

University of London M.A. Philosophy 2000-01

Course Handout for Philosophy of Psychology: Aims and Objectives, Course Schedule, and other materials.

Day: Wednesday

Time: 6 pm

Place: Room 3, 14 Gower Street

Convener: Jim Hopkins, KCL

Intended audience: MA Philosophy students

Aims of Course

The aim of the course is to acquaint students with some central issues and debates in the philosophy of psychology. These will include the nature of explanation in commonsense psychology and psychoanalysis, the realization of motivation and dreaming in the brain, the classical and connectionist computational models of mind, the methodology of explanation in cognitive science, Chomsky's programme in linguistics and evolutionary psychology.

Objectives:

Students who complete the course satisfactorily will

- £ have acquired a philosophical understanding of the character of psychoanalytic explanation, its relationship to commonsense psychological explanation, and central methodological discussions of these issues.
- £ have acquired some introductory understanding of neuroscientific hypotheses about the realization of processes relating to motivation and dreaming in the brain and philosophical questions related to these
- £ be able to outline and assess the computational theory of mind
- £ have acquired an understanding of the differences between classical and connectionist approaches to cognition
- £ have acquired an understanding of Chomsky's programme in linguistics and the central philosophical issues it raises
- £ have acquired an understanding of philosophical issues raised by research in evolutionary psychology

Course Schedule

Term 1

Time and place of seminars: Wednesdays 6 – 7.30 pm, McFetridge Room (Room 3), 14 Gower Street

Weeks 1-5:

Jim Hopkins : Commonsense Psychology and Psychoanalysis

Weeks 6-10:

Sarah Patterson and Barry C. Smith: Cognition, Language and Computation

Term 2

Time and place of seminars: Wednesdays 6 – 7.30 pm, McFetridge Room (Room 3),
14 Gower Street

Weeks 1-5:

Sarah Patterson and Barry C. Smith: Cognition, Language and Computation

Weeks 6-10:

David Papineau: Evolutionary Psychology

Teaching and examination: This course will be taught by weekly seminar; in addition students may have tutorials arranged via their individual departments.

There will be a three-hour written examination for the MA paper in the Philosophy of Psychology in the Examination term; in some cases, in accord with regulations, students may submit essays in place of the written examination.

Topics and Readings (These are taken from fuller handouts which will be made available during the course. Some xeroxes of readings which are hard to find will be supplied.)

Term 1 (Weeks 1 - 5)

Week 1: Commonsense psychology, the intuitive explanation of action, and non-reductive physicalism. What is the nature of commonsense psychological explanation and how does it relate to explanation in the natural sciences?

(1) Commonsense psychology and explanation by reasons: classical philosophical articles. These articles are difficult, and some introductory alternatives have also been suggested. Don't feel you have to master these at first, as we will return to aspects of their content throughout the first five weeks.

(a) The dual nature of the explanation of action by reasons: rendering rational and citing causes.

Davidson, 'Actions, Reasons, Causes, in Davidson (1980) Essays on Actions and Events; Oxford University press.

This article, although a classic, is hard. Useful and simpler accounts involving some of the main can be found in entries in Guttenplan, ed, A Companion to the Philosophy of Mind,

Oxford: Blackwell, 1994. See, e.g. 'Reasons and Causes' by Kathleen Lennon; and also 'Action (1)' by Lawrence Davis; and 'Desire' by Dennis Stampe.

(b) Davidson's non-reductive physicalism, based on the nature of desires, beliefs, and other propositional attitudes.

Davidson, 'Mental Events', 'The Material Mind' and 'Psychology as Philosophy', in Davidson (1980).

These articles, again, are difficult, and there is no easy summary (but try that in 'Davidson, Donald' in Guttenplan.) Also the main argument by which Davidson establishes the anti-reductive view -- the argument for the lack of strict psycho-physical laws -- is obscure and difficult. A simpler and clearer argument flows from the notion that desires, beliefs, and other sententially described mental states involve mental (or neural) representations of the environment, together with the claim that representations cannot in general be linked with what they represent by strict laws. This will be spelled out in the lectures.

(c) The relation of commonsense psychological explanation to law-citing scientific explanation.

Davidson, 'Hempel on explaining action' in Davidson (1980) above. This is a hard article, but basic to consideration of the question whether the explanatory success and cogency of commonsense psychology is related to its use of laws, or to some other source.

