

PHILOSOPHY OF TIME

Ted Sider, Spring 2022
Tuesday 10:20–1:20

Description

This will be a graduate seminar on philosophy of time. We'll begin with two weeks of background, then turn to more recent literature.

Requirements

If taking for research credit: either two short (roughly 10–12 pages) papers, due 3/29 and 5/13, or one term paper (roughly 20 pages), due 5/13. If not taking for research credit: two short expository papers (roughly 6–8 pages), due 3/29 and 5/13.

Readings

Readings will be available on the Canvas site for the course:

<https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/168997>

(There you will also find Bennett and Gorovitz's "Improving Academic Writing", which I have found very useful.)

Tentative Schedule

("Background reading" and "further reading" are optional)

Background

1/18–1/25 *A theory vs B theory; presentism vs eternalism vs growing block*

REQUIRED READING: McTaggart (1927, chapter XXXIII); Smart (1963); Prior (1970, 1957, pp. 8–12)

BACKGROUND READING: Emery et al. (2020); Sider (2001, chapter 2)

FURTHER READING: Temporal ontology: Prior (1968*a*); Solomyak (2018). Time's flow: Williams (1951); Smart (1949); Markosian (1993). Presentism: Adams (1986); Markosian (2004); Zimmerman (2007). Presentism and spacetime physics: Prior (1996); Zimmerman (2011). Grounding objection: Lewis (1992); Bigelow (1996); Emery (2020); Merricks (2007). Inter-temporal facts: Lewis (2004); Sider (1999); Brogaard (2007). "Thank goodness that's over": Mellor (1981, 1998); Prior (1976); Paul (1997); Sider (2001, pp. 18–21). Time and rationality: Sullivan (2018). B-theory and experience of time: Callender (2008); Paul (2010); Skow (2011). Tense logic and nonexistence: Marcus (1946); Prior (1957); Fine (2005*b*); Williamson (2013); Sullivan (2012*b,a*). The open future: Thomason (1970); Prior (1968*b*, chapter 7); MacFarlane (2008); Barnes

and Cameron (2008). Epistemic objection to nonpresentist A theories: Braddon-Mitchell (2004); Forrest (2004); Russell (2016). Time travel: Arntzenius and Maudlin (2013); Lewis (1976); Sider (2005); Vihvelin (1996). Direction of time: Albert (2000); North (2011). Temporal parts and humean supervenience: Lewis (1986a, pp. 203–4); Armstrong (1980); Sider (2001); Merricks (1995); Zimmerman (2008, 2022); Builes and Teitel (2022). Whether the dispute over presentism is merely verbal: Deasy (2019); Meyer (2005); Miller (2005); Sider (1999, 2011, chapters 9, 11)

Moving Spotlight

2/1 *What is the spotlight theory? Fine's fragmentalism*

REQUIRED READING: Sider (2011, pp. 246–65); Fine (2005c, pp. 261–88, 318–20); Deng (2013)

BACKGROUND READING: Fine (2001); Sider (2011, chapter 1)

FURTHER READING: Hofweber and Lange (2017); Skow (2015)

2/8 *Spotlight theories without fundamental tense operators*

REQUIRED READING: Cameron (2015, sections 4.1–4.4, 4.7); Deasy (forthcoming)

FURTHER READING: Deasy (2016); Sider (2017)

2/15 *Catch-up*

Time and Propositions

2/22 *Advanced modalizing and temporalizing*

REQUIRED READING: Dorr (2010a, sections 1–5); Deasy (2020)

BACKGROUND READING: Lewis (1986a, pp. 1–20); Divers (1999); Parsons (2012); Marshall (2016); Sider (2021, pp. 1–12)

3/1 *Contingent and temporary truth*

REQUIRED READING: Dorr and Goodman (2020)

BACKGROUND READING: Sider (2010, pp. 133–43); Kaplan (1989); Richard (1981); Schaffer (2012)

3/8 *Contingency of now*

REQUIRED READING: Glazier (forthcoming)

3/22 *Catch-up*

Connections to philosophy of physics

3/29 *Dynamical laws of nature and the A theory*

REQUIRED READING: Builes and Impagnatiello (2022)

BACKGROUND READING: Arntzenius (2000); Sider (2020, pp. 1–10)

4/5–4/12 *Presentism and relativity*

REQUIRED READING: Maudlin (2012, chapters 1–4); Emery (2019)

BACKGROUND READING: Space and time: Geroch (1981). Relativity objection to the A theory: Putnam (1967); Sider (2001, chapter 2, section 4)

FURTHER READING: Prior (1996); Zimmerman (2011); Skow (2009)

4/19 *Laws and time vs space.* [David Albert visit]

BACKGROUND READING: Lewis (1970; 1973, pp.73–4; 1994); Huggett (2006); Dorr (2010b, pp. 160–2)

FURTHER READING: Skow (2007)

4/26 *Catch-up*

References

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