

## Matter, Mind and Consciousness

David Pitt, Director

CEU Summer Course, July 18-29, 2016

Central European University, Budapest

Session Topics and Associated Bibliography (Both Subject to Change)

*All sessions will be interactive and discussion-based.*

**HOWARD ROBINSON**

***Topic: Substance Dualism.***

### **Lecture 1. Why Standard Physicalism Cannot Be True.**

I shall argue that no-one has improved on the Smart-Armstrong “topic neutral” analysis of consciousness and why this cannot be a correct account. The “phenomenal concept strategy” is no improvement. I'll also argue that the knowledge argument relates not merely to the qualitative nature of mental states but to the all non-formal or abstract aspects of physical reality.

#### **Readings**

- Smart, J. J. C. (1959). “Sensations and Brain Processes,” *Philosophical Review*.
- Loar, B. (1997). “Phenomenal States,” in *The Nature of Consciousness*, eds. Block, Flanagan, Guzeldere.
- Robinson, H. (2012). “Qualia, Qualities and Our Conception of the Physical world,” in *The Case for Dualism*, ed. Benedikt Goecke, Notre Dame Press.

### **Lecture 2: The Argument for Mental Substance (“Dualism”).**

There has been a recent revival of “substance dualism” (i.e. the theory that the human mind is an immaterial substance). I shall be looking at some of these arguments and defending one of them.

#### **Readings**

- Lowe, E.J. (2004). “Non-Cartesian Dualism,” in ed. Heil, *Philosophy of Mind: a Guide and Anthology*, Oxford University Press.

- Swinburne, R (2014). "What Makes Me? A Defense of Substance Dualism," in *Contemporary Dualism: a Defense*, eds. Lavazza and Robinson, Routledge.
- Robinson, H. (2012). "Substance Dualism and Its Rationale," in *Free Will and Modern Science*, ed. Richard Swinburne, the British Academy and Oxford University Press.

### **Lecture 3: Problems with the Concept of Matter.**

Materialists usually show no awareness of problems with the concept of matter - only those with the concept of mind. We will be looking at whether there is a coherent and contentful of matter at all.

#### **Readings**

- Martin, C. B. (1997). "On the Need for Properties: the Road to Pythagoreanism and Back," *Synthese* 112, 193-231.
- Blackburn, S. (1990). "Filling in Space," *Analysis* (special half-centenary volume), April.
- Robinson, H. (2011). "Idealism" in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Mind*, eds. McLaughlin, Beckermann and Walter.

## **GALEN STRAWSON**

**Topic: Panpsychism** ("How things may hang together")

### **Lecture 1: The Primacy of Panpsychism.**

How may we best characterize the overall dialectical situation in the mind-body problem? Can we know anything about the intrinsic nature of the energy that constitutes concrete existence? Is some form of panpsychism the most plausible theory of how things are?

#### **Readings**

- Nagel, T. (1986). *The View from Nowhere* (New York: Oxford University Press), pp. 28–32, 46–53.
- Seager, W. and Allen-Hermanson, S. (2001–13). "Panpsychism," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition), ed. E. Zalta <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/panpsychism/>.
- Strawson, G. (2015). "Mind and Being: the Primacy of Panpsychism," in *Panpsychism: Philosophical Essays*, ed. G. Bruntrup and L. Jaskolla, Oxford University Press.

## Lecture 2: Bouncing Off the Bare Particular (*Sein ist Sosein*).

How should we react to the fact that the idea of a 'bare particular' is incoherent? Does it follow that the object/property distinction is metaphysically superficial? Can we find a stable position? What about the substance/process distinction? Do we have anything to add to Buddhist Madhyamaka metaphysics?

### Readings

- Loux, M. (2002). *Metaphysics: a Contemporary Introduction*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge), ch. 3.
- Mackenzie, M. (draft). "Physicalism and Beyond: Flanagan, Buddhism, and Consciousnesses."
- Nietzsche, F. (1880–1888). Selected texts (GS in preparation).
- Strawson, G. (2009). *Selves*, University Press, pp. 294–317.
- Ramsey, F. P. (1925/1990). "Universals," in F. P. Ramsey *Philosophical Papers*, Cambridge University Press, and in *Properties*, ed. D. H. Mellor & Alex Oliver, Oxford University Press.
- Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant (1641–1787). Selected texts (GS in preparation).

## Lecture 3: Structure and Quality.

'It seems necessary to give up the "structure-quality" division of knowledge in its strict form' (Newman 1928)? Is Max Newman right? How do doubts about the structure/quality distinction relate to doubts about the object/property and substance/process distinctions considered in session [2]?

