



M.A. PROSEMINAR, PHIL 5850

PHILOSOPHICAL NATURALISM

Fall 2019

Mondays 2:30 – 5:30

Paterson Hall 3A36

Instructor information

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Office hours

TBA

Description & Objective

As a philosophical movement, naturalism eschews the nonphysical and emphasizes scientifically respectable methods of inquiry. The objective of this seminar is to explore the roots and guises of contemporary philosophical naturalism and its presence in three particular areas of philosophy—the philosophy of mind, ethics, and epistemology.

Particular topics to be discussed include the American origins of contemporary naturalism, its ontological and methodological commitments, the causal closure of the physical domain, varieties of physicalism (reductionism, nonreductionism, eliminativism) about the mental, naturalist challenges to metaethical realism, the autonomy of normative philosophy, and whether a naturalized epistemology vitiates traditional epistemology's reliance on non-experimental methods: for example, intuition and the *a priori*.

Readings

There is no central text that you need to buy for this seminar. The seminar readings will consist of the following articles. (You will get those not marked by an asterisk on your own; they are available from the library's current online holdings, *PhilPapers*, etc. I will make those marked by an asterisk available.)

Seven articles on naturalism in the *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (SEP)*. Please read them all. We will definitely discuss the first and second and the one on naturalism in epistemology. If there is time, we will discuss them all. To see the notes, click on any note number.

*Brook, A. and R. Stainton (2000) *Knowledge and Mind*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Read at least Ch. 8, A New Approach to Knowledge and Mind. As the first section, Naturalizing Philosophy: How Philosophy Relates to Science, indicates, the new approach is naturalism.

Armstrong, D. (1978). Naturalism, materialism, and first philosophy. *Philosophia: Philosophical Quarterly of Israel*, 8, 261—76.

*Boyd, R. (1988). How to be a moral realist. In G. Sayre-McCord (Ed.), *Essays on moral realism*, pp. 181—228. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Churchland, P. (1981). Eliminative materialism and the propositional attitudes. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 78, 67—90.

*Davidson, D. (1970). Mental events. In L. Forester & J. Swanson (Eds.), *Experience and theory*, pp. 79—110. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press. (Reprinted in Davidson, D. (1980), *Essays on actions and events*, pp. 207—27. Oxford: Clarendon Press.)

*Foley, R. (1994). Quine and naturalized epistemology. *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, 19, 243—60.

Hampton, J. (1998). Naturalism and moral reasons [Chapter 1]. In Hampton, *The authority of reason*, pp. 19—43. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Harman, G. (1977). Ethics and observation [Chapter 1]. In Harman, *The nature of morality*, pp. 3—10. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

*Kim, J. (2003). The American origins of philosophical naturalism. *The Journal of Philosophical Research*, 28 (Issue supplement: *Philosophy in America at the turn of the century*), 83—98.

Kim, J. (2001). Lonely souls: Causality and substance dualism. In K. Corcoran (Ed.), *Soul, body, and survival*, pp. 30—43. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Lewis, D. (1966). An argument for the identity theory. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 63, 17—25.

*Mackie, J.L. (1977). The subjectivity of values [Chapter 1]. In Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing right and wrong*, pp. 15—49. London: Penguin Books.

Nagel, J. (2007). Epistemic intuitions. *Philosophy Compass*, 2, 792—819.

Nagel, T. (1974). What is it like to be a bat? *The Philosophical Review*, 83, 435—50.

*Papineau, D. (2001). The rise of physicalism. In C. Gillett & B. Loewer (Eds.), *Physicalism and its discontents*, pp. 1—36. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Quine, W.V.O. (1969). Epistemology naturalized. In Quine, *Ontological relativity and other essays*, pp. 69—90. New York: Columbia University Press.

*Weinberg, J., S. Nichols, & S. Stich. (2001). Normativity and epistemic intuitions. *Philosophical Topics*, 29, 429—60.

Evaluation

Participation (10% of overall grade): I will keep track of your participation by gauging your degree of preparation for, and willingness to contribute to (via comments and questions) the discussions of the weekly seminar meetings in which you are not giving a presentation.

Presentations (20%+30%=50% of overall grade): For each of two seminar meetings, you will provide an opening commentary on an assigned reading, and then lead the subsequent discussion. Your opening commentary will be based on a 3-4 page (900-1,200 word) paper, which you will submit to me on the morning of the meeting.

Final paper (40% of overall grade): Ideally (but not necessarily) based on one of your presentations, your final paper for the seminar should be approximately 15 pages (4,500 words) in length. It is due on the final day of the fall term's examination period, December 21st.

Schedule

Sept. 09	<i>Introduction: Naturalism and Mind</i>	Brook and Stainton, Ch. 8 Papineau (2001)
Sept. 16	<i>The roots & guises of contemporary naturalism</i>	SEP Article: Naturalis, by David Papineau (2001)
Sept. 23	<i>A few historically significant papers</i>	Armstrong (1978), Kim (2003), Quine1969)
Sept. 30	<i>Naturalism in the philosophy of mind: formative papers.</i>	Lewis (1966), Kim (2001)
Oct. 7	<i>A 'classic' paper: Naturalism without mind/brain type/type identity</i>	Davidson (1970)
Oct. 14	[University closed. We will reschedule if possible.]	Nagel (1974), a 'classic' paper
Oct. 21	[Fall break]	
Oct. 28	<i>Eliminativist form of naturalism</i>	Churchland (1981)

Nov. 04	<i>Ethical naturalism</i>	Mackie (1977), Harman (1977), Hampton (1998)
Nov. 11		Boyd (1988)
Nov. 18	<i>Epistemological naturalism</i>	Quine (1969), Foley (1994)
Nov. 25		
Dec. 2		Weinberg, Nichols & Stich (2001), Nagel (2007)

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2019-20)

Assignments:

Unless specifically told otherwise by their instructors, students:

- Must not use a plastic or cardboard cover or paper clips.
- Must staple the paper (there is a stapler on the essay box).
- Must include the following on the first page: student name and number; course name and number; instructor's name.
- No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work – see dates below.
- Assignments handed in through the essay box (just inside the glass doors, Paterson Hall, Floor 3A) must be dropped into the box by **4:15** on a regular business day in order to be date-stamped with that day's date. Assignments handed in after 4:15 or on a non-business day will be stamped as having been handed in on the next business day.
- Students are required to keep copies of their assignments. If your paper is lost at any point, you will be considered not to have submitted it if you cannot produce a copy immediately on request.

Evaluation:

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Deferrals for Final Exams:

If you miss a final examination (formally scheduled or take-home) because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral. You must apply within 3 working days after the scheduled date of your formally scheduled exam or within 3 working days after the due date of a take-home exam. Visit the Registrar's Office for more information:

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv2/#2.5>

Plagiarism:

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of 'plagiarism' as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. carleton.ca/pmc

Pregnancy obligation: write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Religious obligation: write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Survivors of Sexual Violence: as a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and is survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Accommodation for Student Activities: Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: students.carleton.ca/course-outline

Important Dates:

Sept. 4	Classes start.
Sept. 17	Last day for registration and course changes for fall term and fall/winter (two-term) courses.
Sept. 30	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from fall term or two-term courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.
Oct. 14	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Oct. 21-25	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 22	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, before the official examination period.
Dec. 6	Last day of fall term classes. Classes follow a Monday schedule. Last day for academic withdrawal from fall term courses. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for a fall term course.
Dec. 9-21	Final examinations for fall term courses and mid-term examinations in two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Dec. 21	All take-home examinations are due.