

Knowledge and Reality 102

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OVERVIEW

These tutorials will cover core topics in metaphysics and epistemology, thereby preparing you to sit the Knowledge and Reality 102 finals paper as well as further sharpening your philosophical skillset.

Epistemology

Week 1 - The Structure of Justification

Week 2 - Contextualism

Week 3 - The Problem of Perception

Week 4 - Testimony

Metaphysics

Week 5 - Personal Identity

Week 6 - Possible Worlds

Week 7 - Time

Week 6 - Objects

READINGS AND SPECIFIC ISSUES

NOTE: **Faculty lists** are comprehensive. Below are readings that I think are useful and interesting; they are sufficient for writing your tutorial paper, but you should feel free to explore other papers/books. Almost all papers/books are accessible online. Don't expect to be able to cover all readings or to get to grips with all issues in one week. I will provide advice on which papers are central.

Epistemology:

General readings to dip into:

Audi, R. (2010). *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*. Routledge.

Bernecker, S. & Pritchard, D. (eds.) (2011). *Routledge Companion to Epistemology*. Routledge.

Dancy, J., Sosa, E. & Steup, M. (eds.) (2010). *A Companion to Epistemology*. 2nd Ed. Wiley.

Dancy, J. (1985). *Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology*. Blackwell/Wiley.

Evans, I. & Smith, D. (2012). *Knowledge*. Polity.

Pritchard, D. (2009). *What is this Thing Called Knowledge?* Routledge.

Steup, M., Turri, J., & Sosa, E. (eds.) (2013). *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology*. 2nd Ed. Wiley.

Anthologies:

Bernecker, S. (ed.) (2006). *Reading Epistemology: Selected Texts with Interactive Commentary*. Blackwell/Wiley.

DeRose, K. & Warfield, T. (1999). *Skepticism: A Contemporary Reader*. OUP.

Dretske, F. & Bernecker, S. (eds.) (2000). *Knowledge: Contemporary Readings in Epistemology*. OUP.

Sosa, E., Kim, J., & McGrath, M. (eds.) (2008). *Epistemology: An Anthology*. 2nd Ed. Wiley.

Metaphysics:

General readings to dip into:

Beebe, H., Effingham, N. & Goff, P. (2010). *Metaphysics: The Key Concepts*. Routledge.

Conee, E. & Sider, T. (2014). *Riddles of Existence*. New Ed. OUP.

LePoidevin, R., Simmons, P., McGonigal, A., & Cameron, R. (eds.) (2011). *Routledge Companion to Metaphysics*. Routledge.

Loux, M. (2006). *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*. 3rd Ed. Routledge.

Lowe, E. (2002). *A Survey of Metaphysics*. OUP.

Sider, T., Hawthorne, J. & Zimmerman, D. (eds.) (2007). *Contemporary Debates in Metaphysics*. Blackwell.

Tallant, J. (2011). *Metaphysics*. Continuum.

Anthologies:

BeeBee, H. & Dodd, J. (2002). *Reading Metaphysics: Selected Texts with Interactive Commentary*. Blackwell.

Kim, J. & Sosa, E. (eds.) (1999). *Metaphysics: An Anthology*. Blackwell. (2nd Ed. Published 2001.)

Crane, T. & Farkas, K. (eds.) (2004). *Metaphysics: A Guide and Anthology*. OUP.

Week 1: The Structure of Justification

Issues: the regress argument for foundationalism vs the argument from examples/cases (Pryor); sensory states vs propositional states (or states with content); basic vs non-basic beliefs (how strongly must the former be justified?); inferential vs non-inferential (sometimes called 'immediate') justification; the truth-conducive nature of justification; circular vs holistic justification (for Coherentism); coherence vs consistence; what should coherentists say about perception?; does a coherence theory of justification require a coherence theory of truth?

