

**PHIL 341: Topics in Philosophy of Mind**  
**Fall 2019**

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Office Hours: WF 2-3 PM or by appointment

**Time:** MWF 1-1:50 PM

**Place:** RZR 227

### **Course Description**

This course will be about introspection and self-knowledge. Self-knowledge is an essential component of our existence. It shapes our presence in the world, our actions, our interactions with others, our choices and decisions, the construction of our present and our future. Introspection has traditionally been considered as the most reliable and secure method to acquire self-knowledge. However, this tradition has been harshly criticized and some philosophers have argued that introspection is much less reliable than we think, especially if it is conducted naively or superficially. This course will explore the extent, the nature, and the importance of self-knowledge in general and of introspection in particular. We will discuss optimism and skepticism about introspective self-knowledge, different theories of the nature of introspection, and the value of introspection and self-knowledge.

### **Course objectives and Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course, you will (i) have acquired an understanding of the most important philosophical issues about self-knowledge and introspection; (ii) have strengthened your ability to analyze a philosophical text, critically evaluate a philosophical argument, develop your own philosophical ideas, and actively engage in philosophical discussion; (iii) appreciate the value of the philosophical debate around self-knowledge, a value that is both intrinsic (it is an interesting topic in itself!) and instrumental (e.g. the role of introspection in psychological and cognitive science studies of mind and consciousness); (iv) have developed a deeper appreciation of the value of self-knowledge in human life.

### **Reading list**

A reading list is provided in the “Week-by-week topics and readings” section below. Required readings will be available on Canvas.

## **Evaluation**

Two 2000/3000-word essays, the first (30% of the final grade) to be submitted before October 23<sup>rd</sup>, the second (50% of the final grade) before December 11<sup>th</sup>. A list of topics will be provided. Starting from week 3, you will have to submit, over the course of the semester, a total of ten reading responses, of roughly one page, explaining and/or commenting on some aspect of the required reading for the week it is submitted (except SEP entry sections). Reading responses will cumulatively count for the 20% of the final grade. Participation in class will be tie-breaker.

## **Honor Code Statement**

One of the oldest traditions at Rice is the honor system administered by the student Honor Council, whose members are elected annually by the student body. Adopted by a vote of the student body in 1916, the system requires each Rice student to help ensure the validity of all examinations and assignments by adhering to a strict code of academic integrity. Students agree to report any suspected violations of the Honor Code to the Honor Council, which is responsible for investigating reported violations and recommending penalties where warranted. For further details about Rice Honor Code please consult the Honor System Handbook at <http://honor.rice.edu/honor-system-handbook/>. As a reminder of their commitment, students write and sign the following pledge on all work covered by the Honor Code: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received any aid on this (exam, paper, project, assignment).”

## **Disabilities Statement**

Students with a documented disability or other condition that may affect academic performance should be sure to contact Rice Disabilities Resource Center (Allen Center, Room 111 / [adarice@rice.edu](mailto:adarice@rice.edu) / x5841) and to talk to me about ensuring that the lecture, assignments, exams, class discussion, and so on present no undo problems for them.

## **Syllabus Change Policy**

This syllabus is only a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice.

## Week-by-week topics and reading

### Introduction

8/26: What is self-knowledge? What is introspection? Outline of the course and organizational stuff.

### Module I: Optimism and skepticism about introspection and self-knowledge

#### 1. Is introspective self-knowledge special or privileged? The philosophical tradition

##### Required reading:

- Section 1: “The Distinctiveness of Self-Knowledge”, from Gertler, Brie. 2017. “Self-Knowledge.” In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2017. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/self-knowledge/>.
- “Meditation I” and “Meditation II”, from Descartes, René. *Meditations on First Philosophy*. In *Meditations on First Philosophy in Focus*. Edited by Stanley Tweyman. Translated by Elizabeth Sanderson Haldane and George Robert Thomson Ross. Routledge Philosophers in Focus Series. London; New York: Routledge.

