

Philosophy of Logic and Language

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1 Overview

Week	Topic
1	Descriptions
2	Names
3	Meaning
4	Analyticity
5	Speech Acts
6	Truth
7	Vagueness
8	Modality

This course looks at some of the philosophical issues raised by the study of logic and some issues in the philosophy of language. In studying philosophical logic, we won't be doing the kind of thing that the *Introduction to Logic* course involved, nor the kind of thing that the *Elements of Deductive Logic* course involved. Rather than looking at formal techniques, or investigating meta-level results about logical systems, we'll be thinking about the concepts that philosophers encounter when they look at logic. These are matters such as truth, vagueness and modality. For example, in logic we look at arguments that preserve truth. In this course, we'll think more about what it means to say that something is true. In the philosophy of language, we use words to mean certain things. In this course, we'll investigate why certain words mean what they do. The course will also cover other areas in the philosophy of language, including names and speech acts.

2 Course Website

I'll post the materials for these tutorials on my website as we go along. They can be downloaded at:

www.stephenwrightphilosophy.com on the right-hand side of the page under the 'Philosophy of Logic and Language' link.

3 A Note on the Reading List

For each class I've identified three types of reading. Readings marked as required are exactly that – they're readings you just have to do. Some of these are hard, though, so I've set out some introductory readings that you can consult. These introductory readings are *not* to be used as a substitute for the required readings, though. They are there to give you a route to accessing the content of the required readings. Judicious use of the introductory readings will help you understand what's at stake in some of these debates. It won't, however, give you the kind of understanding of the issues that you can get from the required readings.

- † denotes required reading.
- # denotes introductory reading.
- * denotes background reading.

Lastly, don't be shy about asking me if you find any of the readings hard to get hold of.

4 Study Questions

Along with the readings lists for each tutorial, there are sets of study questions associated with each tutorial. These questions have a dual role. From my perspective, they help me structure the tutorial and guide the discussion each week. From your perspective, they will help you check your understanding of the content and structure your revision, when the time comes. That said, you should absolutely *not* take these as any indication of what might be asked on the final examination. Some of the questions will be the kind of thing you can give essay-length answers to, others will be more short-answer questions.

5 Doing Philosophy

During your time doing philosophical work, you'll want to read things that aren't on the reading lists. And it's really important that what you read is good quality. It's very easy to waste a lot of time and energy in philosophy reading stuff that just isn't helpful. If you read stuff from poor sources, you're liable to wind up confused or misinformed. You want to be reading things that are written by people who have, at the very least, more philosophical experience than you. In the case of several sources, though, there's no filtering or checking to make sure that this is the case. Obviously, the reading lists provided by the faculty are a great place to look. But even they don't contain *everything*. With that in mind, here are some guidelines for you to get you started. As always, do get in touch and ask me if you find yourself in any doubt at all.

Some good places to start your reading are:

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://plato.stanford.edu> is an excellent resource. It gives you an overview of some of the topics that we'll be working on and also comes with a useful bibliography, all of which is of an appropriate quality for you to be using.

The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://www.iep.utm.edu/> is another excellent online philosophy encyclopedia. Like the Stanford Encyclopedia, its entries are reviewed before they are published and also have useful suggestions for further reading.

Philpapers at <http://www.philpapers.org> is an online collection of philosophy articles that can be searched by category. There are some excellent articles on here and the site is a useful way of finding things to read. This site requires some caution, though. Unlike the above two, anyone can add their papers, regardless of whether or not they have actually been published in journals, or are

ever going to be! As a rule of thumb, if you can't see publication details for a paper on this site, then proceed with caution. This notwithstanding, it is an excellent and important source.