(2) Additional readings reflecting commonsense psychology as it appears in clinical psychology ('theory of mind'): Henry Wellman, 'Early understanding of the mind: the normal case' in Baron-Cohen, et. al. Understanding Other Minds: Perspectives from Autism, Oxford, 1994; Wellman and Lagattuta, 'Developing understandings of mind' in Baron-Cohen et al, Understanding Other Minds: Perspectives from Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, Oxford, 2000.

Week 2: Psychoanalytic Explanation: What is the nature of psychoanalytic explanation and how does it relate to commonsense psychological explanation? The explanation of dreams as wishfulfilments as a paradigm of psychoanalytic explanation, and the relation of this to commonsense explanation of action.

Core readings:

Freud, S. The Interpretation of Dreams, Ch. 1 'The method of interpreting dreams' and Ch 2 'Dreams as wishfulfilments', in Vol IV of The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, London, Hogarth, 1970. Also in the Penguin Freud Library, Vol 4. (part of this material may be made available at the lectures) Paradigm of psychoanalytic explanation understanding of which is required for the rest.

Hopkins, J 'Psychoanalytic and Scientific Reasoning', The British Journal of Psychotherapy, 13(1), Autumn 1996. (May be made available at the lectures). Exegesis of Freud's reasoning

in analyzing dreams, and structure of reason explanations compared and contrasted with those involving wishfulfilment.

Additional Readings

Wollheim, R. 'Supplementary Preface' to Freud, Fontana Modern Masters, 2nd Edition, London: Fontana/Harper Collins, 1991. Further account of relations between commonsense explanations by reason and those advanced in psychoanalysis.

Gardner, S. 'Psychoanalytic Explanation' in Guttenplan, ed, A Companion to the Philosophy of Mind, Oxford: Blackwell, 1994. Short but broad-ranging discussion of these and further questions.

Further possible reading: Hopkins, 'Patterns of explanation: speech, action, and dream' in L. Marcus, ed. Sigmund Freud's The Interpretation of Dreams: New interdisciplinary essays., Manchester: Manchester U. Press, 1999. Longer version of Hopkins (1996) above, with more material about commonsense methodology. Petaki, 'Title' in in M. Levine, ed, *The Analytic Freud*, London: Routledge.

Advanced article about difficulty of relating psychoanalytic and commonsense forms.

Week 3: What are the main claims of psychoanalytic theory and how are they supported? (1) The concept of wishfulfilling phantasy and psychoanalytic theory more generally: symptoms, transference, childhood conflict.

Core readings for this topic:

Freud, S. Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, Ch XVII 'The sense of symptoms' in Vol XVI of the Standard Edition (also in the Penguin Freud Library, Vol 1). The preceding lectures constitute one of Freud's best introductions to the basic ideas of psychoanalysis.

Material will also be discussed from the 'Case Notes' appended to the 'History of an Obsessional Neurosis' [the case of the Rat Man] in Vol X of the Standard Edition. This is a long case history, only certain aspects of which will be discussed; and some of the material on which the lecture is based is not included in the Penguin edition.) There is an overall sketch of Freudian theory in these terms (and so related to dreams) in Hopkins 'Freud and the Science of the Mind' in S. Glendinning, ed, The Edinburgh Encyclopaedia of Continental Philosophy, Edinburgh University Press, 1999.

Further possible reading: For a fuller and philosophically informed discussion of Freudian psychology see R. Wollheim, Freud, Fontana Modern Masters, 2nd Edition, London: Fontana/Harper Collins, 1991

(2) The extension of Freudian psychology via the psychoanalysis of children, and some basic ideas of Kleinian theory. Those not particularly interested in psychoanalysis need not do this topic.

For background about the work of Melanie Klein see H. Segal, Klein, Fontana Modern Masters, London: Fontana /Harper Collins, 1979.

Klein, 'The development of a child' and 'Personification in the play of children' in Love, Guilt, and Reparation, Vol 1 of The Collected Works of Melanie Klein, London, Hogarth Press, 1975..

Hopkins, 'Synthesis in the Imagination: Psychoanalysis, Infantile Experience, and the Concept of an Object', in J. Russell, ed, Philosophical Perspectives on Developmental Psychology, Oxford: Blackwell 1987. Introduces Kleinian concepts and relates them to empirical research on children and infants.

Possible further reading: Klein, The Psychoanalysis of Children, in the collected works; Segal, Introduction to the work of Melanie Klein, London: Hogarth, 1973.

