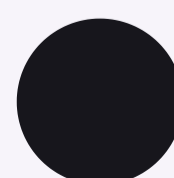
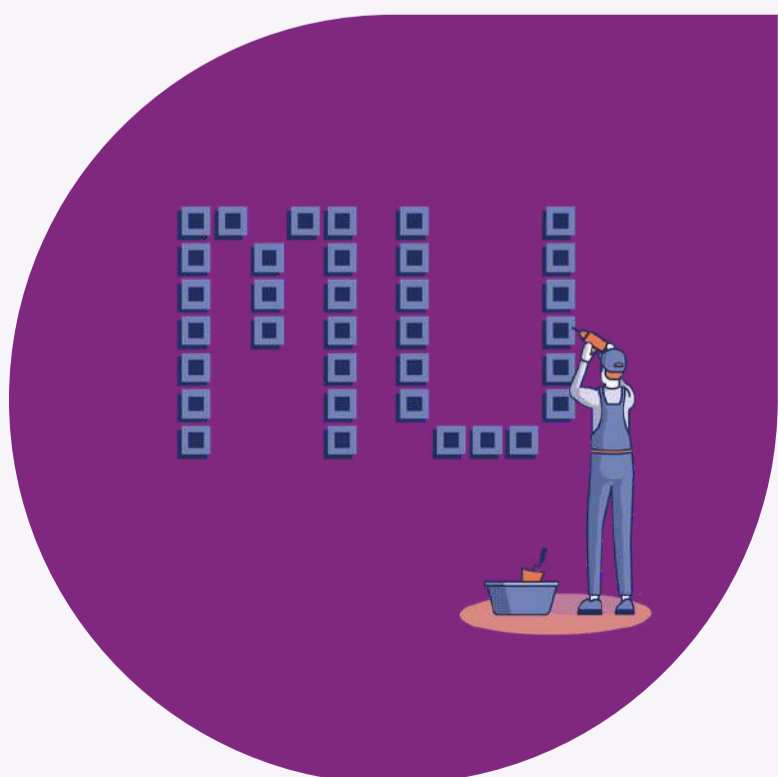


Philosophy



Example Course





Course Outline

This example course consists of 12 initial content-building lessons, including 3 in Metaphysics, Meaning, Ethics and Logic. The plan for each lesson is to set a question with a reading-list, on which the student writes an essay (up to 2000 words). Each week, we will sit down and discuss both the structural side of his argument as well as the content. This is the style in which Philosophy is taught at Oxbridge and will fully prepare students for application.

Part 1 (Ethics)

Lesson (1) - Introduction to Metaethics (1):

Topic Outline: This will introduce you to the central questions in Metaethics, particularly the subjective/objective debate. Can we know what is morally right and wrong? Or is there nothing to be known because moral judgements merely express emotions or preferences? Are there facts about what is good or valuable, and if there are, do they obtain independently of human thought or feeling?