Google Scholar at <http://scholar.google.co.uk/> is a relatively recent research tool and one that's extremely useful. The best thing that you can use Google Scholar for is finding papers that are relevant to what you've been reading. If you run a search for a paper that you've just read, Google Scholar will help throw up any papers that have cited the paper you searched for. This is extremely useful for helping you figure out where to go next. As with PhilPapers, however, there's no quality filter, so if you are in any doubt about what you've found (as with any of the above resources) feel free to ask me first. Lastly, note that this *is* an acceptable use of Google's resources, where searching for philosophers or themes and then reading what you find absolutely is *not*. Likewise, stay off looking for things on Wikipedia.

6 Preliminary Reading

Anything identified as "introductory" on the reading list (marked with a #) would be a good thing to look at before getting started on the course. For those wanting a particularly good introductory reading to the course as a whole, however, the following would be particularly suitable:

Mark Sainsbury (1998) 'Philosophical Logic' in A.C. Grayling (ed.), *Philosophy 1: A Guide Through the Subject* Oxford: Oxford University Press pp. 61-122.

This piece doesn't cover everything that we'll discuss in the course and there are parts of Sainsbury's piece that we won't discuss. But reading the entirety of the piece is useful nonetheless for getting an overview of the kind of things that we'll be talking about.

7 Week 1 – Descriptions

When I tell you that ‘Kripke wrote *Naming and Necessity*’ I say something about a particular person. And I come to say something about that particular person because I use the word “Kripke” and that word refers to that philosopher. ‘Kripke’ is a *name*. Our first point of interest will be how these names come to connect up to the particular things in the world that they pick out. According to one type of theory, names are essentially shorthand for descriptions. We’ll be thinking about what this amounts to and what reasons there might be for thinking that there has to be more about names and what they refer to than definite descriptions.

7.1 Readings

- † Bertrand Russell (1905). ‘On Denoting’ *Mind* 14 (56):479-493.
- † P.F. Strawson (1950). ‘On Referring’ *Mind* 59 (235):320-344.
- † Keith Donnellan (1966). ‘Reference and Denite Descriptions’ *The Philosophical Review* 75 (3):218-304.
- # Scott Soames (2010). *Philosophy of Language* Princeton: Princeton University Press. Ch. 1.2.
- # William Lycan (2008). *Philosophy of Language: A Contemporary Introduction* London: Routledge. Ch. 2-3.
- * Gottlob Frege (1892). ‘On Sense and Reference’ in Peter Geach and Max Black (eds.) *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*.
- * Marga Reimer (1992). ‘Incomplete Descriptions’ *Erkenntnis* 37 (3):347-363.
- * David Kaplan (1999). ‘What is Russell’s Theory of Descriptions?’ in A. . D. Irvine (ed.), *Bertrand Russell: Critical Assessments* London: Routledge. 151-62.

Question: What is a definite description? Are names just shorthand for definite descriptions?

7.2 Study Questions

- (1) How does Grice analyse speaker meaning in terms of a speaker's intentions?
- (2) How does Grice analyse sentence meaning in terms of speaker meaning?
- (3) What is the difference between *natural meaning* and *non-natural meaning*?
- (4) How do conventions and standard procedures ground sentence meaning, according to Grice's theory?
- (5) Sometimes I might say something without intending you to believe me, such as in an exam. How should Grice and Davidson make sense of this?
- (6) How do words get their meaning on Grice's view?
- (7) What is Davidson's truth-conditional theory of meaning?
- (8) What are *meaning facts*? How does Davidson's theory make sense of meaning facts?
- (9) Commands and questions don't have truth-conditions. Can Davidson's theory make sense of them as having meanings?
- (10) What is *compositionality* (in terms of the meaning of sentences)?
- (11) How might Davidson's account
- (12) Analyse the following in terms of Donnellan's distinction:

"...Another point about her is that she isn't my wife."

"True. Very few people are Kitty."

"It isn't Kitty she isn't, you bloody fool. What she isn't is my wife. Not the same thing at all..." (Lycan, taken from Kingsley Amis).

Which are instances of the attributive use and which are instances of the referential use?

