

Qualia and Representation

Philosophy 515: Selected Topics in Philosophy of Mind
Fall 2007

Instructor: David Braun and Alyssa Ney
Time & Location: Wednesdays 2:00-4:40, Lattimore 531
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Topic

Qualia and Representation

Prerequisites

We will assume that students in this seminar have taken a course that is equivalent to our Philosophy 244/444 (Philosophy of Mind). It will also be helpful to have taken the equivalent of our Philosophy 247/447 (Philosophy of Language). We will assume familiarity with type materialism and functionalism, and with Kripke's *Naming and Necessity* (especially Lecture III). Undergraduates must have our written permission to enroll in the course.

Texts

Michael Tye. 2000. *Consciousness, Color, and Content*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Peter Ludlow, Yujin Nagasawa, and Daniel Stoljar (Eds.). 2004. *There's Something About Mary*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (MARY)
Torin Alter and Sven Walter (Eds.). 2007. *Phenomenal Concepts and Phenomenal Knowledge*. New York: Oxford University Press. (PC)

Requirements

1. Weekly summaries of the readings, about 2 pages per article/chapter.
2. A class presentation.
3. A longer paper, about 12 pages, due Friday, December 14, 2007.

Short Weekly Papers

You will write an approximately 2 page (double-spaced, 12 point font) paper for every chapter and article every week, except for the first week and those weeks near the end of the semester when we have student presentations. You are permitted to miss three of these over the course of the semester without penalty. Each paper will summarize the main concepts and arguments in the readings for that week.

The deadline for your summaries for a given week will be **5pm on Tuesday** of that week. Early submissions are welcome. You will submit weeklies to both of us in an e-mail attachment as a Word document. (Please get in touch if this is a problem.)

Class Presentations

Your presentation will be an opportunity for you to get comments on a draft of your long paper. You will make a rough draft of your long paper available several days before the day of your presentation. (Details to be discussed later.) Your presentation, and our discussion of your presentation, should take about half of a seminar session (about 1.25 hours). All students are expected to read the papers in advance and to be prepared to make comments. For each student presentation, there will be a designated student who will lead discussion of the presented paper. The number of seminar sessions that we dedicate to presentations will depend on the number of students enrolled. We expect to use at least the seminar meetings of December 5 and 12 for presentations.

Long Paper

Your long paper will be a revision of the paper that you give in your class presentation. The most straightforward sort of long paper is a critique of a published paper on a topic relevant to this course. Your “target” may be an article or book that we discuss in class.

Grading

Weekly papers: 15% Class Presentation: 15% Long paper: 70%

Readings and Schedule

Tentative and Subject to Revision

1. September 5 Background

David Chalmers. "Consciousness and its place in nature." (<http://consc.net/papers/nature.pdf>)
Frank Jackson. "Epiphenomenal Qualia". (MARY)
Introduction to (MARY)
Optional: Daniel Dennett. "What RoboMary Knows" (PC)

2. September 12 The ability reply

David Lewis. "What Experience Teaches." (MARY)
Michael Tye. Chapters 1 and 2.
Optional: Philip Pettit. "Motion Blindness and the Knowledge Argument" (MARY)
Optional: Laurence Nemirow. "So *This* Is What It's Like: A Defense of the Ability Hypothesis" (PC)

3. September 19 Phenomenal concepts and the "new ways, old facts" reply

Brian Loar. "Phenomenal States (revised version)". (MARY)
David Papineau. "Phenomenal and Perceptual Concepts". (PC)

4. September 26 More on phenomenal concepts and the "new ways, old facts" reply

Saul Kripke. *Naming and Necessity*, Lecture III (handout)
Joe Levine. "Phenomenal Concepts and the Materialist Constraint". (MARY)
David Chalmers. "Phenomenal concepts and the explanatory gap". (PC)

5. October 3 Inexpressible concepts and review of (MARY)

Alex Byrne. "Review of *There's something about Mary*"
(<http://ndpr.nd.edu/review.cfm?id=5561>)
Bob Van Gulick. "So many ways to say 'no' to Mary". (MARY)

6. October 10 Representationalism

Gilbert Harman. "The intrinsic quality of experience"
(<http://www.jstor.org/view/15208583/di982791/98p00702/0>)
Michael Tye. Chapters 3 and 4.
Optional: Alex Byrne. "Don't PANIC" .
(http://host.uniroma3.it/progetti/kant/field/tyesymp_byrne.htm)

7. October 17 Objections to representationalism

Ned Block. "Is experiencing just representing?"
(<http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/phil/faculty/block/papers/representing.html>)
Michael Tye. Chapter 6
Optional: Ned Block. "Mental Paint"

(<http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/philo/faculty/block/papers/mentalpaint.pdf>)

8. October 24 Representationalism as a solution to the knowledge argument

Frank Jackson. "Mind and Illusion" (MARY)

Frank Jackson. "The Knowledge Argument, Diaphanousness, Representationalism" (PC)

Torin Alter. "Does Representationalism Undermine the Knowledge Argument?" (PC)

9. October 31 Nonconceptual content: what is it? Is there such a thing?

John McDowell. Lecture III from *Mind and World* (handout)

Christopher Peacocke. "Nonconceptual content defended"

(<http://www.jstor.org/view/00318205/di014960/01p0035o/0>)

Optional: Alex Byrne. "Perception and conceptual content"

(<http://mit.edu/abyrne/www/percepandconcepcontent.pdf>)

10. November 7 Nonconceptual content continued

Richard Heck. "Nonconceptual content and the 'space of reasons'"

(<http://www.jstor.org/view/00318108/di021290/02p00451/0>)

Jeff Speaks. "Is there a problem about nonconceptual content?"

(<http://www.nd.edu/~jspeaks/papers/nonconceptual-penultimate.pdf>)

11. November 14 Nonconceptual content continued.

Readings TBA

No class on November 21 - Thanksgiving Break

12. November 28

Wrap up

13. December 5 Student presentations

14. December 12 Student presentations