### Readings

- Van Fraassen, B. (2006). "Structure: its shadow and substance," *Brit. J. Phil. Sci.* 57: 275–307.
- Ladyman, J. (draft). "An Apology for Naturalised Metaphysics."
- Newman, M. (1928). "Mr. Russell's 'Causal Theory of Perception'," *Mind* 37: 137–148.
- Strawson, G. (draft). "Structure and quality."

## PHILIP GOFF

**Topic: *Consciousness and Fundamental Reality.***

**Lecture 1: Physicalism and Phenomenal Concepts.**

Much contemporary discussion of the mind-body problem focuses around a couple of powerful arguments which seem to show that conscious states cannot possibly be identical with or grounded in brain states. For the past couple of decades the most popular physicalist strategy for responding to these arguments is to concede that there is an epistemic gap between consciousness and the physical, but to try to explain this gap in terms of the distinctive concepts we use to think about consciousness: phenomenal concepts. We will discuss contemporary developments in this debate.

### Readings

- Diaz-Leon, E. (2014). "Do A Posteriori Physicalists Get Our Phenomenal Concepts Wrong?" *Ratio* 27: 1, 1-16.
- Schroer, R. (2010). "What's the Beef? Phenomenal Concepts as Both Demonstrative and Substantial," *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 88, 505-22.
- Goff, P. (Forthcoming). "Real Acquaintance and Physicalism," in P. Coates & S. Coleman (eds.) *Phenomenal Qualities: Sense, Perception and Consciousness*, Oxford University Press.

### Lecture 2: Russellian Monism.

In the 1920s both Bertrand Russell and Arthur Eddington independently came up with a novel solution to the mind-body problem. Physics characterises the physical in terms of its causal or structural properties, telling us nothing about the concrete categorical nature which underlies such causal structure. Perhaps it is this underlying categorical nature which explains consciousness. This approach was quickly forgotten about, but is currently enjoying a revival, under the banner of 'Russellian monism.' We will explore varieties of Russellian monism, and examine their plausibility.

### Readings

- Pereboom, D. (2015). "Consciousness, Physicalism, and Absolutely Intrinsic Properties," in T. Alter & Y. Nagasawa, eds., *Consciousness and the Physical World: Essays on Russellian Monism*, Oxford University Press.
- Goff, P. (2015). "Against Constitutive Russellian Monism," in Alter and Nagasawa, eds.
- Coleman, S. (2014). "The Real Combination Problem: Panpsychism, Micro-subjects and Emergence," *Erkenntnis* 79: 1, 19-44.

### **Lecture 3: Cosmopsychism.**

Philosophers tend to assume that the fundamental entities are located at the micro-level. However, Jonathan Schaffer has recently conducted a wide-ranging defense of *priority monism*: the view that the universe is the one and only fundamental object. If we combine this view with panpsychist forms of Russellian monism, we get *cosmopsychism*: the view that the one and only fundamental object is a conscious universe. Wacky as it sounds, there is reason to think this view avoids many of the difficulties facing standard forms of Russellian monism. We will try to work out whether this is in fact the case.

#### **Readings**

- Schaffer, J. (2010). "Monism: The Priority of the Whole," *Philosophical Review* 119: 1, 31-76.
- Schaffer, J. (2009). "Spacetime: The One Substance," *Philosophical Studies* 145:1, 131-148.
- Goff, P. (MS.). "A Conscious Universe?," chapter 10 of *Consciousness and Fundamental Reality*.

### **ANGELA MENDELOVICI**

#### **Topic: Intentionality in Perception.**

#### **Lecture 1: Representationalism and the Content of Perception.**

This lecture discusses what is meant by the claim that perception has content. I argue that there is a fairly thin construal of content on which it is fairly unobjectionable that at least conscious perceptual states have content. I also briefly discuss representationalism, the view that an experience's phenomenal features are grounded in its intentional features.

#### **Readings**

- Byrne, A. (2009). "Experience and Content," *Philosophical Quarterly* 59 (236): 429-451.
- Siegel, S. (2006). "Which Properties Are Represented in Perception?," in
- T. S. Gendler & J. Hawthorne, eds., *Perceptual Experience*, Oxford University Press, 481-503.
- (Optional) Pautz, A. (2010). "Why Explain Visual Experience in Terms of Content?" In Bence Nanay (ed.), *Perceiving the World*, Oxford University Press, 254-309.

## **Lecture 2: Accounting for Perceptual Intentionality: The Tracking Theory.**

This lecture considers the prospects of accounting for perceptual intentionality in terms of the tracking theory of intentionality. I argue that the tracking theory cannot account for perceptual intentionality because it cannot accommodate an important kind of misrepresentation that occurs in perception, reliable misrepresentation.