For Foundationalism:

Pryor, R. (2013). "There is Immediate Justification." In Steup et al. (2013). ****Recommended. Notice how much for the foundationalist turns on whether they think of perception as sensational or, like beliefs, as having propositional/assertive content. But, then see Bonjour (1978).**

Against Foundationalism:

Bonjour, L. (1978). "Can Empirical Knowledge have a Foundation?" *American Philosophical Quarterly* 15: 1-13. ****Recommended.**

For Coherentism:

Bonjour, L. (1976). "The Coherence Theory of Empirical Knowledge." *Philosophical Studies* 30: 281-312. ****Recommended. Abridged, with commentary, in Bernecker (ed.) (2006).**

Against Coherentism:

Van Cleve, J. (2013). "Why Coherence is not Enough: A Defense of Moderate Foundationalism." In Steup et al. (2013).

Overviews and misc.:

Fumerton, R. (2010). "Foundationalist Theories of Epistemic Justification." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

Olsson, E. (2012). "Coherentist Theories of Epistemic Justification." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

Bonjour, L. (1999) "The Dialectic of Foundationalism and Coherentism." In J. Greco & E. Sosa (eds.) *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology*. Blackwell.

Essay questions (answer one):

- "If someone's beliefs cohere, then it follows that they are justified in holding those beliefs." Discuss.'
- 'What are the strongest arguments in favour of foundationalism and coherentism, respectively? Which view should we think is true?'

Week 2: Contextualism:

Issues: linguistic contextualism in general; epistemic contextualism as a claim about attributions; epistemic contextualism as a solution to scepticism and bank/airport cases; mechanism by which standards are raised; semantic blindness objection.

Background reading/overview:

Rysiew, P. (2011). "Contextualism." In Bernecker & Pritchard, (eds.) *Routledge Companion to Epistemology*. Routledge.

For Contextualism (read both):

Cohen, S. (2000). "Contextualism and Scepticism." *Philosophical Issues* 10: 94-107.

DeRose, K. (1992). "Contextualism and Knowledge Attributions." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 52: 913-929.

Against Contextualism

Schiffer, S. (1996). "Contextualist Solutions to Scepticism." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 96: 317-333

Klein, P. (2000). "Contextualism and the Real Nature of Academic Skepticism." *Philosophical Issues* 10: 108-116. ****A reply to Cohen (2000).**

The debate continued:

Conee, E. "Contextualism Contested." and "Contextualism Contested Some More."

Cohen, S. "Contextualism Defended." and "Contextualism Defended Some More."

All in Steup et al. (2013)

For later:

DeRose, K. (1995). "Solving the Skeptical Problem." *The Philosophical Review* 104: 1-52. ****Very important, if revising this topic. But probably too lengthy to look at now.**

Essay questions:

- 'What is epistemic contextualism and what are the best arguments for being an epistemic contextualist?'
- "'Contextualism offers the best response to scepticism.'" Discuss.¹

¹ Answering this question requires you to include discussion of Nozick's and Moore's responses. So only pick this question if you studied those views for GenPhil.

Week 3: The Problem of Perception

Issues: the transparency of perception; the phenomenal principle; the common factor/kind assumption; representationalism/intentionalism (perception as prop attitude); direct or naïve realism/disjunctivism/relationalism (perception as a relation of sensory awareness); indirect realism/sense-datum theory; the arguments from illusion and hallucination.

Background (read both, but skip any discussions of adverbialism):

Crane, T. (2006). "Is There a Perceptual Relation?" In T. Gendler & J. Hawthorne (eds.), *Perceptual Experience*. OUP. ****Note the distinction between intentional objects and propositional content - helpful for understanding intentionalism/representationalism, below.**

Crane, T. & French, C. (2015). "The Problem of Perception." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

Sense-datum theory/indirect realism and the arguments from illusion and hallucination:

Ayer, A. (1940). *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge*. ****Sec. I.I only: "Exposition of the Argument."**

Austin, J. (1962). *Sense and Sensibilia*. OUP. Sec. I, III, V. ****Recommended. An early, but influential, critical discussion of sense-datum theories. Sows the seeds of disjunctivism.**

Intentionalism/representationalism:

Searle, J. (1983). *Intentionality*. CUP. Ch.2, Sec. I, IV, V only. ****Note: Searle says he is naïve realist. Currently, philosophers contrast naïve realism with intentionalism/representationalism. Confusingly, Searle calls sense-datum theory 'representative,' which likewise reflects outdated terminology.**

Crane, T. (2001). *Elements of Mind*. OUP. Ch.4, pp.130-145 only.

