

## Philosophy 5700: Advanced Metaphysics

Fall 2014

Instructor: Ben Caplan  
Time: M W 11:10 AM – 12:30 PM  
Location: 353 University Hall  
Office: 372 University Hall  
Office hours: M ~~1:30 PM – 3:00 PM~~ 2:15 PM – 3:45 PM, or by appointment  
Email: caplan.16@osu.edu

### Course description

This course is on the metaphysics of gender, race, and disability. Most of the readings will be on gender and race, with an emphasis on gender.

After some background on the metaphysics of properties, we will review reasons for thinking that gender, race, and disability can't be identified with biological properties. We will then consider whether there are gender and race properties and, if not, whether that would affect our political projects. In the final part of the course, we will consider what it would be for gender, race, and disability to be socially constructed; whether (and, if so, how) gender, race, and disability are related to subordination; and whether having a social constructionist view of gender would be politically useful.

It would be helpful if students were willing to discuss their experiences of gender, race, or disability.

### Course requirements

Implicit association tests	0%
First assignment	30%
Second assignment	30%
Final paper	40%

Each of the first two assignments will be either a problem set or a short paper (3-5 pages). The final paper should be about 5-10 pages.

To pass the course, you must complete **three** implicit association tests: one on gender (e.g. Gender-Science IAT or Gender-Career IAT); one on race (e.g. Race IAT, Skintone IAT, or Asian IAT); one on disability (e.g. Disability IAT). They are worth 0% of your final grade. You can take the tests at [implicit.harvard.edu](http://implicit.harvard.edu).

### Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is a serious offense. You are expected to know what counts as academic misconduct. You are also expected not to commit it. Among other things,

your work must be your own, and you must cite all of your sources. In accordance with Faculty Rule 3335-5-487, all suspected cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the university's Committee on Academic Misconduct. For further details, see the Code of Student Conduct at [studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource\\_csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp).

## **Disability Services**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform me as soon as possible of their needs. For further information, see the website of the Office of Disability Services at [www.ods.ohio-state.edu](http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu).

## **Schedule**

There is no class on the follow days: Monday, 1 September 2014 (it is Labor Day in the US and Labour Day in Canada); Monday, 22 September 2014 (I will be out of town to give a talk); and Wednesday, 26 November 2014 (this is allegedly something to do with a Thanksgiving Break, although Thanksgiving as we all know is in October).

A detailed and updated schedule will be posted online.

## **Tentative outline**

### **0. Background: Gender and Race in Philosophy**

American Philosophical Association, "Minorities in Philosophy." [http://www.apaonline.org/resource/resmgr/data\\_on\\_profession/minorities\\_in\\_philosophy.pdf](http://www.apaonline.org/resource/resmgr/data_on_profession/minorities_in_philosophy.pdf). Accessed 17 August 2014.

American Philosophical Association, "Women in Philosophy." [http://www.apaonline.org/resource/resmgr/Data\\_on\\_Profession/Women\\_in\\_Philosophy.pdf](http://www.apaonline.org/resource/resmgr/Data_on_Profession/Women_in_Philosophy.pdf). Accessed 17 August 2014.

Kieran Healy, "Philosophy in Disciplinary Perspective: Percentage of U.S. Ph.Ds Awarded to Women in 2009." <http://kieranhealy.org/files/misc/philby-discipline.pdf>. Accessed 17 August 2014.

Mollie Paxton, Carrie Figdor, and Valerie Tiberius, "Quantifying the Gender Gap," *Hypatia* 27.4 (Fall 2012): 949-957.

### **1. Background: Properties**

Bertrand Russell, "The World of Universals," from *The Problems of Philosophy*, 1912 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 91-100.

Willard V. Quine, "On What There Is," *Review of Metaphysics* 2.5 (Sept. 1948): 21-38, pp. 29-30.

Donald C. Williams, "On the Elements of Being: I," *Review of Metaphysics* 7.1 (Sept. 1953), 3-18.

David Lewis, *On the Plurality of Worlds* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1986), pp. 59-63.

## 2. Anti-biologism

Joshua Glasgow, "Breaking Nature's Bones," from *A Theory of Race* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 80-112.

Elizabeth Barnes, "Constructing Disability," from *The Minority Body* (ms.), pp. 1-13.

## 3. Realism and anti-realism

Mari Mikkola, "Elizabeth Spelman, Gender Realism, and Women," *Hypatia* 21.4 (Fall 2006): 77-96.

Natalie Stoljar, "Different Women. Gender and the Realism-Nominalism Debate," in *Feminist Metaphysics: Explorations in the Ontology of Sex, Gender and Self*, ed. Charlotte Witt, Feminist Philosophy Collection (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011), 27-46.

Mari Mikkola, "Gender Scepticism and Feminist Politics," *Res Publica* 13.4 (Dec. 2007): 361-380.

## 4. Social constructionism

*For social constructionism about gender and race*

Sally Haslanger, "Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them To Be," *Nous* 34.1 (March 2000): 31-55.

*For social constructionism about race*

Charles W. Mills, "'But What Are You Really?' The Metaphysics of Race," in *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 43-66.

Sally Haslanger, "A Social Constructionist Analysis of Race," in *Revisiting Race in a Genomic Age*, ed. Barbara A. Koenig, Sandra Soo-Jin Lee, and Sarah

S. Richardson, Rutgers Series in Medical Anthropology (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 56-69.

*For social constructionism about disability*

Elizabeth Barnes, "Constructing Disability," from *The Minority Body* (ms.), pp. 13-39.

*What is social construction anyway?*

Sally Haslanger, "Social Construction: Myth and Reality," in *Resisting Reality: Social Construction and Social Critique* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 183-218.

*Against Haslanger's social constructionism about gender*

Mari Mikkola, "Gender Concepts and Intuitions," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 39.4 (Dec. 2009): 559-584.

*Against social constructionism about race*

Joshua Glasgow, "Constructivism, Revisionism, and Anti-Realism," from *A Theory of Race* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 113-132.

*Social construction and subordination*

Sally Haslanger, "Future Genders? Future Races?," *Philosophic Exchange* 34 (2003-2004): 5-27.

Jennifer Saul, "Gender and Race," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes* 80 (2006): 119-143.