

History of Analytic Philosophy 410 — Syllabus

Lecturer: Sidney Felder, e-mail: sf30@panix.com

Rutgers The State University of New Jersey, Spring 2021

“Office Hours” (i.e., individual discussions): By Appointment

For many reasons, there is no uncontroversial general characterization of the range of work that tends to be classified under the heading “Analytic Philosophy”. For our purposes, an analytic philosopher is anyone whose work is conducted in awareness of the fundamental importance, for every variety of foundational and philosophical inquiry, of obtaining a proper understanding of what properties of thought, perception, language, and the world, and what properties of their relationship, make possible the meaningful ascription of truth, falsity, and referential significance of any kind to such things as thoughts, beliefs, sentences, propositions, and judgments. This course covers the early history of analytic philosophy, concentrating largely on writings of Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, G.E. Moore, and Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose work secured recognition of the necessity as well as the great difficulty of this kind of inquiry.

Weeks 1, 2, 3, 4 Transition from idealism, naturalism, and Kantianism

- Russell *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914) Chapter I, Current Tendencies;
Chapter II, Logic As the Essence of Philosophy
Frege *The Foundations of Arithmetic* (1884), Introduction and sections 1-28.
Moore *Principia Ethica* (1903), Chapters I, II, III (36-44), VI (110-121)
Russell *The Principles of Mathematics* (1903), Chapters I, III (Sections 37-38, 43-45), IV,
V (56-60, 63-65), VI (66-74), VIII (86-87, 93), IX, X, XVI, XXVI,
XXVII (217-219), XLII, XLIII (337-341), LI

Weeks 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 Construction of a Language for Mathematics.

- Frege *Begriffsschrift* (1879) Preface, Chapter 1 (Sections 1-3, 8)
— *The Foundations of Arithmetic* (1884), Sections 29-79, 87-91
— “On Sense and Reference” (1892)
— “Concept and Object” (1892)
Russell *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* (1920),
Chapter XV, Propositional Functions; Chapter XVI, Descriptions
— “On Denoting” (1905)
— “The Metaphysician’s Nightmare”

Weeks 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 Objects and States of Affairs

- Russell *Philosophical Essays* (1910), “The Coherence Theory of Truth”
— *The Problems of Philosophy* (1912), Chapter XII, Truth and Falsehood
Frege “The Thought” (1918)
Wittgenstein *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921)

There will be a take-home assignment, to be submitted by e-mail (either in plain text format as an attached PDF) at the end of the term.

Final grade will be determined by quality of both written work and “class participation” (the latter, so far as possible, under the circumstances of asynchronous remote teaching).