### **Readings**

- Fodor, J.A. (1990). "A Theory of Content II," In *A Theory of Content and Other Essays*, MIT Press.
- Ballard, D. (2002). "Our Perception of the World Has to Be an Illusion," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 9 (5-6): 54-71.
- Mendelovici, A. (2013). "Reliable Misrepresentation and Tracking Theories of Mental Representation," *Philosophical Studies* 165 (2): 421-443.

## **Lecture 3: Accounting for Perceptual Intentionality: The Phenomenal Intentionality Theory.**

This lecture considers whether the phenomenal intentionality theory, a theory of intentionality that grounds intentionality in phenomenal consciousness, can offer a satisfactory account of perceptual intentionality. It also considers the difference between the phenomenal intentionality theory and representationalism.

### **Readings**

- Kriegel, U. (2013). "The Phenomenal Intentionality Research Program." In U. Kriegel (ed.), *Phenomenal Intentionality*, Oxford University Press.
- Horgan, T. & Tienson, J. (2002). "The Intentionality of Phenomenology and the Phenomenology of Intentionality". In David J. Chalmers, ed., *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, Oxford University Press, 520-533.
- Mendelovici, A. & Bourget, D. (2014). "Naturalizing Intentionality: Tracking Theories Versus Phenomenal Intentionality Theories," *Philosophy Compass* 9 (5): 325-337.

**MICHELLE MONTAGUE**

**Topic: The intentionality of Perception**

The topic of this section is the intentionality of perception. We will be concerned with the following questions. Having a conscious perception involves both consciousness and intentionality, so what is the relationship between these properties? What is the nature of color experience and sound experience? Do both kinds of experiences necessarily involve a representation of spatiality? Does conscious perception typically involve cognitive phenomenology?

### **Lecture 1: Consciousness.**

In this session we will consider three views of consciousness, and how these views might explicate the relationship between consciousness and intentionality for conscious perception. The first two are what I call 'awareness of awareness' views, and include same-order and higher-order views. The third view is typically called 'representationalism'.

#### **Readings**

- Montague, M. (Forthcoming). *The Given: Experience and its Content*, chapters 1-3, Oxford University Press.
- Rosenthal, D. (2009). "Higher-order theories of Consciousness," in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Mind*, eds. B McLaughlin, A. Beckerman, and S. Walter, Oxford University Press.
- Tye, M. (2009). "Representationalist Theories of Consciousness," in McLaughlin, Beckerman and Walter, eds.
- Zahavi, D. (2005). *Subjectivity and Selfhood: Investigating the First-Person Perspective*, MIT Press.

### **Lecture 2: Representation of Sound and Color.**

In this session, we will consider sound and color experience. We will be especially concerned with how the representation of spatiality might or might not feature in sound and color perception.

#### **Readings**

- McLaughlin, B. (2003). "Color, Consciousness and Color Consciousness," in Q. Smith, ed., *New Essays in Consciousness*, Oxford University Press.
- Nudds, M. (2009). "Sounds and Space," in C. O'Callaghan and M. Nudds, eds., *Sounds and Perception: New Philosophical Essays*, Oxford University Press.
- O'Callaghan, C. (2010). "Perceiving the Locations of Sounds," *Review of Philosophy and Psychology* 1: 123-140.
- Strawson, P.F. (1959). *Individuals: An essay in Descriptive Metaphysics*, Chapter 2: Routledge.

### **Lecture 3: Cognitive Phenomenology and Perception.**

In this session we will consider whether cognitive phenomenology is typically part of conscious perception. Can we draw a principled distinction between perception and cognition? How should the line between cognitive phenomenology and sensory phenomenology be drawn?

#### **Readings**

- Kriegel, U. (2015). *The Varieties of Consciousness*, chapter 1, Oxford University Press.
- McDowell, J. (1996). *Mind and World*, Lecture 2, Harvard University Press.
- Montague, M. (2011). "The Phenomenology of Particularity," in Bayne and Montague, eds.
- Siegel, S. (2010). *The Contents of Visual Experience*, chapter 4, Oxford University Press.

### **MARTA JORBA**

**Topic: Cognitive Phenomenology.**

### **Lecture 1: Introspection, Phenomenal Contrast and Epistemic Arguments.**

This session will introduce the topic and general framework and discuss two main arguments used in the debate, phenomenal contrast and epistemic arguments, and the role that introspection plays in them.