8 Week 2 – Names

In this tutorial, we'll be looking at what might well be the most influential work of 20th century analytic philosophy. In *Naming and Necessity*, Saul Kripke presented some powerful arguments against the idea that names come to be associated with the things they refer to by being shorthand for descriptions. Rather, Kripke developed a theory according to which an initial 'baptism' attaches names to objects and later uses of the name come to refer to the same object in virtue of being connected in the right way to that initial baptism. We'll look at the details of Kripke's discussion and some more general extensions of it.

8.1 Readings

- † Saul Kripke (1972). *Naming and Necessity* Malden: Blackwell.
- # William Lycan (2008). *Philosophy of Language: A Contemporary Introduction* London: Routledge. Ch. 4.
- # John Shand (ed.) (2006). *Central Works of Philosophy Vol. 5* London: Acumen Publishing Chapter 8.
- * Hilary Putnam (1973). 'Meaning and Reference' *Journal of Philosophy* 70:699–711.
- * Gareth Evans (1973). 'The Causal Theory of Names' *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume* 47:187–208.
- * David Wiggins (1994). 'Putnam's Doctrine of Natural Kinds and Frege's Doctrines of Sense, Reference, and Extension: Can They Cohere?' in Peter Clark and Bob Hale (eds.), *Reading Putnam*, 201–215. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Question: Critically assess Kripke's causal theory of names.

8.2 Study Questions

- (1) What is Kripke's objection to the description theory based on ignorance?
- (2) How does Kripke argue against the description theory based on error?
- (3) How does Kripke's modal argument against the description theory go?
- (4) What is the difference between *rigid* and *non-rigid* designators?
- (5) What is the difference between description and ostension?
- (6) How do description and ostension respectively feature in Kripke's account of names?
- (7) What is involved in the baptism that Kripke identifies?
- (8) How do later uses of a name connect back to the earlier uses and the original baptism?
- (9) Does Kripke's theory make sense of how we can refer to electrons even though we don't think they have the properties they were originally taken to have?
- (10) What is a *natural kind* term?
- (11) Might Kripke's theory be extended to natural kinds terms?
- (12) Suppose I think that I name my cat 'Liz' but I actually see an imposter. Wouldn't I still be naming *my* cat? Can Kripke's theory deal with this?
- (13) Might what a name refers to depend on context? Can Kripke's theory account for this?
- (14) Sometimes things seem to change their names. How might Kripke's theory make sense of this?

9 Week 3 – Meaning

If I tell you that *Jesus College has some of the finest philosophers anywhere in the world*, then you can understand what I'm saying even if what I'm saying is false and hasn't been said by anyone before. You understand what I say because you pick up on the *meaning* of what I say. In this class, we'll look at what causes statements to have the words that they do. According to one approach, meaning comes from the intentions that speaker have when they say certain things. According to another approach, this by itself isn't all that there is to meaning.

9.1 Readings

- † H.P. Grice (1957). 'Meaning' *The Philosophical Review* 66:377–388.
- † Donald Davidson (1967). 'Truth and Meaning' *Synthese* 17:304–323.
- † Anita Avramides (1997.) "Intentions and Convention' in Bob Hale and Crispin Wright (eds.), *A Companion to the Philosophy of Language*, 60–86. Oxford: Blackwell.
- # William Lycan (2008). *Philosophy of Language: A Contemporary Introduction* London: Routledge. Chs. 7 & 9.
- # Scott Soames (2003). *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century, Volume 2: The Age of Meaning*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Part 4.
- * Emma Borg (2005). 'Intention-Based Semantics' in Ernest Lepore and Barry Smith (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Language*, 250–267. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- * Scott Soames (2003). *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century, Volume 2: The Age of Meaning* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Part 6.
- * Michael Dummett (1975). 'What is a Theory of Meaning' in Samuel Guttenplan (ed.), *Mind and Language* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Question: What do a speaker's intentions have to do with the meaning of what she says?

