

GRADUATE SEMINARS 2018-19

FALL 2018

Philosophy 275A, Luca Ferrero – Proseminar in Metaphysics and Epistemology

In this proseminar, we will explore the contemporary debate about the metaphysics of agential governance and autonomy started by the seminal contributions of Harry Frankfurt. In addition to Frankfurt's work on agency and identification, we will read, among others, some works by Gary Watson, David Velleman, Michael Bratman, and Christine Korsgaard.

Philosophy 280, Myisha Cherry – The Moral Psychology of Anger

Anger has been a topic of philosophical concern since the days of the ancients in both the Eastern and Western philosophical traditions. Infamously thought to be irrational and dangerous, philosophers have also produced work defending anger against its historical and contemporary critics. In this course, we will look at these debates, concerns, and other relevant questions from a variety of perspectives and traditions such as: what is the phenomenological, motivational, and communicative components of anger, is anger necessary for morality, how ought we to evaluate anger and its expressions, does anger have a role in politics, how is its expression and uptake structured by practices of sexism, racism, and other forms of oppression, and what insights do feminist and race approaches add to our understanding of anger? This course will deepen our understandings of anger as well as moral psychology at the intersections of social and political philosophy.

Philosophy 283, Eric Schwitzgebel – The Abundance or Sparseness of Consciousness, in the Universe, on Earth, and in Your Own Head

We will focus on the question of how sparse or abundant consciousness is in the universe, on Earth, and in your own mind. On Earth: We will consider the question of what sorts of animals are conscious -- that is, what sorts of animals have "phenomenology" or a "stream of experience" or are such that there's "something it's like" to be them? Some theorists hold that only cognitively sophisticated human beings can have genuine conscious experience; others hold that even very simple organisms might have conscious experience. In the universe: We will also consider views on what sorts of possible or hypothetical systems would be conscious: What would it take for a computer or robot to have genuine conscious experience? How about hypothetical science fiction aliens? In your own mind: Some people think that the stream of conscious experience is "sparse" in the sense that we can at any moment only consciously experience one or a few things at a time -- more or less whatever is in attention. Others hold that human experience is "abundant" in the sense that at any moment we normally have lots of experiences going on at once, including peripheral experiences of your feet in your shoes and the hum of the refrigerator in the background.

Philosophy 283, Howard Wettstein – Henry Bugbee’s *The Inward Morning*.

Bugbee’s book is unique in the philosophy literature, in part because it’s a philosopher’s journal. And in part because it reflects the thought of one trained in analytic philosophy but whose interests are similar to those who work in the continental tradition. It is largely jargon-free, the reflections of a person trying to grapple with the big questions. Reflections on nature, on human nature, on art and religion are interspersed with more usual kinds of philosophical reflections. The book represents a challenge and a great opportunity. I am looking forward to working through it with the group. I have done a previous graduate seminar on this book. Our discussions were memorable, at least from my point of view. Students who were in that seminar are encouraged to join again. There will be new material, including parts of the book that we never got to.