

## Philosophy 3: The Nature of Mind

Summer 2001, Session A

Lecture: TWTh 10-12:30

130 Wheeler

Section: TBA (Friday 10-12:30 first week)

30 Wheeler

### Elisabeth Camp, Instructor

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*Website:* <http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~frege/html/coursewebsummer01.html>

all handouts will be available on the web site

### Joshua Beattie, GSI

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All materials for this course are compiled in a reader, available now at:  
Odin Copiers, 2146 Center Street, between Shattuck and Oxford.

### Course Description:

In this course, we will examine the nature of human psychology from a philosophical perspective. We will approach this by investigating how our mental lives are similar to, and different from, the mental goings-on of non-human animals on the one hand, and the activities of computers on the other. In particular, we will ask whether non-human animals or computers should be credited as having beliefs and desires. If so, what about plants and thermostats? If not, what makes our mental lives so different and special?

We will also investigate the relationship between belief and perception. Some philosophers think that the role of perception is simply to cause beliefs in us. Others think there's something importantly distinctive about the experience of seeing a red fire truck or tasting a pineapple. What role does our experience — that is, what it's *like* to perceive certain things — play in explaining, and perhaps justifying, why we believe and act as we do? What difference would it make if some or all of us were zombies, or robots?

Our aim in thinking about these questions will be to achieve a better understanding of what it means to be human and to have a mind.

### Course Requirements:

Two 5-7 page papers.

A take-home exam, short essay format.

Daily readings: you are expected to have done the reading for the day when you come to class.

*Always* bring the reader with you to class.

Attendance and participation in both lecture and section.

Each written assignment will be worth 30% of the final grade. 10% of the final grade will be determined by lecture and section attendance and participation. Late papers will be accepted *only* with a valid, verifiable excuse; this is especially important because the semester is so short.

In addition to these requirements, I will post study questions for the reading material on the course web site by the beginning of each week. These questions are not assigned, but they should help to guide you through the readings. If you must miss either lecture or section, you will be expected to make up the absence by writing a short response (about a page long) on a study question of your choice.

## Philosophy 3: The Nature of Mind

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### I. What, in general, are beliefs?: Reasons and causes

May 29 McGinn: "Mental Phenomena," pp. 1-8

May 30 Descartes: *Discourse on the Method*, pp. 139-141.

Hume: "Of the Reason of Animals"

May 31 Dretske: "If You Can't Make One, You Don't Know How it Works,"  
"The Nature of Thought," pp. 235-241

June 5 Millikan: "Thoughts without Laws"

June 6 Malcolm: "Thoughtless Brutes"

Dennett: "True Believers: The Intentional Strategy and Why It Works"

June 7 Davidson: "Rational Animals"

Evans: "Semantic Theory and Tacit Knowledge," §3

McGinn: "Thought and Language," pp. 97-106.

### II. What does it take for me to have a certain belief?: Mentalese and its difficulties

June 12 Crane: "The Mechanisms of Thought," pp. 135-153

McGinn: "Thought and Language," pp. 83-97

June 13 Searle: "Minds, Brains, and Programs"

Dennett: "Brain Writing and Mind Reading"

June 14 McGinn: "Content"

Burge: "Individualism and the Mental" (§§I, IIa,b, V)

June 19 Searle: "Consciousness, Intentionality, and The Background"

Dreyfus: "From Socrates to Expert Systems: The Limits and Dangers of  
Calculative Rationality"

### IIIa. The Role of Perception: What do we see?

June 20 Searle: "The Intentionality of Perception," §III

Dretske: "Conscious Experience"

*Paper due*

June 21 Davidson: "Seeing through Language"

### IIIb. The Role of Perception: Do we need experience after all?

June 26 Jackson: "What Mary Didn't Know"

Lewis: "Mad Pain and Martian Pain"

June 27 Nagel: "What is it like to be a Bat?"

June 28 Dennett: "Why You Can't Make a Computer That Feels Pain"

### IV. Wrap up

July 3 Course Review

*Paper due*

July 4 NO CLASS

July 5 *Final exam (take-home; due Friday July 6<sup>th</sup>)*