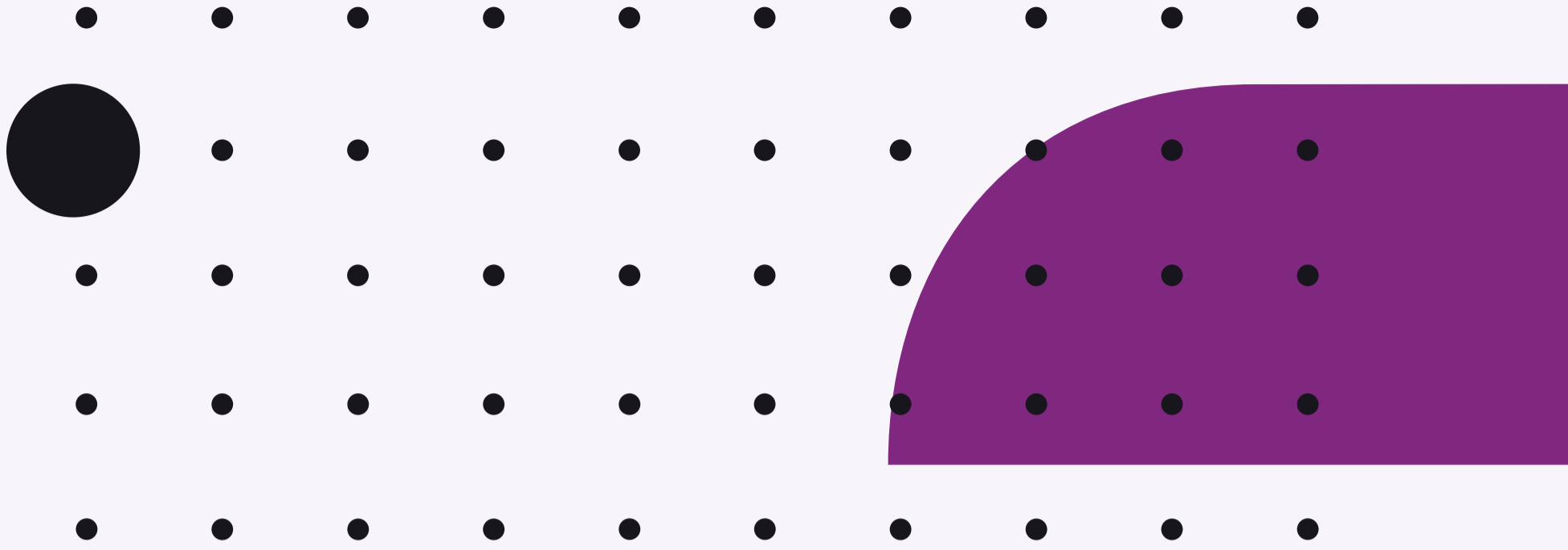
Question: Is there anything about ethics that makes it more subjective than science?

Reading (important reading marked with asterisk):

- *Mackie, J. L., *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong* (London: Penguin, 1977), ch. 2 'The Meaning of "Good"'.
• *Searle, John R., 'How to Derive "Ought" From "Is"', *Philosophical Review*, 73, no. 1 (1964): 43-58. Reprinted in P. Foot, ed., *Theories of Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 101-14.

(Specific to the Question):

- Darwall, Stephen, *Philosophical Ethics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), chs. 2, 3 & 5-8.
- *Foot, Philippa, 'Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives', *Philosophical Review*, 81, no. 3 (1972): 305-16.
- *Blackburn, Simon, *Ruling Passions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), ch.3 'Naturalizing norms'.
- *Ayer, A.J., *Language, Truth and Logic* (London: Gollancz, 1936), ch. 6.
- Schroeder, Mark, *Noncognitivism in Ethics* (London: Routledge



Lesson (2) - Introduction to Metaethics (2):

Topic Outline: Another central questions in Metaethics is the so called 'fact/value distinction'. Is there, indeed, such a distinction? If so, what is it? Is it possible to make inferences from descriptive or non-moral claims to evaluative, normative, or moral claims? Can moral properties be identified with natural properties?

Question: 'It is impossible to fit values into the world described by natural science.' Discuss.

Reading (important reading marked with asterisk):

- *Moore, G. E., 'The Subject-Matter of Ethics', in T. Baldwin, ed., *Principia Ethica*. Rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Also available on Moodle.
- Frankena, W.K., 'The Naturalistic Fallacy', *Mind*, 48, no. 192 (1939): 464-77.
- <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2250706>. Reprinted in P. Foot, ed., *Theories of Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 50-63.
- Railton, Peter, 'Facts and Values', *Philosophical Topics*, 14, no. 2 (1986): 5-31. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43153978>. Reprinted in his *Facts, Values and Norms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Also available online at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/CB09780511613982.003>.
- *Searle, John R., 'How to Derive "Ought" From "Is"', *Philosophical Review*, 73, no. 1 (1964): 43-58. Reprinted in P. Foot, ed., *Theories of Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 101-14. (Again and more in depth).
- *Mackie, J. L., *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong* (London: Penguin, 1977), ch. 2 'The Meaning of "Good"'. (Again and try to really understand).

