

Charles Taylor and Phenomenology seminar

University of Oxford Michaelmas term 2025

Faculty of Theology and Religion Fridays 12.00–13.30

Schwarzman Centre room no. 30.301A Online via Teams*

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To get farther with this, and bring out more what it involves, we have to venture on some phenomenology, and this is always hazardous.

—Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 307

Week 1: Introduction 17th Oct

Charles Taylor, ‘From Philosophical Anthropology to the Politics of Recognition: An Interview with Charles Taylor,’ trans. Steven Rothnie, *Thesis Eleven* 52, no. 1 (1998): 103–12, <https://doi.org/10.1177/072551369805200008>.

Charles Taylor, ‘Merleau-Ponty and the Epistemological Picture,’ in *The Cambridge Companion to Merleau-Ponty*, edited by Taylor Carman, 26–49 (Cambridge University Press, 2005), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL0521809894.002>.

Charles Taylor, ‘Ethics and Ontology,’ *Journal of Philosophy* 100, no. 6 (2003): 305–320, <https://doi.org/10.5840/jphil2003100611>.

Week 2: Early writings 24th Oct

Michael Kullman and Charles Taylor, ‘The Pre-Objective World,’ *The Review of Metaphysics* 12, no. 1 (1958): 108–32, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20123686>.

Charles Taylor, review of *The Primacy of Perception: And Other Essays on Phenomenological Psychology, the Philosophy of Art, History and Politics* by Maurice Merleau-Ponty and *Signs* by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Philosophical Review* 76, no. 1 (1967): 113–117, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2182971>.

Charles Taylor, ‘The Validity of Transcendental Arguments,’ *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 79, no. 1 (1979): 151–66, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4544939>.

Week 3: Middle writings – Phenomenology and ‘the background’ 31st Oct

Charles Taylor, ‘Engaged Agency and Background in Heidegger,’ in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, edited by Charles B. Guignon, 202–21 (Cambridge University Press, 2006), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL0521821363.008>.

Charles Taylor, ‘The Self in Moral Space,’ ‘Ethics of Inarticulacy’ and Moral Sources,’ chap. 2, 3 and 4 in *Sources of the Self* (Harvard University Press, 1992).

* Join [here](#), or use meeting id 370 614 696 731 8 and passcode pq2qo6jk.

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Week 4: Theory and method in *A Secular Age* I – The modern social imaginary 7th Nov

Ulf Bohmann and Darío Montero, ‘History, Critique, Social Change and Democracy: An Interview with Charles Taylor,’ *Constellations* 21, no. 1 (2014): 3–15, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8675.12069>.

Charles Taylor, ‘The Modern Moral Order,’ ‘What Is a “Social Imaginary”?’ and ‘The Specter of Idealism,’ chap. 1, 2 and 3 in *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Duke University Press, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822385806>.

Supplementary reading

Charles Taylor, ‘Our Victorian Contemporaries,’ and ‘Visions of the Post-Romantic Age,’ chap. 22 and 23 in *Sources of the Self* (Harvard University Press, 1992).

Week 5: Theory and method in *A Secular Age* II – The immanent frame 14th Nov

Charles Taylor, ‘The Immanent Frame,’ chap. 15 in *A Secular Age* (Harvard University Press, 2007), <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674044289-007>.

Charles Taylor, ‘Reply [to special issue commentators],’ *Thesis Eleven*, no. 99 (2009): 93–104, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0725513609345378>.

Week 6: Taylor’s epistemological realism 21st Nov

Hubert Dreyfus and Charles Taylor, ‘Escaping the Picture’ and ‘Checking Beliefs,’ chap. 2 and 3 of *Retrieving Realism* (Harvard University Press, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674287136>.

Charles Taylor, ‘Retrieving Realism,’ in *Mind, Reason, and Being-in-the-World: The McDowell-Dreyfus Debate*, edited by Joseph K. Schear, 68–101 (Routledge, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203076316-6>.

Week 7: Phenomenology and disenchantment 28th Nov

Michiel Meijer and Charles Taylor, ‘What Is Reenchantment? An Interview with Charles Taylor,’ in *The Philosophy of Reenchantment*, edited by Michiel Meijer and Herbert De Vries, 17–37 (Routledge, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367823443>.

Charles Taylor, ‘Disenchantment-Reenchantment,’ in *Dilemmas and Connections* (Harvard University Press, 2011).

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Week 8: Phenomenology and reenchantment 5th Dec

Charles Taylor, ‘Epistemic Retreat and the New Centrality of Time,’ chap. 9 in *Cosmic Connections: Poetry in the Age of Disenchantment* (Harvard University Press, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.4159/978067429704-010>.

Charles Taylor, ‘Brandom’s Hegel,’ in *Reading Brandom: On ‘A Spirit of Trust,’* edited by Gilles Bouché, 198–207 (Routledge, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003001942-14>.

Further reading

Martin Heidegger, ‘The Question Concerning Technology,’ in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, translated and with an introduction by William Lovitt (Harper Perennial, 2013).

Stephen Mulhall, ‘Self-Interpreting Animals,’ review of *Cosmic Connections: Poetry in the Age of Disenchantment* by Charles Taylor, *London Review of Books*, 9th October, 2025, <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v47/n18/stephen-mulhall/self-interpreting-animals>.

Charles Taylor, ‘Foucault on Freedom and Truth,’ chapter 6 in *Philosophy and the Human Sciences*, vol. 2 of *Philosophical Papers* (Cambridge University Press, 1985), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139173490.007>.

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