PHILOSOPHY 407: Philosophy of Mind

Course Syllabus -- Spring 2014

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Tue/Thurs 14:00-15:50
SCH 240
PLC 353
Office Hours MW 8-10

Seminar Description
We will begin by surveying some of the more important historical treatments of mind, including Descartes, Hume, James, Dewey, and 20th century behaviorism and functionalism. Then we will focus primarily on contemporary naturalistic views that have emerged from cognitive science and neuroscience, in which mind is conceived as an embodied, enactive, culturally embedded, social process.

Assignments and Grading
Grades will be based on two short essays (each counts for 25% of your grade) and one longer term paper (counting for 50% of your grade). The two short essays (max. 5 double-spaced pages) will be on topics selected by the instructor. The term paper (max. 12 double-spaced pages) will be on a topic selected by you but subject to approval by the instructor. We will be asking for a one paragraph term paper topic proposal at the end of week 8 and then, after it is approved, a short outline of the proposed paper by the end of week 9. The GTF for this course, Phil Mayo, will be amply available to assist you with your papers – to give you guidance, comments, and suggestions, as we want to help you hone your writing. The first short essay will be due during week 3 or 4 (precise date to be determined later), the second short essay is due during week 6 or 7 (precise date to be determined later), and the term paper is due by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday of finals week.

Readings
Damasio, Antonio. Self Comes to Mind
Edelman, Gerald. Wider Than the Sky
Noe, Alva. Out of Our Heads
Reserve Readings Packet, available at The Copy Shop

Wk I
April 1 Introduction
April 3 Dualism
  Descartes, Meditations II, VI

Wk 2
April 8 Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature
April 10 Kant, Critique of Pure Reason
Wk 3
April 15 James, *Principles of Psychology*, Ch. 9 (“The Stream of Thought”)
April 17 James, *Principles of Psychology*, Ch. 10 (“The Consciousness of Self”)

Wk 4
April 22 Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, Ch. 6 (“Nature, Mind, and Subject)

Wk 5

May 1 Behaviorism and Identity Theory
   Skinner, from *About Behaviorism*
   Ryle, from *The Concept of Mind*
   Smart, “Sensations and Brain Processes”

Wk 6
May 6 Functionalism
   Putnam, “The Nature of Mental States”
   Fodor, “The Mind-Body Problem”
May 8 Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind*, Chs. 1,2,3

Wk 7
May 13 Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind*, Chs. 4,5,6
May 15 Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind*, Chs. 7,8

Wk 8
May 20 Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind*, Chs. 9,10
May 22 Bechtel, *Mental Mechanisms*, Chs. 1,4

Wk 9
May 27 Bechtel, *Mental Mechanisms*, Chs. 5,6
May 29 Noe, *Out of Our Heads*, Chs. 1,2,3

Wk 10
June 3 Noe, *Out of Our Heads*, Chs. 4,5
June 5 Noe, *Out of Our Heads*, Chs. Ch. 6,78

Wk 11
June 9-13 Final Exam Week