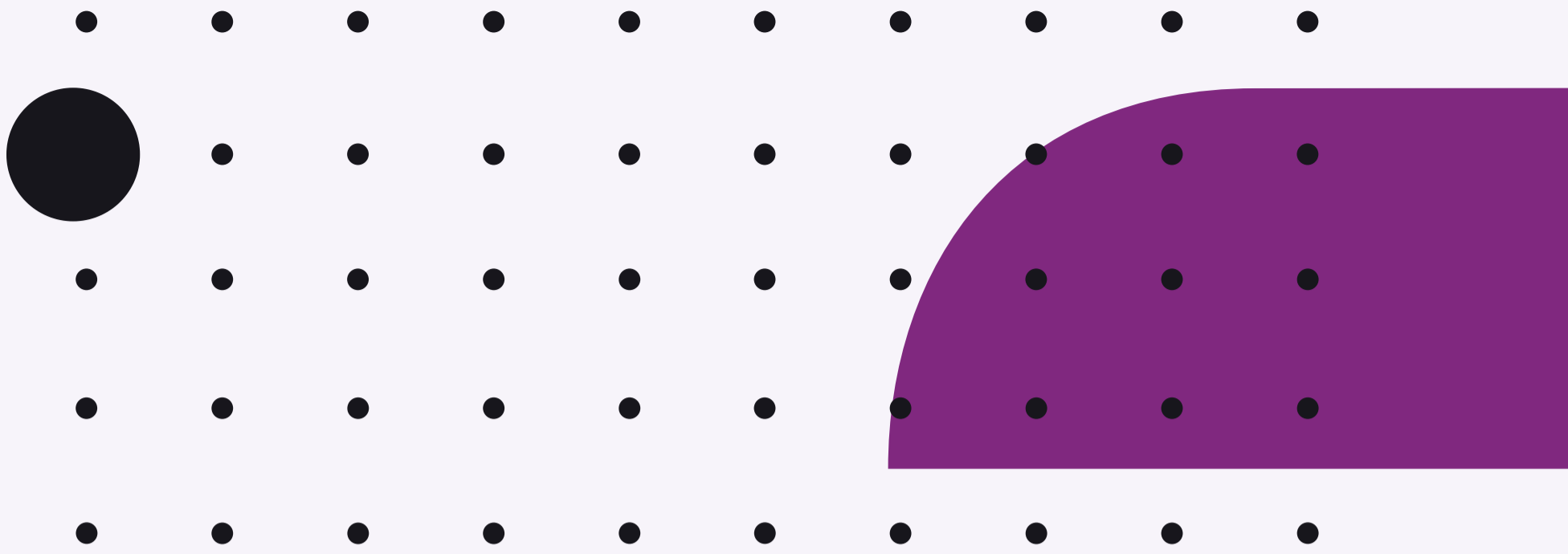
Lesson (3) - Introduction to Normative Ethics

Topic Outline: This lesson is concerned with the question what the right thing to do is. Does morality require us to maximise pleasure and minimise pain? Must we act only in ways that are universalizable?

Question: Could there be a kind of deontologist who accepts that in certain situations we ought to kill one to save five?

Reading (important reading marked with asterisk):

- *Smart, J.J.C., 'Extreme and Restricted Utilitarianism', *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 6, no. 25 (1956): 344-54.
- *Wolf, Susan, 'Moral Saints', *Journal of Philosophy*, 79, no. 8 (1982): 419-39.
- Hooker, Brad, 'Rule-Consequentialism', in H. LaFollette, ed., *The Blackwell Guide to Ethical Theory*. 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2013), pp. 183-204.
- Mill, John Stuart, *Utilitarianism*, ch. 5 'On the connexion between justice and utility'. The Cambridge University Press.
- *Kagan, Shelly, *The Limits of Morality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), ch. 1 'Against ordinary morality'.
- *Ross, W. David, *The Right and the Good*, edited by P. Stratton-Lake (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), ch. 2 'What makes right acts right?'
- Baron, Marcia, 'Kantian Ethics', in M. Baron, P. Pettit and M.A. Slote, eds., *Three Methods of Ethics: A Debate* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), pp. 3-91.



