

PHILOSOPHY PROSEMINAR

Ted Sider, Fall 2006
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DESCRIPTION

First-year philosophy proseminar, restricted to first-year graduate students in philosophy at Rutgers. We will study the highlights of twentieth century work in logic, language, epistemology, and metaphysics. There are two goals. First, to become familiar with these works. These are classics, in which every student of contemporary philosophy should be immersed. Second, to develop the ability to *do* philosophy, in writing and in public.

READINGS

I have asked the bookstore to order the following books:

Ayer *Language, Truth and Logic*

Frege *The Frege Reader (FR)*, edited by Beaney

Goodman *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast (FFF)*

Kripke *Naming and Necessity*

Lewis *On the Plurality of Worlds*

Quine *From a Logical Point of View (FLPV)*, *The Ways of Paradox (WP)*,
Word and Object

Russell *The Problems of Philosophy*

Buy all of them if you can; they're classics. But I will make readings available for copying as well. Some readings will be available on electronic reserve through our library:

http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_servs/course_reserves.shtml

One of the articles on reserve is "Improving Academic Writing", by Jonathan Bennett and Samuel Gorovitz. Everyone should read this at the beginning of the semester.

Some helpful resources:

Jason Stanley, "Philosophy of Language in the Twentieth Century", forthcoming in *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth-Century Philosophy*, draft available online: <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~jasoncs/routledge.pdf>

Scott Soames, *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century* (two volumes)

REQUIREMENTS

Two short class presentations, and several (6 or so) short writing assignments. Writing assignments, and the list of presentation slots, will be posted on the course web page:

<http://fas-philosophy.rutgers.edu/sider/teaching/proseminar/index.html>

SCHEDULE

Language: nature of meaning

- Week 1 Frege, “Thought”, “On *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*”, “Function and Object” (all in *FR*); Russell, “On Truth and Falsehood” (Chapter XII of *The Problems of Philosophy*)
- Week 2 Russell, “On Denoting”, “Descriptions”; Strawson, “On Referring”
- Week 3 (Paper 1 due) Kripke *Naming and Necessity* Lectures 1 and 2; Putnam “The Meaning of Meaning”
- Week 4 Strawson, “Truth functional constants and ordinary words”, in *Introduction to Logical Theory*; Grice, “Logic and Conversation”; Kaplan, “Demonstratives”, preface and sections I-XIV

Epistemology/logical positivism

- Week 5 Russell, Chapters I-XI of *The Problems of Philosophy*; “The Relation of Sense-Data to Physics”
- Week 6 Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic*; Hempel, “Problems and Changes in the Empiricist Criterion of Meaning”
- Week 7 Quine, “Truth by Convention” (*WP*), “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” (*FLPV*)
- Week 8 Quine, “Posits and Reality”; Goodman, “The New Riddle of Induction (*FFF*)”

Metaphysics: modality

- Week 9 Quine, “Reference and Modality” (*FLPV*); Smullyan, “Modality and Description”
- Week 10 Kripke, “Semantical Considerations on Modal Logic”, *Naming and Necessity* pp. 39-47 and lecture 3
- Week 11 Lewis, *On the Plurality of Worlds* 1.1-1.2, 1.6-1.9; chapter 2; 4.1, 4.4-4.5
- Week 12 Goodman, “The Problem of Counterfactual Conditionals” (*FFF*); Stalnaker, “A Theory of Conditionals”