Week 4. Psychoanalysis, motivation, and neuroscience. How are commonsense and psychoanalytic accounts of motives and dreams related to current neuroscientific understanding of these topics?. As with the above this is a topic which is important for your general knowledge and background, but one which students need not try to master unless they are particularly interested.

(1) Motivation and Neuroscience: Panksepp, J. 'Emotions as natural kinds in the mammalian brain' in Lewis and Haviland-Jones, eds, Handbook of Emotions (2nd Ed) London Guilford Press, 2000.

(2) Dreaming and neuroscience:

Solms, M. 'The Interpretation of Dreams and the Neurosciences' (preface to Tramdeutung, Frankfurt: Fischer Verlag 1999; to be circulated.) Summary of recent research on dreams, which apparently supports Freud's account of dreams. (For filling out see Kaplan-Solms & Solms Clinical Studies in Neuropsychanalysis London: Karnac, 2000; esp Ch 3 'The neurodynamics of dreaming' and Ch 10 'Towards a neuroanatomy of the mental apparatus.'

Flanagan, O. Dreaming Souls Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Recent philosophical treatment based mainly on work by the very influential and anti-Freudian school of dream studies led by J. A. Hobson. Excellent on Hobson's programme, and tries to be fair to Freud; but fails take account of the motivational/dopamine-circuit data stressed by Solms, and congruent with the work on motivation by Damasio and Panksepp.

These two sources can be regarded as summarizing the best pro and con arguments from the neurosciences bearing on Freud's account of dreams. Comparing them is a useful but demanding exercise, at the frontier of philosophical and scientific discussion of these matters. (For recent further discussion, including Hobson's latest theory and an exchange between Hobson & Solms,

see Neuropsychanalysis, Vol I issue 2.)

Additonal reading:

Antonio Damasio The Feeling of What Happens Harcourt Brace 1999. Overall account by leading neuroscientist of relations of notions of self, consciousness, emotion, and their realization in the brain.

Week 5: Psychoanalysis and Methodology: What are the main methodological critiques of psychoanalysis and how telling are they?

Core Readings:

Popper 'Conjectures and Refutations' in Conjectures and Refutations, Routledge, London, 1964. Classical influential critique.

Grunbaum, 'Precis of The Foundations of Psychoanalysis: a Philosophical Critique' in Clark and Wright, eds, Mind, Psychoanalysis, and Science, Oxford, Blackwell, 1988.

Hopkins, 'Epistemology and Depth Psychology' in Clark and Wright. Reply to Grunbaum, comments on Popper.

Gardner, 'Psychoanalysis, Contemporary Views' in Wilson and Keil, eds, The MIT Encyclopaedia of Cognitive Sciences, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999. Short but broad-ranging discussion of methodological issues.

Further possible reading: Kline, P. Psychology and Freudian Theory London: Methuen 1984. Clear and sensible (but dated) discussion of empirical testing of Freudian theory.

Macmillan, M. Freud Evaluated. Best of many 'Annihilate Freud' books.

Hopkins, J. 'Psychoanalysis, Interpretation, and Science' in Hopkins & Savile, eds, Psychoanalysis, Mind, and Art, Oxford: Blackwell 1992. More methodological defense.

Term 1 Weeks 6 - 10

Introductory Reading: Steven Pinker, The Language Instinct (Penguin, 1995/2000)

Week 6 Introduction to cognitive science

Reading: J. Fodor, 'Four accounts of mental structure,' ch. 1 of The Modularity of Mind, MIT Press, 1983.

N. Block, 'The computer model of the mind' in Thinking, ed. D. Osherson
And E. Smith (MIT Press, 1990).

Week 7 **Explaining language**

Reading: N. Chomsky, 'Language and problems of knowledge' in Philosophy of Language, ed. A. Martinich (OUP, 1996)

N. Chomsky, 'Reply,' Mind & Language (1987) 2: 178•197

Week 8 **Classical computation**

Reading: J. Haugeland, 'Semantic engines: An introduction to mind design' in Mind Design (first edition), ed. J. Haugeland (Free Press, 1985); reprinted in Minds, Brains and Computers, ed. D. Cummins and R. Cummins (Blackwell, 2000)

R. Cummins, 'Interpretational semantics,' ch. 8 of Meaning and Mental Representation (MIT Press, 1989)

Week 9 **Connectionism and language**

Reading: P. Churchland, 'Cognitive activity in artificial neural networks' in Thinking, ed. D. Osherson and E. Smith (MIT Press, 1990); reprinted in Minds, Brains and Computers, ed. D. Cummins and R. Cummins (Blackwell, 2000)