Part 2 (Metaphysics)

Lesson (1) - Dualism and Functionalism

Topic Outline: What it is to have a mind, are mind and matter separate? Or classified by their functional role? What can science tell us about the mind?

Question: Does explaining the existence of phenomenal consciousness require accepting the truth of dualism?

Reading (important reading marked with asterisk):

Overview:

- *Crane, Tim, *The Mechanical Mind*. 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2nd ed. 2003; 3rd ed. 2016). (Good Overview).
- Kim, Jaegwon, *Philosophy of Mind*. 3rd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2011). (Overview)

Dualism:

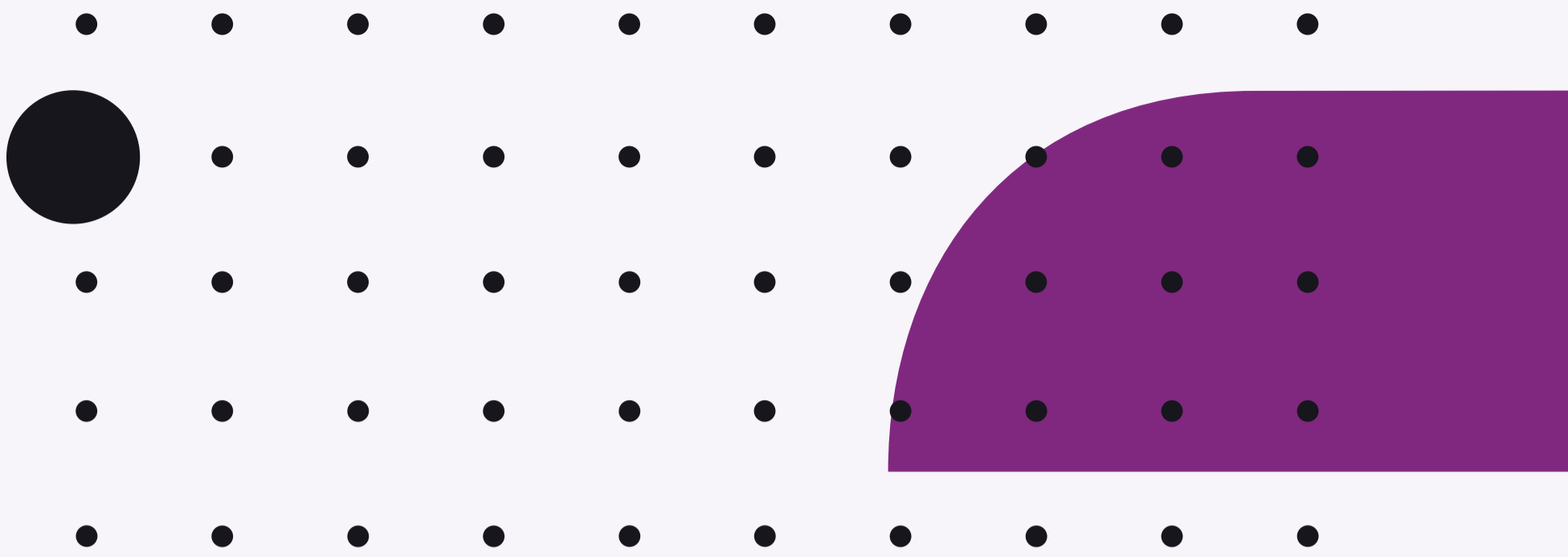
- *Descartes, René, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, chs. 2 & 6. Cambridge University Press ed. The relevant bits are reprinted in D.M. Rosenthal, ed., *The Nature of Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991). [Classic source on dualism].
- Bennett, Karen, 'Mental Causation', *Philosophy Compass*, 2, no. 2 (2007): 316-37.

Functionalism:

- *Lewis, David, 'Psychophysical and Theoretical Identifications'.
- *Putnam, Hilary, 'The Nature of Mental States'.
- *Block, Ned, 'Troubles with Functionalism'.
- *Searle, John, 'Can Computers Think?'
- Sprevak, Mark, 'Extended Cognition and Functionalism', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 106, no. 9 (2002): 503-27.

