

Philosophy of Mind

Janelle Derstine (Ph.D., Rutgers)

Overview: Is the mind identical to the brain? Will computers/AI soon be able to think for themselves? What can the neurosciences tell us about consciousness? In this class we focus on fundamental questions about the nature of the mind, mental states, the relations between mind & brain, consciousness, and personal identity. The course begins with a detailed examination of the so-called mind/body problem, moves on to theories of mental content, and then turns to some recent debates, with an eye towards seeking theoretical and empirical convergence on the nature of mind.

Office Hours: email me at ceridwen@rutgers.edu for an appointment and suggest at least 3 periods of time in which you would be available for live Zoom meeting.

Texts (required)

(DC) *Readings in the Philosophy of Mind*, ed. David J. Chalmers (OUP, 2002)

(K) *Philosophy of Mind*, Jaegwon Kim (Westview, 2010, 3rd edition)

Assessment:

25%-Discussion board posts on Canvas

25%—Annotation assignments (group assignment)

22%—Two 4-5 page papers

25%—8 – 10 page final paper due on Last day of class uploaded as PDF (checked via Turn It In)

NO FINAL EXAM

Important Requirements (failure to comply may result in final grade deduction)

1. Blog posts are required: if you miss too many your final grade will go down an entire grade (e.g., B+ downgraded to C+)
2. I will not accept late work without a verified note from the Dean
3. In exceptional cases, for outstanding circumstances, I may choose to accept late work deducted 25% each day
4. All written work should be in PDF format and uploaded to Canvas site
5. I do not write recommendation letters.

TOPICS AND READINGS (Subject to change as pace of course demands)

Introduction

Thagard (2009) ‘Why cognitive science needs philosophy and vice versa’ ([Online](#))

‘Folk Psychology as a Theory’ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy ([Online](#))

Part 1: The Mind / Body Problem

Week 2 & 3 Substance Dualism

Kim, Chapter 1 Introduction
René Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy (II & VI) [dc, 01]
Descartes and Princess Elizabeth Correspondence (Online/Bennett)
Jaegwon Kim, Ch 2 Mind as Immaterial Substance: Descartes's Dualism

Week 3 & 4 Behaviorism

Jaegwon Kim, Chapter 3: Mind and Behavior: Behaviorism
Hilary Putnam, Brains and Behavior [dc, 07]
Gilbert Ryle Descartes Myth [dc, 05]
**Carl Hempel, Psychology in Physical Language [dc, 06]

Week 4 Identity Theory Paper 1 Due Feb 25th

Jaegwon Kim, Chapter 4, Mind as the Brain: The Psychoneural Identity Theory
UT Place, Is consciousness a brain state? *Just the introductory paragraph and Intro section*
J. J. C. Smart, Sensations and Brain Processes (dc, 9)
Feigl, The "mental" and the "physical" (dc, 10)
**Kane B lecture on YouTube (highly recommended) on Identity Theory
**CD Broad on Mechanism/Emergentism (dc, 16)

Week 5 Functionalism

Jaegwon Kim, Chapter 5 & 6, selections: Machine Functionalism & Causal-Theoretical Functionalism
John R. Searle, Can Computers Think? [dc, 63]
Ned Block, Troubles with Functionalism [dc, 14]
**David Rosenthal (2012), 'Higher Order Awareness, Misrepresentation, and Function' (Sakai Resources)
**'Turing Machines' SEP: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/turing-machine/>

PART 2: CONTENT AND CONSCIOUSNESS

Week 6 & 7 The Content of Thought Paper 2 due March (TBA, likely last Friday of break)

Jaegwon Kim, Philosophy of Mind, Chapter 8 Mental Content
Saul A. Kripke, Naming and Necessity (Excerpt) [dc, 32]
Hilary Putnam, The Meaning of "Meaning" (Excerpt) [dc, 54]
Dan Dennett, True Believers: The Intentional Strategy and Why It Works [dc, 52]
**Gopnik, A. (1993) 'How We Know Our Own Minds: The Illusion of First-Person Knowledge of Intentionality' (Sakai)
**Peter Carruthers, with Mark Engelbert. (2010). 'Introspection' (Sakai Resources)

Week 8 Spring Break

Week 9 Phenomenological Consciousness

Joseph Levine, Materialism and Qualia: The Explanatory Gap [dc, 35]
Thomas Nagel, What Is It Like to Be a Bat? [dc, 32]

Frank Jackson, The Knowledge Argument [dc]
David Rosenthal, There's Nothing Mary Knows (*forthcoming*)
**Dan Dennett, Quining Qualia [dc]
**Kim Chapters on Consciousness (9 & 10)

Week 10 Mind Reading

Shaun Nichols, 'Mindreading and the Philosophy of Mind' (*forthcoming*; Sakai)
Micael Lombardo & Simon Baron-Cohen (2010) 'The role of the self in mindblindness in autism'
Victoria McGeer, 'Autistic Self Awareness' ([Online](#))
**Ann X. Huang et al, Understanding the Self in Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD): A Review of Literature

Week 11 & 12 Consciousness

Jaegwon Kim, Philosophy of Mind, chapter 9 & 10 Selections: What Is Consciousness? & Consciousness and the Mind-Body Problem
Mandik, Peter. (2007). 'The neurophilosophy of consciousness.' (Sakai Resources)
Block, N. (2005) 'Two neural correlates of consciousness' *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* (Sakai Resources)
Lau, H. C., & Passingham, R. E. (2006). Relative blindsight in normal observers and the neural correlate of visual consciousness. PNAS (Sakai Resources)

PART 3: EXTENDED, EMBEDDED, AND EMBODIED COGNITION

Week 12 & 13 Extended Mind

Andy Clark and David J. Chalmers, The Extended Mind [dc, 59]
Sterelny, Kim. (2010). 'Minds: Extended or scaffolded?' Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences 9, 465–481.
Sutton, John, Celia Harris et al (2010) 'The psychology of memory, extended cognition, and socially distributed remembering' (Sakai)
Palermos, S. Orestis (2016). The Dynamics of Group Cognition.

FINAL PAPER DUE: LAST DAY OF CLASS ON PDF IN CANVAS

IF WE HAVE TIME:

PART 4: STRUCTURE AND ARCHITECTURE

Week 13 & 14 Modularity

Peter Carruthers (2003) Is the mind a system of modules shaped by natural selection? In Dan Sperber & Deirdre Wilson (2002) Pragmatics, Modularity and Mind-Reading (Sakai)
RA Wilson Collective Memory, group minds, and the extended mind thesis' (Sakai)
C. Hitchcock (ed.), *Contemporary Debates in the Philosophy of Science* (Sakai)
Peter Carruthers 'The Evolution of Working Memory' Online

Other possible Alternatives, Special Topics, and Meta-issues

TBD based on what topics are of interest to students Some ideas:

Griffiths et al, 'Probabilistic models of cognition' (Sakai)
Beer, 'Dynamical approaches to cognitive science' (Sakai)
J.A. Scott Kelso, Ch 1 *Dynamic Patterns* (Sakai)
Pylkkänen, Paavo (2016) 'Can Bohmian Quantum Information Help us to Understand
Consciousness?' Online
Theiner et al, 'Recognizing Group Cognition'
Chemero & Silberstein, 'After Philosophy of Mind'