

**Philosophy 262: Intuitions and Philosophical Methodology [revised 10/18/07]
Harvard University, Fall 2007**

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Office hours: Thursdays, 1–3pm

Course Description:

Is the widespread practice among analytic philosophers of appealing to “intuitions” about cases legitimate? What, if anything, could establish the legitimacy of that practice? What, if anything, would constitute a viable alternative?

Time and Place: Wed., 4–6pm, Emerson 310

Course URL: <http://my.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k20648>

All handouts, announcements, and readings will be available through the course web site. You must login using your Harvard PIN to see all of the content on the site. Auditors without a Harvard PIN should contact the instructor about receiving an XID so that they can access everything on the site.

Course Admission Policy:

This is a graduate-level course; undergraduates (and students in a graduate program other than philosophy) will only be allowed to take the course for credit under special circumstances.

Readings:

Each week’s readings will be available for copying in Robbins Library in Emerson Hall and for downloading on the course web site. However, for those of you that prefer reading things in their original editions, you might consider purchasing the following book, which contains several of the readings we will be doing:

Michael R. DePaul and William Ramsey, eds. *Rethinking Intuition: The Psychology of Intuition and Its Role in Philosophical Inquiry*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998.

Copies of this book have been ordered at the textbook section of the Harvard Coop.

Requirements:

The breakdown of grades will be as follows:

30% *Seminar attendance and participation.*

Evaluation will be based on attendance, preparation, and contributions to discussion. For those that do not feel comfortable talking during class, discussing material during office hours may count toward one’s contributions to discussion.

70% *Final paper.*

A final paper of approximately 20 to 25 double-spaced pages (normal-sized margins, normal-sized font) will be due by 5pm on Sunday, January 13. Students are also required to turn in an (ungraded) 1-page summary of what they plan to write their final paper on by the beginning of class on Wednesday, November 28, and to meet with the instructor to discuss their paper topic the following week.

Schedule:

NOTE: All readings will be available in Robbins Library and on the course web site. Readings followed by “(RI)” can also be found in DePaul & Ramsey (eds.), *Rethinking Intuition*. Readings listed within brackets are optional.

Wed., Sept. 19: Introduction & Case Study 1: The Gettier Literature

[Gettier, “Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?”]

[Feldman, “Modifying the Traditional Analysis of Knowledge” (ch. 3 of *Epistemology*)]

[Lycan, “On the Gettier Problem Problem”]

Wed., Sept. 26: Case Study 2: The Trolley Problem & Case Study 3: The Analysis of Causation

Foot, “The Problem of Abortion and the Doctrine of Double Effect”

[Thomson, “Killing, Letting Die, and the Trolley Problem”]

Thomson, “The Trolley Problem”

Lewis, “Causation” [and “Postscript E” of reprint]

Lewis, “Causation as Influence”

[Collins, Hall, and Paul, “Counterfactuals and Causation: History, Problems, and Prospects”]

Wed., Oct. 3: Motivating the Problem

Kagan, “Thinking about Cases”

Goldman and Pust, “Philosophical Theory and Intuitional Evidence” (RI)

Wed., Oct. 10: A Rationalist Account of Intuitions, Pt. 1

Bealer, “The Incoherence of Empiricism”

Bealer, “Intuition and the Autonomy of Philosophy,” pp. 201–214 (RI)

Wed., Oct. 17: A Rationalist Account of Intuitions, Pt. 2

Bealer, “Intuition and the Autonomy of Philosophy,” pp. 214–231 (RI)

Wed., Oct. 24: A Naturalistic Account of Intuitions

Kornblith, “The Role of Intuition in Philosophical Inquiry: An Account with No Unnatural Ingredients” (RI)

Kornblith, “Knowledge in Humans and Other Animals”

Kornblith, “Appeals to Intuition and the Ambitions of Epistemology”

Wed., Oct. 31: The Canberra Plan

Jackson, “Armchair Metaphysics”

[Harman, “Doubts about Conceptual Analysis”]

Jackson, “The Role of Conceptual Analysis” (ch. 2 of *From Metaphysics to Ethics*)

Wed., Nov. 7: A Virtue-Based Account of Intuitions

Sosa, “Intuitions” (ch. 3 of *A Virtue Epistemology: Apt Belief and Reflective Knowledge, Vol. 1*)

Sosa, “Intuitions: Their Nature and Epistemic Efficacy”

Wed., Nov. 14: Intuitions as Garden-Variety Counterfactual Judgments

Williamson, “Philosophical ‘Intuition’ and Skepticism about Judgment” (§1, §2, and §6 only)

Williamson, “Armchair Philosophy, Metaphysical Modality, and Counterfactual Thinking”

[Williamson, “Philosophical Knowledge and Knowledge of Counterfactuals”]

Wed., Nov. 21: What Is Reflective Equilibrium, and Does It Solve the Problem?

[Goodman, *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast*, ch. 3, §2]

Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (original edition), ch. 1, §4 and §9

[Rawls, “The Independence of Moral Theory”]

Daniels, “Wide Reflective Equilibrium and Theory Acceptance in Ethics”

[Daniels, “Reflective Equilibrium and Archimedean Points”]

Scanlon, “Rawls on Justification”

DePaul, “Intuitions in Moral Inquiry” (§5 only)

[DePaul, “Why Bother with Reflective Equilibrium?” (RI)]

[DePaul, “Reflective Equilibrium and Foundationalism”]

McMahan, “Moral Intuition”

Wed., Nov. 28: Is Intuition Any Worse Off than Perception?

Cummins, “Reflection on Reflective Equilibrium” (RI)

Alston, “The Reliability of Sense Perception: A Case Study” (ch. 3 of *Perceiving God*)

[Alston, “Epistemic Circularity”]

1-page summary of final paper topic due (at beginning of class)

Wed., Dec. 5: Experimental Challenges to Intuition, Pt. 1: Surveys

[Stich, “Reflective Equilibrium, Analytic Epistemology, and the Problem of Cognitive Diversity”]

Weinberg, Nichols, and Stich, “Normativity and Epistemic Intuitions”

Nichols, “Folk Concepts and Intuitions: From Philosophy to Cognitive Science”

[Bernstein, “Experimental Philosophy Meets Experimental Design: 23 Questions”]

Sosa, “A Defense of the Use of Intuitions in Philosophy”

[Weinberg, “What’s Epistemology For? The Case for Neopragmatism in Normative Metaepistemology”]

Wed., Dec. 12: Experimental Challenges to Intuition, Pt. 2: fMRI Studies

Greene et al., “An fMRI Investigation of Emotional Engagement in Moral Judgment”

[Greene et al., “The Neural Bases of Cognitive Conflict and Control in Moral Judgment”]

Singer, “Ethics and Intuitions”

Greene, “The Secret Joke of Kant’s Soul”

Final paper due by 5pm on Sun., Jan. 13.