Philosophy 244  Philosophy of Mind  Fall 2011

Professor Elisabeth Camp  
Office: 426 Logan Hall  
Office Hours: Mondays 11-12:30, and by appointment  
Email: campe@sas.upenn.edu  

TAs:  Lindsey Fiorelli; fiorelli.lindsey@gmail.com  
Louise Daoust: loud@sas.upenn.edu  

Texts: All readings are in a coursepack, available at Campus Copy Center, 3907 Walnut Street. All handouts, including paper topics and study questions, will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Description
What is a mind? What is special about human minds? We’ll tackle this question by contrasting human minds with both the operations of computers and the cognitive activities of other animals; and by contrasting theoretical speculation with empirical investigation.

More specifically, we’ll ask whether ‘strong’ artificial intelligence—an autonomous computer mind—is possible, or likely. Could a computer ever hold a real conversation, or experience what it’s like to see red? If not, why are we so different? As we become increasingly reliant on technology, can the boundaries of our minds extend beyond our skulls, to include computer and other types of interfaces? We’ll also ask whether any other animals besides ourselves have mental states like beliefs or desires. If not, how should we understand what goes on in their heads? Throughout, we’ll explore the implications of these questions for our ethical responsibilities to animals and computers.

Course Goals
What should you take away from this course in the long term: say, in five years? You should gain, and retain, some significant understanding of the basic commitments and motivations of contemporary philosophy of mind and cognitive science: rationalism, empiricism, behaviorism, functionalism, computationalism, etc. But more importantly, you should have sense for the most theoretically challenging questions in the area: about what minds are, how they differ from one another, and how they work. Finally, I hope that you have an increased interest in, and ability to think critically about, empirical developments in cognitive science: that you read the newspaper, or ScienceDaily.com, with a keener eye and a more reflective mind.

Course Requirements:
• Daily readings: you should do the assigned reading before the assigned class, and bring the coursepack with you to class.  
• Attendance and participation, including Blackboard posts (see below) (15% of course grade).  
• Two short papers, 4-5 pages (20% each of course grade).  
• A group project and presentation, plus 2-3 page report (15% of course grade).  
• A final paper, 7-8 pages (30% of course grade).

I will post study questions on Blackboard by Monday of each week; you should post a response to one question on the Blackboard discussion board by Thursday. If you must miss either lecture or discussion, you should make up the absence by writing a short response (1-2 paragraphs) to a question about the material for that day.

Papers should be ‘blinded’ and submitted by email to Prof. Camp. Except in extreme conditions, extensions must be granted well before the due date, and only at our discretion; otherwise, late papers will be downgraded 1/3 letter grade per day.

You are expected to be familiar with and to abide by Penn’s policy on academic and intellectual integrity:  
http://www.upenn.edu/provost/PennBook/academic_integrity_code_of

Finally, here are some useful online resources for philosophy of mind, and philosophy more generally:  
Dictionary of Philosophy of Mind:  http://philosophy.uwaterloo.ca/MindDict  
David Chalmers’ bibliography of Philosophy of Mind:  http://consc.net/mindpapers
Schedule of Topics and Readings
(subject to revision: check Blackboard for updates)

Fundamental Approaches to the Mind
Rationalism and Empiricism
Wed 9/7 Introductory Lecture
Mon 9/12 Descartes: *Meditation 2; Discourse on the Method* (excerpt)
Locke: *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (excerpt)
Hume: Treatise on Human Understanding (excerpt)

Behaviorism and Computationalism
Wed 9/14 Ryle: “Descartes’ Myth”
Watson: “Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It”
Mon 9/19 Turing: “Computing Machinery and Intelligence”
Wed 9/21 Fodor: “Why There Still Has to Be a Language of Thought”
Mon 9/26 Block: “The Mind as the Software of the Brain” (§§1-3)
Wed 9/28 Fodor and Block, cont’d

Can Machines Think?
Can Machines Have Thoughts?
Mon 10/3 Searle: “Minds, Brains, and Programs”
[supplemental: Block §4]
Wed 10/5 Dennett: “True Believers”
Mon 10/10 NO CLASS: Fall Break
Wed 10/12 Mueller: “How Computer Chess Programs Are Changing the Game”
[links to New York Times articles and IBM’s Smarter Planet blog post on Watson]
Dennett: “Can Machines Think?”
First Paper Topics Handed Out

Qualia and Consciousness
Mon 10/17 Lewis: “Mad Pain and Martian Pain” (including Postscript)
Wed 10/19 Jackson: “What Mary Didn’t Know”
Mon 10/24 Chalmers: “Facing Up to the Problem of Consciousness”
Dennett: “The Fantasy of First-Person Science”
First Papers due
Wed 10/26 Weiskrantz: “Some contributions of neuropsychology of vision and memory to the problem of consciousness”
Fang and He: “Cortical responses to invisible objects in the human dorsal and ventral pathways”
Mon 10/31 Owen et al: “Detecting Awareness in the Vegetative State”
Monti et al: “Willful Modulation of Brain Activity in Disorders of Consciousness”
Groopman: “Silent Minds”
Second Paper Topics Handed Out
Wed 11/2  Clark and Chalmers: “The Extended Mind”
          Bach-y-Rita & Kercel: “Sensory substitution and the human-machine interface”
          Leuthardt et al: “Using the electrocorticographic speech network to control a
          brain-computer interface in humans”
          Brooks: “The Outsourced Mind”

Can Animals Think?
Animal Experience
  Mon 11/7  Nagel: “What is it Like to be a Bat?”
          Akins: “A Bat without Qualities”
          Dawkins: “The Scientific Basis for Assessing Suffering in Animals”

Animal Thoughts and Human Thoughts
  Mon 11/14 Dretske: “If You Can’t Make One, You Don’t Know How It Works”;
          “The Nature of Thought” (excerpt)
          Second Papers due

  Wed 11/16 Dretske cont’d
  Fri 11/18:  Group debate in section

  Mon 11/21 Malcolm: “Thoughtless Brutes”
          Davidson: “Rational Animals”
          Group reports due

  Mon 11/28 Tomasello: “Chimpanzees Understand Psychological States–The Question is
          Which Ones and to What Extent”
          Povinelli: “Chimpanzee Minds: Suspiciously Human?”
          Camp: “Putting Thoughts to Work: Concepts, Systematicity, and Stimulus-
          Independence”

Externalism and Human Thought
  Mon 12/5 Burge: “Individualism and the Mental” (excerpt)

  Wed 12/7  Conclusion
          Final Paper Topics Handed Out

Wed 12/19  Final Papers Due