Qualia:

- Jackson, Frank, 'Epiphenomenal Qualia', *Philosophical Quarterly*, 32 (1982): 127-36.
- Akins, Kathleen, ''What Is It Like to Be Boring and Myopic?'



Lesson (2) - The Problem of Induction

Topic Outline: If there are these laws of nature, what are they, how do we learn about them, and what would it mean for them to be broken? These are the questions raised in the topic of induction.

Question: How do the ravens paradox and the grue paradox relate to the problem of induction?

Reading (important reading marked with asterisk):

- *Hume, David, Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, Section IV. Also available online at: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cam/reader.action?docID=415078&ppg=97>.
- *Russell, Bertrand, The Problems of Philosophy (London: Williams and Norgate, 1912), chs. 6 & 7. Also available online at: <http://www.wmcarey.edu/crockett/russell/>.
- Lipton, Peter, Inference to the Best Explanation (London: Routledge, 2004), chs. 6 & 7.
- Mellor, D.H., 'The Warrant of Induction', in his Matters of Metaphysics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 254-68.
- *Goodman, Nelson, 'The New Riddle of Induction'

Lesson (3) - The Problem of Causation

Topic Outline: What is it for one thing to cause another? Your alarm clock may go off every morning just before sunrise; but it doesn't cause the sun to rise; so what is missing?

Question: 'All events seem entirely loose and separate. One event follows another; but we never can observe any tie between them. They seem conjoined, but never connected.' Given this picture, how can we explain causation?

Reading (important reading marked with asterisk):

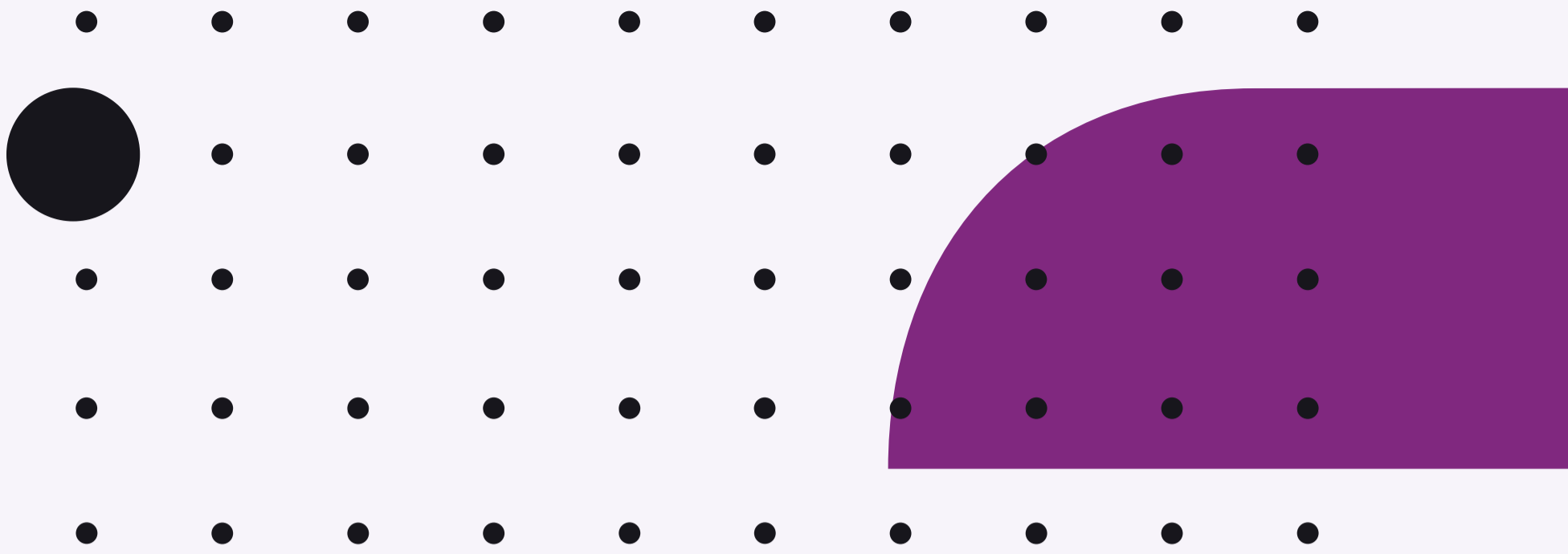
- *Crane, Tim, 'Causation', in A.C. Grayling, ed., Philosophy 1: A Guide through the Subject (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 184-94 (Overview)

