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M 2-4:30 Skinner 1116
OH: T, Th 10:45-11:30

Philosophy 848: Fallibilism Fall 2008

The substantive topic of the seminar is: how should we respond to evidence of our liability to deep mistakes about ourselves and the world around us? We will also address methodological issues connected to empirical research in areas related to ethics and epistemology. All readings online. (R) = eReserve via BlackBoard.

INTUITIONS

1. Introduction (9/8)

2. Doing & Allowing (9/15)

Quinn “Actions, Intentions, and Consequences”
Horowitz “Philosophical Intuitions and Psychological Theory”
Kamm “Moral Intuitions”

3. Epistemology (9/22)

Weinberg et al. “Normativity and Epistemic Intuitions” (R)
Sosa “Experimental Philosophy and Intuition”
Gendler “Philosophical Thought-Experiments”

Optional: Williamson “Philosophical Intuitions”

4. Character & the Fundamental Attribution Error (9/29)

Doris *Lack of Character* c. 2-4 (R)
Sreenivasan “Errors about Errors”

Optional: Vranas “The Indeterminacy Paradox”

5. Brain Imaging & deontology (10/6)

Greene “An fMRI Investigation”
Haidt “The Emotional Dog”
Greene & Haidt “How Does Moral Judgment Work?”
Greene “The Secret Joke of Kant’s Soul” (R)

CONTINGENCIES

6. Contingency & Disagreement I (10/13)

Christensen “Disagreement”

Kelly “Peer Disagreement and Higher-order Evidence”

7. Contingency & Disagreement II (10/20)

Elga “Reflection and Disagreement”

Sher “But I Could be Wrong”

Pettit “When to Defer to Majority Testimony”

8. Evolution I: Morality (10/27)

Joyce *The Evolution of Morality* c. 1 & 6 (R)

Prinz “The Limits of Evolutionary Ethics” (R)

Kahane “Evolutionary Debunking Arguments”

Optional: Street “A Darwinian Dilemma”

9. Evolution II: Epistemology (11/3)

Plantinga “The Evolutionary Argument against Naturalism” (R)

Ramsey “Naturalism Defended” (R)

Fodor “Is Science Biologically Possible?” (R)

Talbott “The Illusion of Defeat” (R)

Merricks “Conditional Probability and Defeat” (R)

FAILURES IN THINKING AND FEELING

10. Heuristics & Bias I: Morality (11/10)

Sunstein, “Moral Heuristics”

Bostrom “The Reversal Test: Eliminating Status Quo Bias in Applied Ethics”

11. Heuristics & Bias II (11/17): Politics

Westen et al., “The Neural Basis of Motivated Reasoning”

Caplan “The Myth of the Rational Voter”

Caplan “Rational Ignorance”

Huemer “Why People are Irrational about Politics”

12. Self-deception (11/24)

Davidson “Who is Fooled?” (R)

Mele “Real Self-deception”

13. Affect I: Happiness (12/1)

Gilbert & Wilson “Miswanting” (R)

Suh et al. “Events and Subjective Well-being: Only Recent Events Matter”

Brickman et al. “Lottery Winners and Accident Victims: Is Happiness Relative?”

Easterlin “Will Raising the Income of All Increase the Happiness of All?”

14. Affect II: Psychopaths (12/8)

Nichols, “How Psychopaths Threaten Rationalism” (R)

Kennett & Fine “Internalism and Evidence from Psychopaths” (R)

Smith “The Truth about Internalism” (R)

Levy “Psychopaths and Moral Responsibility”