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Phil 77650
The Morality of Inequality
Prof. Baumrin
4 credits
Tues. 6:30-8:30
Room 7314
The principal aim of Enlightenment theory was to establish human equality as the goal of civilisation, for examples universal suffrage, universal education. The principal route to economic success, individual and collective, is to amass capital through savings; so the economic theories of Adam Smith and Thomas Malthus focus on saving and the elimination of waste. A legacy of the Enlightenment passed on to us is the clash between the morality of equality and the morality of inequality. That is what this seminar will be about.

[Counts towards course satisfaction of Group C]
[back to course schedule]
Meaning and Interpretation is a course in which we examine meaning and the interpretation of meaning across various disciplines with their different emphases and methods. We begin with the philosophy of language with particular stress on the Gricean approach to meaning. Next we look at the notion of interpretation in literature and the arts paying particular attention to the so-called intentional fallacy and the debates surrounding it. The notion of interpretation in the law -- including the interpretation of statutes and constitutions -- will occupy a segment of the course. We will also consider interpretation in archaeology, in history and even jokes. Students will be required to lead a discussion in class and to submit a final paper. There are no prerequisites.

[Counts towards course satisfaction of Group A, B, or C]
[back to course schedule]
the Bratman-Gilbert debate), the nature of institutions (John Searle, Steven Lukes), and of structures (Anthony Giddens and Sally Haslanger), moving to the ontology of groups in both continental and analytic frames (Jean-Paul Sartre, Iris Young, and Philip Pettit). The seminar will then consider some of the normative and practical implications of social ontological perspectives, including the vexed question of collective responsibility (e.g., Larry May), the metaphysics of sex and gender (Carol Gould, Asta Sveinsdottir), the ontology of race (Anthony Appiah, Philip Kitcher, and Charles Mills), and finally, feminist notions of relational autonomy and intersectional group identities and their import for understanding contemporary social and political life (Jennifer Nedelsky and Diana Meyers, among others).

Seminar members will be encouraged to relate the course materials to their ongoing research projects through oral presentations and analytical term papers, and will be expected to be active participants in the seminar discussions.

[Counts towards course satisfaction of Group A or C]

[back to course schedule]
Relational Autonomy, Liberal Individualism, and the Social Constitution of Selves

This course explores the influence of regimes of colonization, racialization, and imperialism on conceptions of gender justice. It begins from the understanding of decolonial feminist philosophies as including both critical and constructive projects: the former involve exploring the ways Western concepts and histories promote a congruence between Western feminism and Western imperialism, and the latter involve constructing plural visions of solidarity, as well as local and global gender justice. Developing feminist solidarity and coalition requires an analysis of epistemic justice, or the roadblocks to mutual engagement with respect and reciprocity between differently situated groups. Hence, this course will pursue both epistemological and ethical aspects of transnational feminism. Some of the topics we will discuss include: the influence of the concept of modernity on conceptions of transnational justice and gender justice, the role of the concept of culture in feminist discourses, the difference between decolonial, postcolonial, and transnational feminist theoretical approaches, how to overcome racist and sexist patterns of epistemic prejudice, the idea that gender itself is a colonial imposition, and the ideal/non-ideal theory distinction.

Cross-listed with Women’s and Gender Studies

[Counts towards course satisfaction of Group C]

Phil 80000
The Contingent A Priori and the Identification of Numbers
Profs. Kripke & Marshall
4 credits
Weds. 2:00-4:00
Room 7314

This course will begin with a reconsideration, based on earlier lectures of mine on the subject and related talks given elsewhere, of my views on the contingent a priori. One of my most questioned views in Naming and Necessity was that certain examples, one about ‘Neptune’, and one about the supposed standard meter stick, are contingent but a priori. I will give a somewhat qualified defense of these examples. This will lead us to numerous other issues, including the question of when is a term or notion properly introduced into our language, as well as the question of what is our concept of the natural numbers. As regards the latter question, we will begin with Russell, who thought he had shown that his theory of the natural numbers (which is nearly enough Frege’s too) was in some sense the unique concept of the natural numbers, and that not any structure (or ‘progression’) satisfying the Peano axioms will suffice to give our notion of cardinality and counting. Wittgenstein, in Part III of the Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics (Blackwell, 3rd Edition, 1978) makes a critical examination of Russell’s theory of the natural numbers as presented in Principia Mathematica. He finds the Russellian conception defective. His arguments appear at first to rest on some technical errors (and he does seem to make some), unaware of the resources of Principia. (For a critique, we will discuss work by Mark Steiner.) Nevertheless, I think that Wittgenstein’s discussion can be used to give specific morals as to our concept of the natural numbers, and how it may be different from what it would be in other imagined cultures. (The basic question is, when does a computation come to an end, so that we have no further question of the form, “yes, but what number is that?”) I will also present my own conclusions, inspired by Wittgenstein’s criticisms of Russell and connect these to my views on the contingent a priori. Weaknesses in my conclusions, and cases that might be hard to accommodate will be discussed as well. We will also discuss Oliver Marshall’s response to my views (described in chapter 4 of his dissertation and his recent paper in Philosophy Mathematica). If there is time, I would also like to discuss some ways of representing numbers and finitude in set theory without the axiom of infinity (an issue that has also been discussed by Charles Parsons).
Phil 77600
Critical Philosophy of Race
Prof. Mills
4 credits
Mon. 6:30-8:30
Room 6421
Race, once a marginal subject in philosophy (excluding, that is, the racist writings of many of the classical figures of the modern canon), has become increasingly respectable in recent years. Critical philosophers of race have produced a growing and exciting body of work in such areas as metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, political philosophy, aesthetics, phenomenology and existentialism, and the rewriting of the history of philosophy itself. This course will provide an overview and guide to some of this literature, and its implications for the teaching of the traditional canon.