Start with Hume himself:

- Hume, David, Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, sect. 4. Also available online at: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cam/reader.action?docID=415078&ppg=97>.
- Hume, David, Treatise of Human Nature, Book 1.iii., sects. 1, 2 & 14. Also available online via: https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/permalink/f/t9gok8/44CAM_ALMA51533180080003606.
- *Beebe, Helen, 'Causation and Necessary Connection' (For an overview of interpretations).
- *Lewis, David, 'Causation', Journal of Philosophy, 70, no. 17 (1973): 556-67 (Difficult!)

For Criticism:

- *Kim, Jaegwon, 'Causes and Counterfactuals', The Journal of Philosophy, 70, no. 17 (1973): 570-72.
- *Mackie, J.L., 'Causes and Conditions', American Philosophical Quarterly, 2, no. 4 (1965): 245-64.
- Paul, L.A., and Ned Hall, Causation: A User's Guide (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). (Overview of contemporary debate)



Part 3 (Formal Logic)

A key notion of analytic philosophy is the idea of a deductively valid argument (e.g. All men are mortal; Socrates is a man; so, Socrates is mortal). We can ask about the validity of arguments in natural languages (such as English); but this is likely to be imprecise and intuitive. However, we can also construct artificial (but precise) formal languages, and ask precise questions about the validity of arguments in those formal languages. Two formal languages will be introduced: Truth-Functional logic (lesson 1 and 2) and First-Order Logic (Lesson 3). The main textbook for all is Tim Button: Forallx. (Available for free online, you might want to print it out).

Lesson (1 - 3) - Truth-Functional Logic and First-Order Logic

Exercises will be from the book

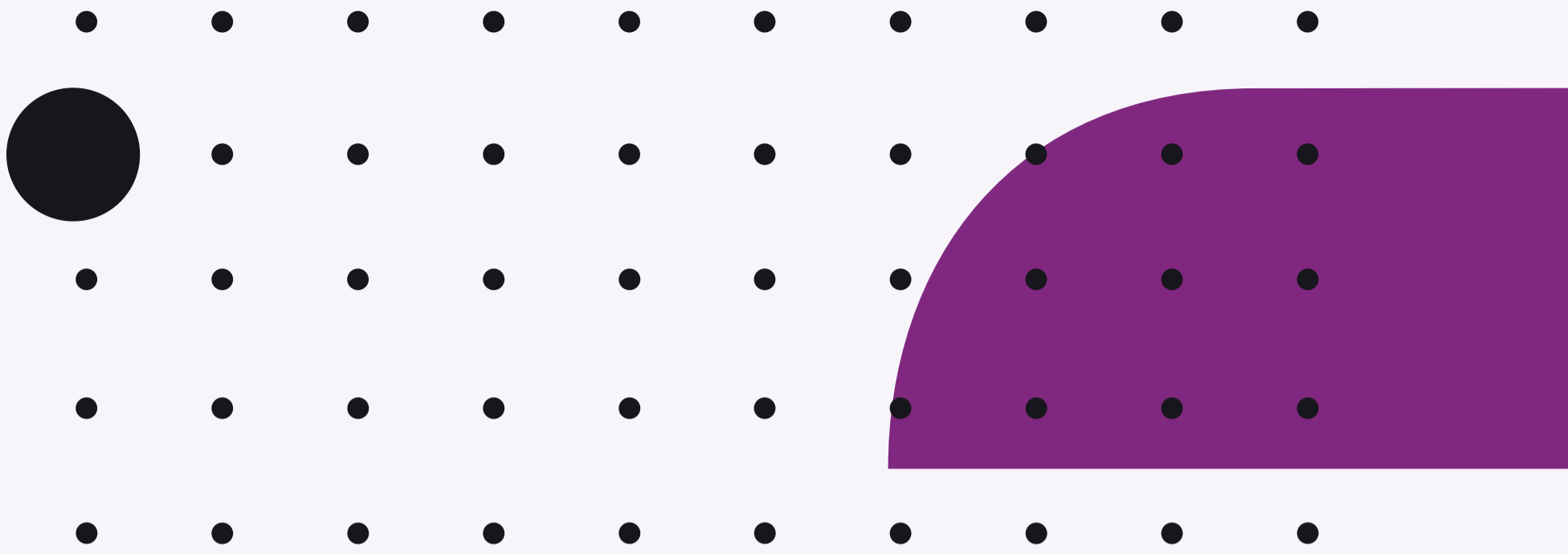
Reading (important reading marked with asterisk):