9.2 Study Questions

- (1) How does Grice analyse speaker meaning in terms of a speaker's intentions?
- (2) How does Grice analyse sentence meaning in terms of speaker meaning?
- (3) What is the difference between *natural meaning* and *non-natural meaning*?
- (4) How do conventions and standard procedures ground sentence meaning, according to Grice's theory?
- (5) Sometimes I might say something without intending you to believe me, such as in an exam. How should Grice and Davidson make sense of this?
- (6) How do words get their meaning on Grice's view?
- (7) What is Davidson's truth-conditional theory of meaning?
- (8) What are *meaning facts*? How does Davidson's theory make sense of meaning facts?
- (9) Commands and questions don't have truth-conditions. Can Davidson's theory make sense of them as having meanings?
- (10) What is *compositionality* (in terms of the meaning of sentences)?
- (11) How might Davidson's account make sense of indexical statements?
- (12) Some people think that moral statements, such as *killing is wrong* don't have truth conditions, since they're just expressions of emotions. If these people are correct, does this make problem for the Davidson's theory, given that these kinds of statements can be meaningful?
- (13) Is it correct to say that without a theory of truth, Davidson doesn't offer us a theory of meaning?
- (14) How does Davidson's account of meaning connect with Tarski-sentences?

10 Week 4 – Analyticity

With a discussion of meaning in hand, we'll move our investigation on to look at an interesting property of meanings. Lots of sentences are true because of the way that the world is. Statements like *Paris is the capital of France* are true because of political matters to do with France. Other sentences are true just because of what they mean. Sentences like *all triangles have three sides* are true just because of what the words in them mean. We'll have a look at what kinds of statements, if any, might be true just in virtue of their meanings. We'll examine Quine's attack on the idea that there are any such things as analytic statements and look at the response from Grice and Strawson.

10.1 Readings

- † W.V.O. Quine (1953). *From a Logical Point of View* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapter 2.
- † H.P. Grice & P.F. Strawson (1956). 'In Defence of a Dogma' *Philosophical Review* 65:141–158.
- † Paul Boghossian (1996). 'Analyticity Reconsidered' *Nous* 30 (3):360–391.
- # William Lycan (2008). *Philosophy of Language: A Contemporary Introduction* London: Routledge. Chs. 8.
- # Michael Morris (2006). *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Language* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 11.
- * A.J. Ayer (1946). *Language, Truth and Logic*. London: Victor Gollancz.
- * Hilary Putnam (1962). 'It Ain't Necessarily So' *Journal of Philosophy* 59 (22):658–671.
- * Michael Devitt (2002). 'Meaning and Use' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 65 (1):106–121.
- * Paul Horwich (2005). *Reflections on Meaning* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Question: Is there any meaningful distinction between synthetic and analytic statements?

10.2 Study Questions

- (1) What is meant by *verificationism*?
- (2) How might a verificationist try to use the notion of analyticity to explain *a priori* knowledge and *necessary* truths?
- (3) What is *synonym substitution* as an approach to understanding analyticity?
- (4) What is the difference between an *extensional* language and an *intensional* language?
- (5) Why does synonym substitution require a necessity operator?
- (6) What is the problem with explaining necessity in terms of analyticity?
- (7) What is the strong interpretation of Quine's conclusion that Grice and Strawson give?
- (8) How do Grice and Strawson seek to provide evidence against the strong conclusion?
- (9) Is their attempt to rebut the strong conclusion successful?
- (10) What is the weaker interpretation that Grice and Strawson come up with?
- (11) Why do Grice and Strawson claim that Quine's weaker conclusion doesn't license doing away with analytic statements?
- (12) Might synonymy be a reasonable stopping point in the explanation that Quine identifies?
- (13) How should we understand *analytic* statements?
- (14) How do the notions of *analyticity*, *a priori* and *necessity* relate to one another?

11 Week 5 – The Liar Paradox

The liar paradox originates with considerations of statements of the form *this statement is false*. Intuitively, this looks like a sentence and therefore has a truth value. But if the sentence is true, then it's also false, because it declares itself to be false. If, on the other hand, it's taken to be false, then it's also true because it declares itself to be false (and if that's false, then the sentence is true). This seems to create pressure on the idea that all sentences are either true or false. In this tutorial, we'll think about how we should seek to resolve this tension. One approach is to suggest that statements of the form *this sentence is false* isn't actually a sentence. But then what is it?