Phil 77900
Ideology and Propaganda
Prof. Priest
4 credits
Tues. 4:15-6:15
Room 3207
This course is about ideology, what it is and how it functions, the techniques of propaganda that can be used to promote it, and how these might be resisted. We will start by looking at some of early texts: Marx, Gramsci, Mannheim. Then we will look at Edward Bernay's classic on the manipulation of mass opinion, Propaganda. Next, we will turn to Sandra Bartkey's Femininity and Domination, on ideology and patriarchy, and Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, on education and oppression. Finally, we will look at Noam Chomsky's Manufacturing Consent and Jason Stanley's How Propaganda Works.

Phil 77700
Aesthetic Psychology
Prof. Prinz
4 credits
Tues. 9:30-11:30
Room 7395
Description TBA
Phil 77700 / MPH-0007  
Social Justice in Public Health and Medicine  
Prof. Rhodes  
4 credits  
Tues. 4:00-6:30, *Sept. 4 - Nov. 28*  
Annenberg 10-74 (Icahn School of Medicine, Mount Sinai)  

Justice is a major concern in theoretical ethics and political philosophy and a huge literature is devoted to trying to explain just what it entails. In this course our aim will be to examine a broad spectrum of issues in medicine, medical research, and public health that raise questions about justice. In light of these critical examples, we shall review and critique an array of philosophical views on justice, including contemporary theoretical work by authors who focus on justice in medicine (e.g., Norman Daniels, Paul Menzel). Throughout the seminar we shall be engaged in two activities: (1) using clinical dilemmas and health policies as touchstones for developing a clear understanding of justice, and (2) developing an understanding of how theories of justice apply in different public health and medical contexts. By going from practice to theory and from theory back again to practice, we shall advance our understanding of the theoretical literature as well as the requirements of justice in public health, medicine, biomedical research, and other areas of the social world.

This course will focus on the allocation of medical resources and how they raise questions about justice. It will examine how medical resources are actually distributed here, elsewhere, and globally, and in various contexts. We shall also develop an understanding of how the U.S. happens to have developed the mechanisms that we now have for the delivery of health care. We shall consider ways in which existing approaches to resource allocation do and do not express justice, and some of the problems that become apparent when you attend to the special needs of social groups (e.g., the poor, children, women, the elderly, African-Americans) and the allocation of specific sorts of scarce resources (e.g., transplant organs).

**Course Objectives**

By the end of this course participants should be able to:

- Explain different concepts of justice.
- Apply concepts of justice to circumstances in which medical and public health resources are allocated.
- Evaluate ways in which medical and public health resources are allocated and provide arguments for distributing them one way rather than another.
- Justify decisions about the distribution of medical and public health resources in terms of reasons that other reasonable people should accept.

**Readings:**

- Course readings will be supplemented with additional papers from the literature that are posted on the course website.
- Some topics will be introduced with PowerPoint presentations posted on the course website.
We perceive things in respect of properties accessible to the senses—properties that enable us to distinguish among objects and events. Vision, e.g., discriminates objects and events in respect of their colors, shapes, sizes, locations, and motions; similarly for properties accessible to the other sensory modalities.

But it’s controversial how such discrimination occurs. Is discrimination due to mental representations? If so, what kind of representations? Purely conceptual? Partly conceptual? Qualitative representations? Might perceiving occur without any mental representations at all? By mental qualities that lack any representational character? Without any intermediate mental state, but rather by some direct relation perceivers bear to perceived objects? In some other way? And how does perceiving differ from nonperceptual cognition—for thinking about perceived objects?