V D. Rumelhart and J. McClelland, 'On learning the past tenses of English verbs' in Parallel Distributed Processing, ed. J. McClelland and D. Rumelhart (MIT Press, 1986); reprinted in Minds, Brains and Computers, ed. D. Cummins and R. Cummins (Blackwell, 2000)

Week 10 **Rules in language**

Reading: S. Pinker and A. Prince, 'On language and connectionism: Analysis of a parallel distributed processing model of language acquisition,' Cognition (1988) 28: 73•193; reprinted in Connections and Symbols, ed. S. Pinker and J. Mehler (MIT Press, 1988)

K. Plunkett and V. Marchman, 'Learning from a connectionist model of the acquisition of the English past tense,' Cognition (1996) 61: 299•308

Term 2

Weeks 1 • 5

Week 1 **Cognitive architecture and levels of explanation**

Reading: D. Marr, 'The philosophy and the approach,' ch. 1 of Vision (Freeman,

I

1982); reprinted in Minds, Brains and Computers, ed. D. Cummins and R.

Cummins (Blackwell, 2000)

A. Clark, 'Connectionism, competence and explanation' in The Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence, ed. M. Boden (OUP, 1990)

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Week 2 Connectionism and cognitive architecture

Reading: J. Fodor and Z. Pylyshyn, 'Connectionism and cognitive architecture,' Cognition (1988) 28: 3•71; reprinted in Connections and Symbols, ed. S. Pinker and J. Mehler (MIT Press, 1988) and in Mind Design II, ed. J. Haugeland (MIT Press, 1997)

W. Ramsey, S. Stich and J. Garon, 'Connectionism, eliminativism and the future of folk psychology' in Philosophy and Connectionist Theory, ed. W. Ramsey, S. Stich and D. Rumelhart (Lawrence Erlbaum, 1991) and in Mind Design II, ed. J. Haugeland (MIT Press, 1997)

Week 3 Content and computational explanation

Reading: R. Cummins, 'Interpretation and the reality of content,' ch. 10 of Meaning and Mental Representation (MIT Press, 1989)

F. Egan, 'Computation and content,' Phil. Review (1995) 104: 181•203.

Week 4 Chomskyan internalism

Reading: N. Chomsky, 'Language and nature,' Mind (1995) 104:1•61, concentrating on part 2, 'Language from an internalist perspective'

J. Higginbotham, 'Remarks on the metaphysics of linguistics,' Linguistics and Philosophy (1991) 14: 555•566

Week 5 Cognitive architecture and folk psychology

Reading: A. Gopnik and H. Wellman, 'Why the child's theory of mind really is a theory' in Folk Psychology, ed. M. Davies and T. Stone (Blackwell, 1995)

G. Segal, 'The modularity of theory of mind' in Theories of Theories of Mind, ed. P. Carruthers and P. Smith (CUP, 1996)

Weeks 6 - 10

Week
6:

Selfish Genes, Group Selection, Altruism, Developmental Systems Theory, Memes

Dawkins The Selfish Gene Dawkins The Extended Phenotype chs 2, 5, 6 Griffiths and Sterelny Sex and Death chs 3, 5, & 8

Week 7: Functional Explanation, Biological Purpose, Adaptationism, Genetic Determinism, Innateness

Gould and Lewontin "The Spandrels of San Marco and the Panglossian Paradigm" in Sober ed Conceptual Issues in Evolutionary Biology

Neander "Functions as Selected Effects" Phil of Sci 1991

Griffiths and Sterelny op cit Ch 10

Week 8: Sociobiology, "Evolutionary Psychology", Modularity

Barkow Cosmides and Tooby The Adapted Mind, esp essay by Symonds and the long piece by Cosmides and Tooby

Griffiths and Sterelny op cit ch 13

Week 9: Evolutionary Speculation and Empirical Psychology, Just So Stories, Emotions

Griffiths What the Emotions Really Are

Frank Passions within Reason

Damasio Descartes' Error

Griffiths and Sterelny op cit ch 14

Week 10: Evolution and Philosophical Theory, Teleosemantics

Papineau Philosophical Naturalism ch 3

Millikan "Biosemantics" J Phil 1989

Braddon•Mitchell and Jackson "The Teleological Theory of Content" Australian J Phil 1997