11.1 Readings

- † Scott Soames (1999). *Understanding Truth* Oxford: Oxford University Press Chapter 6.
- † Gila Sher (2002). 'Truth, the Liar, and Tarski's Semantics.' In Dale Jacquette (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophical Logic* London: Blackwell Publishing.
- † Saul A. Kripke (1975). 'Outline of a Theory of Truth.' *Journal of Philosophy* 72 (19):690-716.
- # Alex Burgess and John Burgess (2011). *Truth* Princeton: Princeton University Press Chapters 2 and 7.
- # Richard Kirkham (1991). *Theories of Truth: A Critical Introduction* Cambridge: MIT Press Chapter 9.
- * Greg Ray (2002). 'Truth, the Liar, and Tarskian Truth Definition' In Dale Jacquette (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophical Logic* London: Blackwell Publishing.
- * Anil Gupta (2001). 'Truth.' In Lou Goble (ed.), *The Blackwell Guide to Philosophical Logic*.
- * Graham Priest (1994). 'The Structure of the Paradox of Self-Reference' *Mind* 103:25-34.

Question: What is the best way to deal with the confusion that arises from considering the liar paradox?

11.2 Study Questions

- (1) How does Tarski propose to resolve the liar paradox?
- (2) What is the difference between a language and a metalanguage?
- (3) What three things does a metalanguage need to have in order for it to resolve the liar paradox?
- (4) Why does Tarski seek to avoid treating truth as primitive?
- (5) If I say that ‘everything Rose says is false’ and you say that ‘everything Steve says is false’ how does this present a problem for Tarski’s response to the liar paradox?
- (6) What’s the difference between a *vindicationist* account of truth and an *inconsistency* account?
- (7) What is meant by truth at level zero on Kripke’s account?
- (8) Why is *either snow is white or “snow is not white”* true at level zero?
- (9) How do levels build up on Kripke’s account?
- (10) What does Kripke call the *minimum fixed point*?
- (11) Why do statements of the form *this sentence is false* not find a level on Kripke’s view?
- (12) How does *this statement is true* behave differently to *this statement is false* moving through the levels?
- (13) What is the “revenge problem” for an account like Kripke’s?
- (14) Can a vindicationist account of truth respond to the revenge problem?

12 Week 6 – Truth

Truth is one of the fundamental concepts in logic and in philosophy more generally. When we think about logic and valid arguments, we say that valid arguments preserve truth from the premises through to the conclusion. This tutorial looks at what it means for a statement to be true. Our attention will primarily be on two theories of truth. The first is the *correspondance theory*, according to which a proposition is true just when there is a corresponding fact for that proposition. The second is the *redundancy theory*, according to which adding a notion of truth to a language that previously lacked it yields a language that is no different to the original language.

12.1 Readings

- † J. L. Austin (1950). ‘Truth’ *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 24 (1):111-29.
- † P. F. Strawson (1949). ‘Truth’ *Analysis* 9 (6):83-97.
- † F. P. Ramsey (1927). ‘Facts and Propositions’ *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 7 (1):153-170.
- # Scott Soames (2010). *Philosophy of Language* Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1.2 & 1.3.
- # Alexis G. Burgess and John P. Burgess (2011). *Truth* Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- * Bertrand Russell (1906). ‘On the Nature of Truth’ *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 7:28-49.
- * Hartry Field (1972). ‘Tarski’s Theory of Truth’ *Journal of Philosophy* 64 (13):347-375.
- * Donald Davidson (1969). ‘True to the Facts’ *Journal of Philosophy* 66 (21):748-764.

Question: What is the correspondence theory of truth? Can it account for false propositions?