Naïve realism/disjunctivism:

Fish, W. (2009). *Perception, Hallucination and Illusion*. OUP. Chs.1 and 2.

Nudds, M. (2009). "Recent Work in Perception: Naïve Realism and its Opponents." *Analysis* 69: 334-346.

Campbell, J. (2002). *Reference and Consciousness*. OUP. Ch.6, Sect.1 and 2 only (pp.114-120) ****Recommended. Good for distinguishing naïve realism from intentionalism/representationalism.**

Essay question:

- "The phenomena of illusion and hallucination show that we *never* perceive external objects." Discuss.'
- 'What mental state are you in when you see a red tomato? Are you in the same state when you hallucinate a red tomato?'

Week 4: Testimony

Issues: reductionism (R) vs non-reductionism (NR); gullibility objection to NR; psychological implausibility objection to R; hybrid theories; Graham's overdetermination view; Burge's acceptance principle and its limits; infant/child problems.

Background:

Lackey, J. (2011). "Testimony." In Bernecker & Pritchard, (eds.) *Routledge Companion to Epistemology*. Routledge. ****We will focus on the issues discussed in sect.2**

Reductionism:

Fricker, E. (1994). "Against Gullibility." In B.M. Matilal & A. Chakrabarti (eds.) *Knowing from Words*. Kluwer. ****Reprinted in abridged form, with commentary, in Bernecker (2006).**

Faulkner, P. (2002). "On the Rationality of Our Response to Testimony." *Synthese* 131: 353-370.

Non-reductionism (notice the foundationalist theme):

Burge, T. (1993). "Content Preservation." *The Philosophical Review* 102: 457-488. ****Reprinted in abridged form, with commentary, in Bernecker (2006).**

Audi, R. (1997). "The Place of Testimony in the Fabric of Knowledge and Justification." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 34: 405-422.

****Reading advice: Fricker then Burge, or else Audi then Faulkner.**

Hybrid views:

Fricker, E. (2002). "Trusting Others in the Sciences: A Priori or Empirical Warrant?" *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part A* 33: 373-383. ****Recommended.**

Graham, P. (2006). "Testimonial Justification: Inferential or Non-Inferential?" *Philosophical Quarterly* 56: 84-95. ****Reply to Fricker (2002).**

Further issues:

Lackey, J. (2005). "Testimony and the Infant/Child Objection." *Philosophical Studies* 126: 163-190.

Faulkner, P. (2000). "The Social Character of Testimonial Knowledge." *Journal of Philosophy* 97: 581-601. ****Another hybrid view, with discussion of Burge.**

Essay Questions:

- 'Do we have reflectively accessible reasons to believe what others tell us? Need we?'
- "Non-reductionism permits too much gullibility to be the correct account of testimonial justification." Discuss.'
- 'Assuming that we have a default entitlement to believe the tellings of others (Burge), how significant is this fact for ordinary adults?'

Week 5: Personal Identity

Issues: the foetus and thinking animal arguments for animalism/against Lockeanism; Baker's constitution view; Parfit's arguments for the unimportance of identity from both fission and reductionism.

Overview:

Noonan, H. (2003). *Personal Identity*. 2nd Edition. Routledge. "Chapter 1: An Initial Survey." ****In-depth background reading. The whole book is very useful, especially on Lockeanism and Parfit.**

Animalism versus Lockeanism:

Olson, E. (2003). "An Argument for Animalism." In R. Martin & J. Barresi (eds.) *Personal Identity*. Blackwell.

Olson, E. (1997). "Was I Ever a Fetus?" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 57: 95-110.