##### Recommended reading:

- Chapter 1 (“Introduction”) and sections 3.1 and 3.2 of Chapter 3 (“The nature and scope of (purportedly) special self-knowledge”) from Gertler, Brie. 2011. *Self-Knowledge*. London; New York: Routledge.

##### Classes:

8/28: Introduction: (alleged) special epistemic properties of introspection and self-knowledge.

8/30: Analysis and discussion of Descartes’ Meditations I and II.

#### 2. No privileged access: against the philosophical tradition

##### Required reading:

- Section 2: “Doubts about the distinctiveness of self-knowledge”, from Gertler, Brie. 2017. “Self-Knowledge.” In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2017.
- Chapter 6 “Self-Knowledge”, from Ryle, Gilbert. 1949. *The Concept of Mind*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

##### Recommended reading:

- Sections 3.3 and 3.4 of Chapter 3 (“The nature and scope of (purportedly) special self-knowledge”) from Gertler, Brie. 2011. *Self-Knowledge*. London; New York: Routledge.

##### Classes:

9/4: Introduction: raising skepticism about introspection in philosophical debate.

9/6: Analysis and discussion of Ryle's chapter.

### 3. Self-knowledge and introspection in XX century psychology: introspectionism

Required reading:

- Titchener, E. B. 1912. "Prolegomena to a Study of Introspection." *The American Journal of Psychology* 23 (3): 427–48.

Classes:

9/9: Introduction: some history of introspective psychology.

9/11: Analysis and discussion of Titchener's paper.

### 4. Self-knowledge and introspection in in XX century psychology: behaviorism

Required reading:

- Watson, John B. 1913. "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It." *Psychological Review* 20 (2): 158–77

Classes:

9/13: The decline of the primacy of introspection in psychology.

9/16: Analysis and discussion of Watson's paper.

### 5. Skepticism about introspection in contemporary psychology

Required reading:

- Nisbett, Richard E., and Timothy D. Wilson. 1977. "Telling More than We Can Know: Verbal Reports on Mental Processes." *Psychological Review* 84 (3): 231–59.
- Johansson, Petter, Lars Hall, Sverker Sikström, and Andreas Olsson. 2005. "Failure to Detect Mismatches Between Intention and Outcome in a Simple Decision Task." *Science* 310 (5745): 116–19.

Classes:

9/18: Analysis and discussion of Nisbett and Wilson's paper.

9/20: Analysis and discussion of Johansson et al.'s paper.

### 6. Assessing the use of introspection in scientific research

Required reading:

- Goldman, Alvin I. 1997. "Science, Publicity, and Consciousness." *Philosophy of Science* 64 (4): 525–45.

Classes:

9/23: Analysis and discussion of Goldman's paper.

## 7. Skepticism about introspection in contemporary philosophy

### Required reading:

- Dennett, Daniel C. 2003. "Who's on First? Heterophenomenology Explained." *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 10 (9–10): 19–30.
- Schwitzgebel, Eric. 2008. "The Unreliability of Naive Introspection." *Philosophical Review* 117 (2): 245–273.

### Classes:

9/25: Analysis and discussion of Dennett's paper.

9/27: Analysis and discussion of Schwitzgebel's paper.

## 8. Optimism about introspection in contemporary philosophy: limited specialness

### Required reading:

- Horgan, Terence, and Uriah Kriegel. 2007. "Phenomenal Epistemology: What Is Consciousness That We May Know It so Well?" *Philosophical Issues* 17 (1): 123–144.

### Classes:

9/30: Analysis and discussion of Horgan and Kriegel's paper.

10/2: Analysis and discussion of Horgan and Kriegel's paper.

## 9. Assessing the use and scope of introspection and first-person reflection

### Required reading:

- Kriegel, Uriah. 2013. "A Hesitant Defense of Introspection." *Philosophical Studies* 165 (3): 1165–76.
- Charles Siewert, *The Legitimacy of Reflection* (manuscript), selected sections.

### Classes:

10/4: Analysis and discussion of Kriegel's paper.