The essential book (we will move through this in three weeks):

- *Magnus, P.D., and Tim Button, 'forallx: Cambridge' [Online]. Available at: <http://www.nottub.com>, under the "OERs" section (Accessed: 23 August 2019).

For moving between formal and natural languages and some theory:

- Bergmann, Merrie, James Moor, and Jack Nelson, The Logic Book. 6th ed. (Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill Education, 2014), sects. 2.2-2.4 & 7.3-7.4.
- Forbes, Graeme, Modern Logic: A Text in Elementary Symbolic Logic (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), chs. 2, 5 & 7.
- Klenk, Virginia, Understanding Symbolic Logic. 5th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007), chs. 4 & 13.
- Teller, Paul, A Modern Formal Logic Primer (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989), vol. 1; ch. 2 & vol. 2; ch. 4. Also available online at: <http://tellerprimer.ucdavis.edu>.



Part 4 (Meaning)

Lesson (1) - Frege and Russell on Names and Description

Topic Outline: First we consider the classical debate between Frege and Russell about the particular aspect of language - "naming". What is the meaning of a given name? Is there a significant difference between names and descriptions? And how do names refer to their bearers?

Question: According to Russell, why is the sentence 'The present king of France is bald' false?

Reading (important reading marked with asterisk):

Frege:

- * Frege, Gottlob, 'On Sense and Reference', in M. Black and P. Geach, eds., *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952), pp. 56-78.
- * Dummett, Michael, *Origins of Analytical Philosophy* (London: Duckworth, 1993), ch. 7 'Sense without reference'.
- Kenny, Anthony, *Frege* (London: Penguin, 1995), chs. 6 & 7.

Russell:

- *Russell, Bertrand, *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1919), ch. 16 'Descriptions'.
- *Sainsbury, R. Mark, 'Philosophical Logic'.
- Strawson, Peter, 'On Referring', *Mind*, 59, no. 235 (1950): 320-44.
- Russell, Bertrand, 'Mr Strawson on Referring', *Mind*, 66, no. 263 (1957): 385-89.



Lesson (2) - Verificationism

Topic Outline: Verificationism tied meaning to the possibility of verification. We explore the successes and failures of their approach.

Question: Can the verification theory of meaning be given a formulation that is both clear and defensible?

Reading (important reading marked with asterisk):

- *Ayer, A.J., *Language, Truth and Logic*. 2nd ed. (London: Gollancz, 1946), Introduction and ch. 1 'The elimination of metaphysics'.
- *Schlick, Moritz, 'Meaning and Verification', *Philosophical Review*, 45, no. 4 (1936): 339-69.

Surveys:

- *Hacking, Ian, *Why Does Language Matter to Philosophy?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), ch. 9 'A.J. Ayer's verification' (pp. 93-102).
- Hart, W.D., 'Meaning and Verification', in E. Craig, ed., *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (1998).

For richer treatments, see:

- *Hempel, Carl G., 'The Empiricist Criterion of Meaning', in A.J. Ayer, ed., *Logical Positivism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1959), pp. 108-32.

