Philosophy 501, Self-Knowledge, USC, fall 2009

Tuesday 2.00-3.15 and Friday 1.00-1.50, MHP 102 (Philosophy Seminar Room)

James Higginbotham (MHP 205B, GFS 301K; Office Hours F 10.00-12.00 and by appointment; telephone 213-821-2308 (Linguistics), 213-740-4624 (Philosophy); 213-280-3309 (BlackBerry); e-mail higgy@usc.edu).

Description

This course is about the nature of thoughts about oneself, one's subjective position in time, and similar matters.

Texts

The only required purchase is Quassim Cassam (ed.), Self-Knowledge, Oxford Readings in Philosophy: Oxford University Press. The text has been ordered for the bookstore. List of readings and references to be distributed on 28 August.

Course Requirements

Registered students will be responsible for leading one or more discussions, and for a term paper, whose topic I will discuss with each student in advance.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

These are perhaps too optimistically arranged, and in any case we may choose to take more time on some readings. There will be other material in the wings, if we can get to it, especially on subjective time. Also, I hope to have Pranav Anand come down for a lecture on the work in his thesis.

Week 1, 8/25 and 8/28.

General introduction. No reading. Outline of some logical, philosophical, and linguistic issues, and remarks on the modal logic of belief.

Week 2, 9/1 and 9/4.

Continued introduction. Indexical Scope.

Week 3, 9/8 and 9/11.

±Frege.

Frege, *Der Gedanke*.
Perry, "Frege on Demonstratives." In *The Problem of the Essential Indexical*.
Evans, "Understanding Demonstratives." To be distributed.
Perry, "Postscript to Frege on Demonstratives." In *The Problem of the Essential Indexical*.

Week 4, 9/15 and 9/18.

IEM.

Strawson, "The First Person---and Others." In Cassam.
Evans, "Self-Identification." In Cassam.

Week 5, 9/22 and 9/25.

*De Re* and *De Se*

Burge, "Belief *de re*.

Week 6, 9/29 and 10/2.

Continued

Lewis, "Attitudes *de dicto* and *de se"," and "Postscripts."
Stalnaker, "Indexical Belief."

Week 7, 10/6 and 10/9.

Continued

Perry, "Stalnaker and Indexical Belief."
Stalnaker, Reply to Perry.

Week 8, 10/13 and 10/16.

First-Personal Language

Chierchia, "Anaphora and Attitudes *de se*."

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Higginbotham, "Remembering, Imagining, and the First Person."

Week 9, 10/20 and 10/23.

Monsters?

Israel and Perry, "Where Monsters Dwell."
Schlenker, "A Plea for Monsters."
Anand, excerpts from thesis.

Week 10, 10/27 (no class 10/30)

Darkest Oxford.

Velleman, "Self to Self."
Williams, "Imagination and the Self."

Week 11, (no class 11/03), 11/06.

Critiques and Comparisons.

Recanati, excerpts from Perspectival Thought.
Recanati, "De Re and De Se."
Higginbotham, "On Words and Thoughts About Oneself."

Week 12, 11/10 and 11/13.

Recent Work.

Feit, Belief About the Self. Selections.

More recent work.

Peacocke, Truly Understood. Excerpts, mainly Chapters 1-3.


Week 14, 11/24 and 11/27. Thanksgiving Week; no class Friday.

Week 15, 12/01 and 12/04.

Term papers are due according to the usual USC counterfactual: in classes with no final examination, they are to be submitted on the date that the final examination would have been held, had there been one. Date to be determined by the Registrar.
References