10/7: Analysis and discussion of Siewert's chapter.

10/9: Analysis and discussion of Siewert's chapter.

## Intermezzo

10/11: Host: Uriah Kriegel

10/16: Catch-up session.

10/21: Review session.

## Module II: The nature of introspection and self-knowledge

### 10. The inner sense view

#### Required reading:

- Section 3.2: “Inner sense accounts”, from Gertler, Brie. 2017. “Self-Knowledge.” In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2017.
- Chapter 15 “Introspection”, from Armstrong, David M. 1968. *A Materialist Theory of the Mind*. New York: Humanities Press.

#### Recommended reading:

- Sections 5.1 and 5.2 of Chapter 5 (“The inner sense theory of self-knowledge”) from Gertler, Brie. 2011. *Self-Knowledge*. London; New York: Routledge.

#### Classes:

**10/23:** Introduction to the inner sense view.

**10/25:** Analysis and discussion of Armstrong’s chapter.

### 11. Against the inner sense view

#### Required reading:

- Shoemaker, Sydney. 1994. “Self-Knowledge and ‘Inner Sense’: Lecture I: The Object Perception Model.” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 54 (2): 249–69.

#### Recommended reading:

- Sections 5.3-5.8 of Chapter 5 (“The inner sense theory of self-knowledge”) from Gertler, Brie. 2011. *Self-Knowledge*. London; New York: Routledge.

#### Classes:

**10/28:** Main objections to the inner sense view.

**10/30:** Analysis and discussion of Shoemaker’s paper.

### 12. The acquaintance view

#### Required reading:

- Section 3.1: “Acquaintance accounts”, from Gertler, Brie. 2017. “Self-Knowledge.” In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2017.
- Gertler, Brie. 2012. “Renewed Acquaintance.” In *Introspection and Consciousness*, edited by Declan Smithies and Daniel Stoljar, 89–123. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

#### Recommended reading:

- Chapter 4 (“The acquaintance theory of self-knowledge”) from Gertler, Brie. 2011. *Self-Knowledge*. London; New York: Routledge.

Classes:

11/1: Introduction to the acquaintance view.

11/4: Analysis and discussion of Gertler's paper.

### 13. Reliabilism

Required reading:

- Section 3.5: "Transparency accounts", from Gertler, Brie. 2017. "Self-Knowledge." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2017.
- Fernández, Jordi. 2003. "Privileged Access Naturalized." *The Philosophical Quarterly (1950-)* 53 (212): 352–72.

Classes:

11/6: Introduction to transparency arguments.

11/8: Analysis and discussion of Fernández's paper.

### 14. Rationalism

Required reading:

- Section 3.6: "Rationalist accounts", from Gertler, Brie. 2017. "Self-Knowledge." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2017.
- Moran, Richard. 2012. "Self-Knowledge, 'Transparency', and the Forms of Activity." In *Introspection and Consciousness*, edited by Declan Smithies and Daniel Stoljar, 211–36. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Recommended reading:

- Chapter 6 ("The rationalist theory of self-knowledge") from Gertler, Brie. 2011. *Self-Knowledge*. London; New York: Routledge.

Classes:

11/11: Introduction to rationalism about self-knowledge.

11/13: Analysis and discussion of Moran's paper.

### 15. Neo-Expressivism

Required reading:

- Section 3.8: "Expressivist accounts", from Gertler, Brie. 2017. "Self-Knowledge." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2017.
- Bar-On, Dorit. 2008. "Neo-Expressivism: Avowals' Security and Privileged Self-Knowledge." In *Self-Knowledge*, edited by Anthony E. Hatzimoyisis, 189–201. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Classes:

11/15: Introduction to neo-expressivism.  
11/18: Analysis and discussion of Bar-On's paper

## 16. Pluralism about introspection

### Required reading:

- Schwitzgebel, Eric. 2012. "Introspection, What?" In *Introspection and Consciousness*, edited by Declan Smithies and Daniel Stoljar, 29–48. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

### Classes:

11/20: Analysis and discussion of Schwitzgebel's paper.