12.2 Study Questions

- (1) What is the correspondence theory of truth?
- (2) To what might a true statement correspond?
- (3) Does the correspondence theory leave us unable to know anything about the world?
- (4) How might a correspondence theorist seek to handle statements of the form *it is not the case that all Fs are Gs*?
- (5) Why might having beliefs that resemble the world be a problematic account of correspondence?
- (6) Should we think of the correspondence theory of truth as a theory at all?
- (7) What is the redundancy theory of truth?
- (8) Can *is true* be deleted from statements of the form 'this sentence is true' without loss?
- (9) Can *is true* be deleted from statements of the form '*p* is true' without loss?
- (10) Is it correct to think that adding *is true* adds any force to an assertion that *p*?
- (11) Is there a difference between believing *p* and believing that *p is true*?
- (12) Does the liar paradox make a particular problem for the redundancy theory?
- (13) Does the liar paradox make a particular problem for the correspondence theory?
- (14) What do moral facts have to do with theories of truth?

13 Week 7 – Vagueness

Think about a spectrum of different sized hill-like objects ranging from things that are clearly mountains to things that are clearly not. But inbetween, there are some objects that are neither clearly mountains nor clearly not mountains. The idea is that there are *vague* objects. And this has implications for logical reasoning. One way of addressing the issues raised by borderline cases is through giving up on standard logic. Should we do this? Or is there a better way of understanding vagueness?

13.1 Readings

- † R. M. Sainsbury (1996). ‘Concepts Without Boundaries’ in Rosanna Keefe & Peter Smith (eds.), *Vagueness: A Reader*. MIT Press. 186-205.
- † Rosanna Keefe (2000). *Theories of Vagueness* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 7.
- † Timothy Williamson (2010). ‘Vagueness and Ignorance’ in Darragh Byrne & Max Kölbel (eds.), *Arguing About Language*. Routledge. 145-177.
- # The Stanford Encyclopedia Entry on Vagueness.
- # Rosanna Keefe (2000). *Theories of Vagueness* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Introduction.
- * Timothy Williamson (1994). *Vagueness*. London: Routledge.
- * David Lewis (1988). ‘Vague Identity: Evans Misunderstood’ *Analysis* 48 (3):128-130.
- * Gareth Evans (1978). ‘Can There Be Vague Objects?’ *Analysis* 38 (4):208.

Question: ‘There is no vagueness in the world, nor in our concepts. The only vagueness is a shortcoming in our interaction with the world or in our grasp of our concepts.’ Discuss.

13.2 Study Questions

- (1) What is the structure of a *sorites paradox*?
- (2) Does understanding a term such as *tall* involve understanding where the threshold for *being tall* is?
- (3) Is the vagueness involved in concepts like *tall* different to the vagueness involved in objects like *the boundary of Everest*?
- (4) What does the logical possibility of something having a sharp boundary have to do with the actuality of it having a sharp boundary?
- (5) Does every concept admit borderline cases?
- (6) Is the epistemicist defence of classical logic just pigheadedness? Would abandoning it be just fine?
- (7) Does an appeal to a many-valued logic simply over-exacerbate the problem?
- (8) How does the analogy between precision and vagueness (on the one hand) and straight lines and circularity (on the other) work?
- (9) How can we calculate the truth value of a conjunction or a disjunction on this view?
- (10) Are calculations of truth values problematic where the truth value of p is 0.5?
- (11) What is the *hedging problem* for many-valued logics?
- (12) What are disambiguations on the supervaluationist picture?
- (13) In what ways is supervaluationism in conflict with classical logic?
- (14) What do supervaluationist theories think the truth value of *X is tall* is?
- (15) Does supervaluationism lead to scepticism about metaphysical objects?
- (16) How can supervaluationist theories make sense of the idea that a statement of the form *either X is tall or it's not the case that X is tall* is true?

14 Week 8 – Modality

There's the way that things are and there are various ways that things might have been. I might have been taller, I might not have existed and I might have been a physician. How are we to make sense of these kinds of statements? One popular account appeals to *possible worlds* as ways that things might have been. In this tutorial, we'll think about what kinds of things possible worlds might be, considering the strengths and weaknesses of each.