Quine's Attack on Verificationism:

- Quine, W.V., 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism', *Philosophical Review*, 60, no. 1 (1951): 20-43.
- Quine, W.V., *The Ways of Paradox* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966; rev. ed. 1976), ch. 10 'Necessary truth'.

Two discussions of Quine:

- *Grice, H. Paul, and Peter F. Strawson, 'In Defence of a Dogma', *Philosophical Review*, 65, no. 2 (1956): 141-58.
- Juhl, Cory, and Eric Loomis, *Analyticity* (London: Routledge, 2010), ch. 3 'Analyticity and its discontents'.



Lesson (3) - Wittgenstein

Topic Outline: Ludwig Wittgenstein was unquestionably one of the most important intellectual figures of the twentieth century. We will study his two masterpieces: the Tractatus and the Investigations. Although his historical importance can hardly be questioned, the interpretation of Wittgenstein's works has proved controversial, and I will provide an introduction to exegetical cruces in all the texts specified, as well as experience in relating those issues to ones in contemporary philosophy of mathematics, mind, and language. Note: this is a part II module, but John requested specifically to do this course. Since I specialize in Wittgenstein and he is also important for understanding the development of analytic philosophy in general, I believe it is worthwhile to follow up on John's request.

Possible Questions (Pick one!):

Q (Tractatus 1): Explain and assess Wittgenstein's claim that a proposition is a logical picture.

Q (Tractatus 2): 'The world is the totality of facts, not of things.'(TLP1.1) Why does Wittgenstein make this claim?

Q (PI): Are there any of my mental states that I could not record in a diary?

Reading (important reading marked with asterisk):

Primary Texts:

- *Wittgenstein, Ludwig, Philosophical Investigations, translated by G.E.M. Anscombe. 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958). Also available online via: https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/permalink/f/t9gok8/44CAM_ALMA51529329830003606. The 4th edition (2009) may also be used.
- *Wittgenstein, Ludwig, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (either of the two translations, both published by Routledge). The Pears and McGuinness translation is available online via: https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/permalink/f/t9gok8/44CAM_ALMA51527918070003606.

(Do not get bogged down because of Wittgenstein's mysterious language - just try and somehow make sense of it yourself, lots of philosophers are still arguing over whether he can be made sense of at all!)

Tractatus:

- * Anscombe, G.E.M., An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus (London: Hutchinson, 1959).
- * Potter, Michael, Wittgenstein's Notes on Logic (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), chs. 11, 25 & 26 (Picture Theory, but the whole book is great)
- * Sullivan, Peter, 'Identity Theories of Truth and the Tractatus', Philosophical Investigations, 28, no. 1 (2005): 43-62. (Very advanced).
- * Putnam, Hilary, 'Wittgenstein and Realism', International Journal of Philosophical Studies, 16, no. 1 (2008): 3-16.
- * O'Brien, Lucy, 'Solipsism and Self-Reference', European Journal of Philosophy, 4, no. 2 (1996): 175-94. (Solipsism).
- *McGuinness, Brian, 'The Mysticism of the Tractatus', The Philosophical Review, 75, no. 3 (1966): 305-28. (Covers the most obscure and interesting part of Wittgenstein)

Note: The topics here are varied and manifold. Just have a browse and get a feeling for Wittgenstein's "program" of philosophy.

Philosophical Investigations:

(Note: we will mainly cover the private language argument, which is Wittgenstein's attack on Descartes's dualist ideas that still prevail in many of today's thinkers)

- *Jones, Owen R., ed., The Private Language Argument (London: Macmillan, 1971). [Articles by Ayer and Rhees]
- Craig, Edward J., 'Privacy and Rule-Following', in J. Butterfield, ed., Language, Mind and Logic (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 169-86.
- *Kenny, Anthony, 'Cartesian Privacy', in G. Pitcher, ed., Wittgenstein: The Philosophical Investigations (London: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 352-70. Reprinted in his The Anatomy of the Soul (Oxford: Blackwell, 1973).
- *Wright, Crispin, 'Does Philosophical Investigations I, 258-60 Suggest a Cogent Argument against Private Language?' in P. Pettit and J. McDowell, eds., Subject, Thought and Context (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 209-66.