## Intermezzo

11/22: Review session.

## Module III: The value of introspection and self-knowledge

## 17. Self-knowledge and substantiality

### Required reading:

- Chapter 3 "Substantial self-knowledge", from Cassam, Quassim. 2015. *Self-Knowledge for Humans*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Charles Siewert, "What use is Reflection?" (manuscript), selected sections.

### Classes:

11/25: Analysis and discussion of Cassam's chapter.

11/27: Analysis and discussion of Siewert's chapter.

12/2: Host: Charles Siewert.

## **Conclusion: Why is self-knowledge important? What is the role of introspection in the acquisition of self-knowledge?**

12/4: Catch-up/review session.

12/6: Conclusion of the course.



Schedule:

Week #	Class #	Month	Day	Topic	Notes
1	1.	Aug.	26	<i>Introduction to the course.</i>	
	2.		28	<i>Is introspective self-knowledge special? Introduction.</i>	
	3.		30	<i>Is introspective self-knowledge special? Descarts.</i>	
2		Sept.	02		No class – Labour day.
	4.		04	<i>Against the philosophical tradition. Introduction</i>	
	5.		06	<i>Against the philosophical tradition. Ryle.</i>	
3	6.		09	<i>Introspectionism. Introduction.</i>	
	7.		11	<i>Introspectionism. Titchener.</i>	
	8.		13	<i>Behaviorism. Introduction.</i>	
4	9.		16	<i>Behaviorism. Watson.</i>	
	10.		18	<i>Skepticism in psychology. Nisbett &amp; Wilson.</i>	
	11.		20	<i>Skepticism in psychology. Johansson et al.</i>	
5	12.		23	<i>Assessing use of introspection in science. Goldman.</i>	
	13.		25	<i>Skepticism in philosophy. Dennett.</i>	
	14.		27	<i>Skepticism in philosophy. Schwitzgebel.</i>	
6	15.		30	<i>Limited specialness. Horgan and Kriegel.</i>	
	16.	Oct.	02	<i>Limited specialness. Horgan and Kriegel.</i>	
	17.		04	<i>Assessing the use and scope of introspection. Kriegel.</i>	
7	18.		07	<i>Assessing the use and scope of introspection. Siewert.</i>	
	19.		09	<i>Assessing the use and scope of introspection. Siewert.</i>	
	20.		11	<b>Host: Uriah Kriegel.</b>	
8			14		No class – Midterm Recess.
	21.		16	<i>Catch-up session.</i>	
			18		No class.
9	22.		21	<i>Review session.</i>	
	23.		23	<i>Inner sense. Introduction.</i>	<b>ESSAY 1 DUE!</b>
	24.		25	<i>Inner sense. Armstrong.</i>	
10	25.		28	<i>Against inner sense. Introduction.</i>	
	26.		30	<i>Against inner sense. Shoemaker.</i>	
	27.	Nov.	01	<i>Acquaintance. Introduction.</i>	
11	28.		04	<i>Acquaintance. Gertler.</i>	
	29.		06	<i>Reliabilism. Introduction.</i>	
	30.		08	<i>Reliabilism. Fernández.</i>	
12	31.		11	<i>Rationalism. Introduction.</i>	
	32.		13	<i>Rationalism. Moran.</i>	
	33.		15	<i>Neo-expressivism. Introduction.</i>	
13	34.		18	<i>Neo-expressivism. Bar-On.</i>	
	35.		20	<i>Pluralism. Schwitzgebel.</i>	
	36.		22	<i>Review session.</i>	
14	37.		25	<i>Substantiality. Cassam.</i>	
	38.		27	<i>Substantiality. Siewert.</i>	
			29		No class – Thanksgiving.
15	39.	Dec.	02	<b>Host: Charles Siewert.</b>	
	40.		04	<i>Review session.</i>	
	41.		06	<i>Conclusion of the course.</i>	
			11		No class. <b>ESSAY 2 DUE!</b>