Baker, L. (1999). "What Am I?" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 59: 151-159. ****Against Olson (1997).**

Parfit, D. (2012). "We Are Not Human Beings." *Philosophy* 87: 5-28. ****Three quirks of the paper. First, Parfit says Lockeans could construe 'person' as a phase sortal of a human. I am inclined to think that just is Olson's (1997) view, so that view would be animalist. Second, it is not clear whether the view here is Lockean or simply a brain criterion (see Olson 2015). Three, Parfit's view here departs radically from his earlier and better-known position: wide psychological continuity with no competitor.**

Olson, E. (2015). "On Parfit's View That We Are Not Human Beings." *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* 76: 39-56

Fission and what matters in survival:

Parfit, D. (1984). *Reasons and Persons*. OUP. Ch.12. Extracted as "Why our Identity is not what Matters," in R. Martin and J. Barresi (eds.) *Personal Identity*. Blackwell.

Parfit, D. (1995). "The Unimportance of Identity." In H. Harris (ed.) *Identity*. OUP. Reprinted in R. Martin and J. Barresi (eds.) *Personal Identity*. Blackwell. ****Mainly argues for the unimportance conclusion on the basis of reductionism alone, though fission discussed in sect.III.**

Sosa, E. (1990). "Surviving Matters." *Nous* 24: 297-322. Extracts in Martin and Barresi (eds.) *Personal Identity*. Blackwell. ****Against Parfit (1984) and (1995).**

Lewis, D. (1983). "Survival and Identity." In his *Philosophical Papers*, Vol.1. OUP. Reprinted in Martin and Barresi.

Essay questions:

- 'What are you: a human, a person, both or neither?'
- 'What arguments does Parfit offer for his conclusion that identity is not what matters? Are they good ones?'
- 'What do fission cases tell us about personal identity?'

Week 6: Possible Worlds

Issues: necessity; possibility; alien properties; Lewisian Realism/Concretism (actuality as indexical, counterpart theory instead of transworld identity, rejection of modality as primitive, possible worlds as concreta); combinatorialism (principles of recombination, contraction, expansion, ‘no simples’ problem, combinatorialism as a form of actualism); possible worlds as abstracta (states of affairs – obtaining/non-obtaining distinction, essences/haecceities); possible worlds as fictional entities.

One of the more challenging topics. Perhaps start with Bricker (2007) and Lewis (1973). Then either: Kripke (1980) Melia (2003: 109-121) for question one; or, Melia (1976) and Rosen (1990) for question two, looking at other alternatives when revising.

Overview:

Menzel, C. (2016). “Possible Worlds.” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

Lewisian Realism/Concretism (for):

Bricker, P. (2007). “Concrete Possible Worlds.” In Sider et al. (2007). ****Recommended - Fairly accessible overview and defence of Lewisian realism.**

Lewis, D. (1973). *Counterfactuals*. Blackwell. Ch.4, Sec.1 “Possible Worlds.”

Lewis, D. (1986). *On the Plurality of Worlds*. Blackwell. Ch.1, Sec.1-3 and Ch.4, Sec.1-3. The latter reprinted as “Counterparts or Double Lives?” in Kim & Sosa (1999). ****Definitely read if you revise this topic.**

Lewisian Realism/Concretism (against):

Kripke, S. (1980). *Naming and Necessity*. Harvard University Press. pp.44-53. ****Don’t skip the footnotes!**

Melia, J. (2003). *Modality*. Acumen. pp.109-121.

Alternatives:

Rosen, G. (1990). “Modal Fictionalism.” *Mind* 99: 327-354. ****Possible worlds as fictions.**

Melia, J. (2007). “Ersatz Possible Worlds.” In Sider et al. (2007).

Stalnaker, R. (1976). “Possible Worlds.” *Nous* 10: 65-75. ****Possible worlds as abstracta.**

Armstrong, D. (1984). “The Nature of Possibility.” *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 16: 575-594. ****Possible worlds as ways of recombining actuality.**

Essay questions:

- ‘What are the benefits of Lewisian modal realism? Are they outweighed by the theory’s costs?’
- ‘What are possible worlds?’

Week 7: Time

Issues: McTaggart's argument for time's unreality; a-theory (tensed ordering of events, dynamic theory/time flows, spotlight vs growing/shrinking block vs presentist versions) vs b-theory (non-tensed ordering of events, static theory/passage of time as an illusion, date vs token-reflexive semantics for tensed expressions).

General:

Loux, M. (2006). *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*. 3rd Ed. Routledge. Ch.7. ****Detailed overview of McTaggart's argument for the unreality of time and the development of a-theories and b-theories.**

Markosian, N. (2014). "Time." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Sec.4-6.

