

Professor Elisabeth Camp

Office: 426 Logan Hall

Office Hours: Thursday 2-4 and by appointment

Email: campe@sas.upenn.edu

In this course we will examine what concepts are, and what functions they need to perform. More specific topics include whether and how inferential role can play a constitutive role in individuating concepts (atomism and holism); how the reference of concepts is determined (individualism and externalism); and compositionality (prototypes, the language of thought, and cognitive maps). For each topic, we'll consider the canonical philosophical background, relevant psychological investigations, and more recent philosophical discussion.

Most of the readings will be posted on the Blackboard website. The only book you really need to own is *Concepts: Core Readings* (ed. Margolis and Laurence), which will be available at Penn Book Center. You should have a copy of Kripke's *Naming and Necessity* anyway; I'll put a copy on reserve if not everyone has or wants to buy it. It wouldn't be a bad idea to buy copies of Fodor's *Concepts: Where Cognitive Science Went Wrong*, Peacocke's *A Study of Concepts*, and Bermudez's *Thoughts without Words*, but I'll make the relevant chapters available on Blackboard.

Everyone registered for the course will be expected to lead discussion for one meeting; auditors are strongly encouraged to do so as well. This should involve a *brief* review of the main claims in the readings (no longer than 20 minutes), along with a few questions about the material; some of these questions may be clarificatory, but at least some should be more substantive. I'll expect you to email a sketch of the review plus questions to me by the Sunday before the seminar, so that we can coordinate plans for the meeting.

The listed readings are provisional and subject to revision, including especially in the light of suggestions from you. If you find an especially useful or intriguing article or argument on one of our topics that's not listed, let me know.

Your grade in the course will be a holistic function of your general participation, your presentation/discussion, and your paper. Papers should be 20-25 pp. long, and have an abstract. You must meet with me during the term to discuss your topic; we'll spend the last class discussing your topics and outstanding questions that emerge over the semester.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Jan. 9: Introduction

Jan. 16: The "Classical View"

Locke: *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Bk. II: chs. 2, 3, 12, 23(1-11), 24; Bk. III: ch. 3

[Hume: *Treatise of Human Nature*, Bk. I Pt. I]

Frege: "Sense and Reference," "Function and Concept," "Thought"

1. Inference, Holism, and "Theory-Theory"

Jan. 23: Philosophical Background

Quine: "Two Dogmas of Empiricism"

Harman: "(Nonsolipsistic) Conceptual Role Semantics"

Peacocke: *A Study of Concepts*, ch. 1

[Block: "Advertisement for a Semantics for Psychology", "An Argument for Holism"]

Jan. 30: Psychological Investigations

Murphy and Medin: "The Role of Theories in Conceptual Coherence" (in *CCR*)

Margolis: "The Significance of the Theory Analogy in the Psychological Study of Concepts"

[Gopnik: "Conceptual and Semantic Development as Theory Change: Object Permanence"]

Feb. 6: Philosophical Alternatives

Fodor: *Concepts: Where Cognitive Science Went Wrong*, ch. 6.

Millikan: "A common structure for concepts of individuals, stuffs, and real kinds" (in *CCR*)

[Millikan: *On Clear and Confused Ideas*, chs. 2, 3]

[Fodor & Lepore: "Why Meaning (Probably) Isn't Conceptual Role"]

[Bilgrami: "Why Holism is Harmless and Necessary"]

[Boghossian: "Does an Inferential Role Semantics Rest Upon a Mistake?"]

[Jackman: "Moderate Holism and the Instability Thesis"]

2. Reference, Externalism, and Essentialism

Feb. 13: Philosophical Background

Kripke: *Naming and Necessity*

Putnam: "Meaning and Reference"

Burge: "Individualism and the Mental"

Feb. 20: Psychological Investigations

Medin and Ortony "Psychological Essentialism"

Rips: "Necessity and natural categories"

Strevens: "The Essentialist Aspect of Naïve Theories"

[Gelman: "Psychological Essentialism in Children"]

[Malt: "Water is not H₂O"]

Feb. 27 (Class to be RESCHEDULED): Philosophical Responses

Fodor: "Methodological Solipsism Considered as a Research Strategy"

Chalmers: "Two-Dimensional Semantics"

[Boghossian: "What the Externalist Can Know A Priori"]

[Peacocke: "Content, Computation, and Externalism"]

SPRING BREAK 3/6

3. Compositionality and Mental Representations

Mar. 13: Arguments for LOT

Fodor and Pylyshyn: "Connectionism and Cognitive Architecture: A Critical Analysis"

Davies: "Concepts, Connectionism, and the Language of Thought"

[Peacocke: *A Study of Concepts*, ch. 2]

Mar. 20: Arguments for and against Prototypes

Rosch: "Principles of Categorization" (in *CCR*)

Smith et al: "Combining Prototypes: A Selective Modification Model" (in *CCR*)

Rey: "Concepts and Stereotypes" (in *CCR*)

[Armstrong, Gleitman & Gleitman: "What Some Concepts Might not Be" (in *CCR*)]

[Khalidi: "Two concepts of concept"]

Mar. 27: Systematicity and Stimulus-Independence

Carruthers: "On Being Simple-Minded"

Bermudez: *Thinking without Words*, chs. 3-5

Camp: "Putting Thoughts to Work: Concepts, Systematicity, and Stimulus-Independence"

[Gallistel: "Animal Cognition: The Representation of Space, Time, and Number"]

Apr. 3: Cognitive Maps, Sentences, and Reasoning

Bermudez: *Thinking without Words*, chs. 6-9

Westerhoff: "Logical Relations between Pictures"

Cummins: *Representations, Targets, and Attitudes*, ch. 7

[Frege: "Letter to Peano"]

[Rescorla: "Cognitive Maps and the Language of Thought"]

[Barwise & Etchemendy: "Visual Information and Valid Reasoning"]

Apr. 10: Singular Thought, Determinacy, and Quantification

Quine: *Word and Object*, ch. 3

Evans: "Identity and Predication"

[Strawson: *Individuals*, chs. 1, 5, 6]

Apr. 17: Review, Papers, and Outstanding Questions