)

Week 4 October 22: Descartes, *Meditations 1 & 2*

Further Readings

B. Stroud, *The Significance of Philosophical Scepticism* (Oxford, 1984), Ch 1.

B. Williams, *Descartes* (Penguin 1978), Ch.2.

M. Wilson, *Descartes* (Routledge 1978), Ch1&2.

J. Dancy, *Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology* (Blackwell 1985), Ch.1

Week 5 October 29: Gettier "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" and Nozick *Philosophical Explanations* (OUP 1981), Ch.3, abridged in Dancy (ed) *Perceptual Knowledge* (OUP 1988), pp.21-42

Further Readings

S. Sturgeon, "Knowledge" in Grayling (ed) *Philosophy* (OUP 1995)

A. Goldman, "What is Justified Belief?" in Moser (ed) *Empirical Knowledge* (OUP 1986).

J. Dancy, *Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology* (Blackwell 1985), Ch.2.

T. Williamson, "Is Knowing a State of Mind?" *Mind* 1995, 533-565.

Week 6 November 5: E. Sosa "The Raft and the Pyramid" *MidWest Studies in Philosophy* 5 (1980), 3-13, reprinted in his *Knowledge in Perspective* (CUP 1991)

Further Readings

L. Bonjour, "Can Empirical Knowledge have a Foundation?" *American Philosophical Quarterly* 1964, 1-13.

J. Pollock, *Contemporary Theories of Knowledge* (Rowman & Littlefield 1986), Ch.3.

A. Plantinga, *Warrant the Current Debate* (OUP 1993), Ch.4.

****Week 7 November 12: Reading Week (Note: This is one week later than scheduled.)****

Week 8 November 19: Frege "On Sense and Reference" in *Meaning and Reference* (ed) Moore (OUP 1993), 23-42

Further Readings

M. Dummett, "Frege's Distinction between Sense and Reference" in Moore *op cit.* 228-256.

G. Evans, *Varieties of Reference* (OUP 1982), Ch.1.

G. McCulloch, *The Game of the Name* (Clarendon 1989), Ch.1&5.

Week 9 November 26: Kripke "Identity and Necessity" in Moore *op cit.* 162-191.

Further Readings

G. McCulloch, *The Game of the Name*, *op cit.* Ch.4.

G. Evans, "The Causal Theory of Names" in Moore *op cit.* 208-227.

K. Donnellan, "Reference and Definite Descriptions", *Philosophical Review* 1966.

Week 10: 3 December: John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* Chapter I and II esp sections 1-4 (5), 11, 15, 1

Introductory reading:

An Introduction to Political Philosophy, Jonathan Wolff, pp. 167-195

Further Reading:

Reading Rawls ed. Norman Daniels, esp. papers by R. Dworkin, Nagel, Scanlon, Hart

Week 11: 10 December: John Rawls: *A Theory of Justice* Chapter III sections 20-29

Further reading: see above

TERM 2

Week 1, January 8th: Kant's Moral Theory: Immanuel Kant *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* (also known as the *Groundwork*) chs 1 and 2.

Further Reading

R. Sullivan *An Introduction to Kant's Ethics*

P. Foot 'Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives' in her *Virtues and Vices*

Week 2, January 15th: Freedom and Moral Responsibility: Harry Frankfurt, 'Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility' *Journal of Philosophy* 66 (1969): 829-39. (also in his *The Importance of What We Care About*)

Further Reading

Michael Otsuka 'Incompatibilism and the Avoidability of Blame' *Ethics* 1998

Week 3, January 22nd: The Entitlement Theory of Justice Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, Chapter 7, Section 1

Further Reading

J. Paul (ed) *Reading Nozick*

G.A. Cohen *Self-Ownership, Freedom and Equality* Chs 1 and 2

J. Wolff *Robert Nozick*

Week 4, January 29th: Locke on Political Obligation John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters I, II, VIII-XI.

Further Reading

A. John Simmons, *Political Obligation and Moral Principles* ch 3 and 4

D Lloyd Thomas, *Locke on Government* chs 1-3

Week 5, February 5th: Mill on Liberty John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapters I, III-V.

Further Reading

J. Gray and G.W. Smith (ed) *On Liberty in Focus*

C.L. Ten *Mill On Liberty*

J. Wolff, *Introduction to Political Philosophy* Ch 4

February 12th: READING WEEK

Week 6, February 19st: Methodology David Hume, *Treatise*, Bk.1, Pt.3 & *Enquiry* Sec.4-5.

Further Reading:

B. Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, Ch.6

P. F. Strawson, *An Introduction to Logical Theory* Ch.9

Black & Edwards in R. Swinburne ed. *The Justification of Induction*

Week 7, February 26th: Methodology N. Goodman, *Fact Fiction, Forecast*, Ch.3

Further Reading

M. Sainsbury, *Paradoxes*, Ch.4

D. Davidson, "Emeroses by Other Names", in *Essays on Actions and Events*

Week 8, March 5th: Metaphysics W.V.O. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", *From a Logical Point of View*

Further Reading

A. Quinton, "The A priori and the Analytic" in Strawson (ed.); *Philosophical Logic*

A.J. Ayer, *Language Truth and Logic* Ch.4

W.V.O Quine, "Truth by Convention" in *The Ways of Paradox*

Week 9, March 12th: Parfit, "Personal Identity", *Philosophical Review* 1971

Further Reading

B.Williams, "The Self and the Future" in *Problems of the Self*

B.Williams, "Personal Identity and Individuation", *Problems of the Self*

Lewis, "Survival and Identity", in *Philosophical Papers* Vol.1.

Week 10, March 19th: Mackie, "Causes and Conditions" in E. Sosa ed. *Causation and Conditionals*

Further Reading:

Hume *Treatise*, Bk.1 Pt.3 sec. 14-5, *Enquiry* sec.7

Lewis "Causation" & "Postscripts" in *Philosophical Papers* Vol.2.

Crane "Causation" in Grayling (ed.) *Philosophy*