A pivotal issue that animates these debates and figures in arguments for and the various positions is the role of conscious qualitative states—so-called qualia—in perceiving. Conscious qualitative states are widely thought to be problematic, to resist explanation and even informative description. That is the so-called hard problem. Because of that, some positions, e.g., those that advocate a direct relation with no mental intermediary or that posit only conceptual representations, seek in effect to avoid any appeal to mental qualities on the typically unstated assumption that such an appeal would run afoul of the hard problem. Other positions rely on perceptual mental state with qualitative character, but typically give no informative account of their nature.

We will address the question of whether perceiving takes place by way of qualitative mentality, and whether an informative account of such mental qualitative character is after all possible. And we’ll examine what the implications of answers to these questions are for: (1) how perceiving discriminates properties accessible to the senses, (2) how perceiving categorizes and classifies objects and events, (3) how those two perceptual functions differ and how they operate together, (4) how the various perceptual modalities differ, (5) how cross-modal perception occurs, (6) whether perceiving can occur without being conscious, and (7) how all this constrains satisfactory accounts of the way perceiving differs from nonperceptual cognition.
questions by using insights from classical Chinese thought. Topics will include: the debate between the Confucians and Mohists on the proper role of partiality in ethics; the Mohist critique of tradition and the search for objective evaluative criteria; the debate among the Confucians concerning whether human nature contains any legitimate sources of normativity; skepticism by Daoist thinkers about the legitimacy and usefulness of moral concepts; and the mischievous philosophical fantasies of Zhuangzi.

Readings will include primary texts in translation, relevant secondary literature, as well as contemporary philosophical and psychological research. No prior familiarity with Chinese philosophy will be assumed or required.

This course counts towards satisfaction of Group C (ethics) or Group D (ancient) requirements. Final papers must concentrate on an ethical problem OR a historical / interpretive problem in order to satisfy these requirements, respectively.

[Counts towards course satisfaction of Group C or D-Ancient]

Phil 76100
Plato’s Republic
Prof. Vasiliou
4 credits
Mon. 2:00-4:00
Room 7314

Plato's Republic is one of the most influential texts in the history of philosophy. The dialogue treats most major areas of philosophy, including ethics, political philosophy, metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of education, and aesthetics. Avid discussion continues about its unity, purpose, and the overall plausibility of some of its central claims. We shall read the entire work, supplementing it with readings from elsewhere in Plato; Apology, Crito, Euthyphro, Gorgias, Meno, Phaedo, and Symposium will be particularly important. Engagement with secondary literature will be mandatory. One theme that will continue through the seminar is the extent to which the dominant eudaimonist readings of the Republic are accurate.

We will use the translation by G.M.A. Grube (2nd edition, revised by C.D.C. Reeve) from Hackett Press, which is easily and inexpensively available as a stand-alone volume. (Note: this is not Reeve's own 2004 translation of the Republic from Hackett, which converts the dialogue into direct discourse.) The same translation is included in Cooper, J. (ed.), Plato Complete Works, Hackett. For other dialogues, we will also use the Hackett editions (available in the Cooper volume or in stand alone editions). Everyone taking the course for credit should purchase a physical copy of the Grube/Reeve Republic (at least) and be sure to bring it with them to the seminar. For the first seminar, please read the Apology, Crito, and Euthyphro. It would also be useful to have read the Republic at least once cover to cover. Required work will most probably include two short take-home essay exams and a term paper of approximately 6000 words. Auditors are welcome, provided they attend regularly.

[Counts towards course satisfaction of Group D-Ancient]

Phil 72000
Logic
Prof. Warenski
This course is a philosophical introduction to classical symbolic logic. No prior background in logic is assumed. We will study sentence logic and first-order predicate logic with identity. Topics to be covered include semantics, syntax, and proof procedures. We will also cover the metalogical concepts of soundness and completeness. Along the way, we will take a look at some central problems in the philosophy of logic, motivations for non-classical logics, and the relevance of logic to other areas of philosophy. The goal is to achieve both a practical mastery and philosophical understanding of elementary logic.

Phil 77500
Ethics and Evolution: Darwinism and Beyond
Prof. Wilson
4 credits
Mon. 11:45-1:45
Room 7395
This seminar will be devoted to the relationship between the theory of evolution by natural selection and morality. We will address topics such as the following: Darwin’s theory of proto-morality; mutual aid in nonhuman animals, racism and eugenicism in 19th and 20th C. social theory; selfishness and altruism; aggression and warfare; dominance behaviour, and sexual strategies and their relevance for moral norms. On the metaethical level we will be concerned with the 'is-ought' problem, and the ontological status of moral 'beliefs.'

Cross-listed with Psychology and Anthropology

[Counts towards course satisfaction of Group B or C]