McTaggart:

McTaggart, J. (1908). "The Unreality of Time." *Mind* 17: 457-474.

A-theory:

Zimmerman, D. (2007). "The Privileged Present: Defending an "A-Theory" of Time." In Sider et al. (2007). ****Recommended. Defends presentism in particular.**

Broad, C. (1923). *Scientific Thought*. Kegan Paul. Ch.2. Extracted as "The General Problem of Time and Change," in Van Inwagen & Zimmerman (eds.) *Metaphysics: The Big Questions*. Blackwell. ****Growing block version of a-theory.**

B-theory:

Dyke, H. (2002). "McTaggart and the Truth about Time." In Callender (ed.), *Time, Reality and Experience*. CUP. ****Good overview of McT and defence of token-reflexive semantics of tensed expressions.**

- https://www.academia.edu/682177/McTaggart_and_the_Truth_about_Time

Smart, J. (2007). "The Tenseless Theory of Time." In Sider et al. (2007).

Essay Questions:

- 'In what sense, if any, is the present special?'
- 'What do a-theorists and b-theorists about time disagree about? Which view is to be preferred?'
- 'Is time unreal?'

Week 8: Objects

Issues: 4D theorists (perdurantists, temporal parts, space-time worms vs stages) vs 3D theorists (endurantists, what it means for objects to be 'wholly present'); the problem of change/temporary intrinsics (role of indiscernibility of identicals and Leibniz's Law in the argument); the problem of coinciding objects (i.e. statue-lump cases).

4D vs 3D:

- Sider, T. (2007). "Temporal Parts." In Sider et al. (2007). ****Recommended and to be read first.**
- McGrath, M. (2007). "Temporal Parts." *Philosophy Compass* 2: 730-748. ****Good on the distinction between worm vs stage theories and good discussion of coincidence.**
- Loux, M. (2006). *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*. 3rd Ed. Routledge. Ch.8. ****Like Sider's paper, focusses on problem of change.**
- Hawthorne, J. (2007). "Three-Dimensionalism vs. Four-Dimensionalism." In Sider et al. (2007).

The Problem of Change/Temporary Intrinsics:

- Lewis, D. (1986). *On the Plurality of Worlds*. Blackwell. pp.202-204. ****Read first on this problem.**
- Hawley, K. (2004). "Temporal Parts." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Sec.3.
- Zimmerman, D. (1998). "Temporary Intrinsics and Presentism." In Van Inwagen & (ed.), *Metaphysics: The Big Questions*. Blackwell ****Discusses the problem of change in relation to presentism.**
- MacBride, F. (2001). "Four New Ways to Change Your Shape." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 79: 81-89. ****Contains a defence of Lewis's option 1: relativizing intrinsic properties to times and explores other ways to account for change that go beyond those suggested by Lewis. Tough-going near the end.**

The Problem of Coinciding Objects/Colocation:

- Wasserman, R. (2009). "Material Constitution." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Sec.2-3, plus 4 if you want to know more about nihilism.
- Sider, T. (2001). *Four-Dimensionalism*. OUP. Ch.5 ****Lengthy discussion of coincidence cases as favouring temporal parts. Defends stage-theory over worm version of 4D.**
- Wiggins, D. (1968). "On Being in the Same Place at the Same Time." *Philosophical Review* 77: 90-95.
- Thomson, J. (1983). "Parthood and Identity Across Time." *Journal of Philosophy* 80: 201-220. ****Sect.V for objections to temporal parts.**
- Merricks, T. (2001). *Objects and Persons*. Ch2.Sec.III ****Argues 4D can't get around some statue/lump cases. Ch.3 dissolves the co-location problem by arguing that there are no objects, just atoms arranged object-wise (e.g., statue-wise). Although something of an aside for our purposes, it is a view worth thinking about, and is mentioned in Sider (2007) as 'nihilism.'**

Essay questions:

- 'What is the relationship between a statue and the material from which it is made?'
- 'A banana is unripe one day and ripe the next. Why is this a problem and what is the solution?'