#### **Readings**

- Bayne, T. and Montague, M. (2011). "Cognitive Phenomenology: An Introduction," in T. Bayne and M. Montague, eds., *Cognitive Phenomenology*, Oxford University Press.
- Spener, M. (2011). "Disagreement About Cognitive Phenomenology," in T. Bayne and M. Montague, eds.
- Levine, J. (2011). "On the Phenomenology of Thought," in Bayne and Montague, eds.

### **Lecture 2: Access and Phenomenal Consciousness, Inner Speech.**

This session will address two main elements in cognitive phenomenology: the relation of access and phenomenal consciousness in thought and the relation between inner speech and conscious thought.



## Readings

Block, N. (1995). "On a Confusion About a Function of Consciousness," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 18: 227-247.

Prinz, J. (2011). "The Sensory Basis of Cognitive Phenomenology, in Bayne & Montague, eds.

Jorba, M. and Vicente, A. (2014). "Cognitive Phenomenology, Access to Contents and Inner Speech," *Journal of Consciousness Studies*.

### **Lecture 3: Stream of Consciousness and Temporality.**

This last session will be a discussion of the ontology of thought in relation to the stream of consciousness, drawing implications for cognitive phenomenology debates.

## Readings

- Soteriou, M. (2007). "Content and the Stream of Consciousness," *Philosophical Perspectives* 21.
- Tye, M. and Wright, B. (2011). "Is There a Phenomenology of Thought?, in Bayne and Montague, eds.
- Chudnoff, E. (2014). *Cognitive Phenomenology*, chapter 4: "Time," Routledge.
- Jorba, M. (MS). "Thought, Processive Character and the Stream of Consciousness."

## **DAVID PITT**

### ***Topic: The Experience of Thinking.***

#### **Lecture 1: The Phenomenology of Cognition.**

An introduction to the idea that there is a specific experience of thinking, as unlike other kinds of experience (seeing, hearing, smelling, etc.) as they are unlike each other. This kind of experience – a "cognitive (or conceptual) phenomenology" – is not the experience of hearing or seeing words or images in one's head. It is a sui generis kind of experience characteristic of pure thought. Different thoughts have different experiential characters of this kind, and the experiential character of a thought is its content (its meaning).

## Readings

- Pitt, D. (2004). "The Phenomenology of Cognition, or, *What Is It Like to Think that P?*", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 1-36.
- Pitt, D. (2009). "Intentional Psychologism," *Philosophical Studies*, 117-138

## **Lecture 2: Indexical Thought and Nominal Thought.**

Development of the thesis that thinking is a kind of experience, with respect to thoughts whose expression involves the utterances of indexicals ('I', 'here', 'now', 'you', 'this', 'that', ...) and proper names ('Ildiko', 'Aristotle', ...). The meanings of sentences containing these expressions have standardly been taken to involve their *referents*. For example, the sentence 'I am hungry' as uttered by me has a different meaning from the same sentence as uttered by you, *because* the referents of our utterances of 'I' are different (me and you, respectively). Similarly, the sentence 'Ildiko is a philosopher' has different meanings when said about different Ildikos. Those individuals – me, you, the Ildikos, are thus *constituents* of the meanings of our sentences. And since the meaning of a sentence is the same as the content of the thought it expresses, the same is true of the associated thought contents. This is inconsistent with the experiential individuation of thought contents; so an alternative account of these thoughts (and sentences) must be developed.

### **Readings**

- Pitt, D. (2013). "Indexical Thought," in Kriegel, ed., *Phenomenal Intentionality*, Oxford University Press.
- Pitt, D., "Thinking with Names," chapter 4 of *The Quality of Thought* (book under contract with Oxford University Press).

## **Lecture 3: Unconscious Thought.**

The thesis that thinking is a kind of experience, characterized by a particular kind of experiential quality (also called "phenomenology"), is in *prima facie* tension with the apparent existence of unconscious thought. The tension arises because it is not at all obvious that there can be unconscious experience. Indeed, many philosophers declare it a self-evident truth that experience and experiential ("phenomenal") qualities must be conscious. This claim may be challenged, on both philosophical and empirical grounds. But it may also be the case that, contrary to what seems to be true to common sense and cognitive science, what goes on in the unconscious brain when, for example, one "works on" a problem while in a dreamless sleep, is not thought, but merely formal computation over inherently meaningless structures ("symbols") *programmed by* and *subserving* conscious cognition. This is no more genuine *thinking* than what goes on in your computer's hard drive.

### **Readings**

- Searle, J. (1980). "Minds, Brains, and Programs," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*.
- Kriegel, U (2011). "Cognitive Phenomenology as the Basis of Unconscious Content," in Bayne and Montague, eds.
- Pitt, D., "Unconscious Thought," chapter 5 of *The Quality of Thought*.