14.1 Readings

- † David Lewis (1986). *On the Plurality of Worlds*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. Chapters 1 & 2.
- † Robert Stalnaker (2001). 'On Considering a Possible World as Actual' *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume* 75 (75):141-156.
- † Ted Sider (2002). 'The Ersatz Pluriverse' *Journal of Philosophy* 99 (6):279-315.
- # Theodore Sider (2003). 'Reductive Theories of Modality' in Michael J. Loux & Dean W. Zimmerman (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Metaphysics*. Oxford University Press. 180-208.
- # Joseph Melia (2003). *Modality* Chesham: Acumen.
- * Gideon Rosen (1990). 'Modal Fictionalism' *Mind* 99 (395):327-354.
- * John Bigelow and Robert Pargetter (1987). 'Beyond the Blank Stare' *Theoria* 53 (2-3):97-114.
- * Kit Fine (1994). 'Essence and Modality' *Philosophical Perspectives* 8:1-16.

Question: What is a possible world? What do possible worlds have to do with modality?

14.2 Study Questions

- (1) What does it mean to say that modal operators are not truth-functional?
- (2) How does a possible worlds semantics purport to make modal logic truth-functional?
- (3) How does the fact that modal operators are not truth-functional bear on the idea that meaning is a matter of truth conditions?
- (4) Could we ever be able to eliminate modal notions from our talk? What do we use modal talk for?
- (5) What is the difference between absolute and relative possibility?
- (6) Is there any such thing as absolute necessity?
- (7) Are any of our beliefs immune to revision?
- (8) How does Lewis' paraphrase argument go?
- (9) Why does Lewis think that possible worlds must be the same type of thing that the actual world is?
- (10) What is the difference between *actualism* and *possibilism*?
- (11) What sorts of things might an *ersatz* possible world be?
- (12) What is the Humphrey Objection?
- (13) What is the incredulous stare?
- (14) How extravagant is the ontological cost of a Lewisian account of modality?
- (15) What are the problems with ersatz accounts of possible worlds?

15 Revision Reading

Below is some reading designed to help ease you into your revision. It should start you off in the process of remembering what you've been thinking about during the course. It doesn't (usually) go into the kind of levels of detail that you'll want to go into in your essays, nor the kind of levels of detail that we've been thinking about things in during tutorials. But it's useful stuff to give you an overview and try to jog your memory a bit. There's one particular collection that I'd recommend to you for shaping your reading:

Bob Hale and Crispin Wright (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to the Philosophy of Language*.

I would also recommend the following guide to various issues in twentieth-century philosophy:

Scott Soames (2003). *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century Volume 2: The Age of Meaning*.

15.1 Descriptions

Gillian Russell (2007). 'The Analytic/Synthetic Distinction' *Philosophy Compass* 2 (5):712-729.

15.2 Names

Scott Soames (2003). *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century Volume 2: The Age of Meaning* Part 7.

15.3 Meaning

Scott Soames (2003). *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century Volume 2: The Age of Meaning* Parts 4 and 6.

15.4 Analyticity

Paul Boghossian (1997). 'Analyticity.' In Bob Hale and Crispin Wright (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to the Philosophy of Language*.

15.5 The Liar Paradox

Rosanna Keefe (2008). 'Vagueness: Supervaluationism' *Philosophy Compass* 3 (2):315-324.

15.6 Truth

Ralph Walker (1997). 'Theories of Truth.' In Bob Hale and Crispin Wright (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to the Philosophy of Language*.

15.7 Vagueness

R.M. Sainsbury and Tim Williamson (1997). 'Sorites.' In Bob Hale and Crispin Wright (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to the Philosophy of Language*.

15.8 Modality

Ross Cameron (2010). 'The Grounds of Necessity' *Philosophy Compass* 5 (4):348-358.