

Introduction to Philosophy Seminars Term 2

1. Seminars

I. Descartes on Scepticism

Task: one or two seminar members to write a short essay to be presented in the seminar; other members of the seminar to write essay plans.

Essay question: Critically assess Stroud's argument in chapter 1 of *The Significance of Philosophical Scepticism*.

Core Reading:

Descartes *Meditations*, first meditation

Stroud, B. *The Significance of Philosophical Scepticism*, by Stroud, ch.1

II. Locke on Personal Identity

Task: one or two seminar members to write short essay to be presented in seminar, other members to write essay plans.

Essay question: What is Locke's account of personal identity? Is it correct?

Core Reading:

Locke, J. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, ch. xxvii.

Secondary literature:

Part I of the Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy entry on 'identity' ('exposition of a popular view').

Mackie J.L., *Problems from Locke* (OUP, 1976), Ch. 6 sections 1 & 2, pp.173-189. Available On-line via the library catalogue.

Lowe, E.J., *Locke on human understanding* (Routledge, 1995), Ch. 5 sections 1&2, pp.93-108.

III. Parfit on Personal Identity

Task: one or two seminar members to write short essay to be presented in seminar, other members to write essay plans.

Essay question: Critically assess Parfit's account of personal identity.

Core Reading:

D. Parfit, 'Personal Identity', *Philosophical Review* 1971.

Secondary literature:

Olson, E. T., "Personal Identity", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2010 Edition)*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL =

<<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2010/entries/identity-personal/>>.

Parfit, D. 'Why Our Identity is Not What Matters', D. Parfit *Reasons and Persons* (OUP 1984), Chapter 12, pp.245-280. Reprinted in Raymond Martin and John Barresi (eds.) *Personal Identity* (Blackwell 2003), Chapter 3, pp.115-143.

Noonan, H. *Personal Identity*, chapters 8 and 9 ('Quasi-memory' and 'Parfit on What Matters in Survival').

IV. Aesthetics

Task: Each seminar member to prepare a short essay, one or two of which we will be chosen for presentation.

Essay question: Critically assess Kant's appeal to disinterested contemplation and universality in the first two moments of the *Critique of Judgement*.

Core reading:

Kant, I. *Critique of Judgement*, moments 1 and 2.

Secondary literature:

Wazl, C. H. *An Introduction to Kant's Aesthetics: Core Concepts*, Introduction, chapters 1 and 2.