

History of Analytic Philosophy

Spring 2023, 13418, GPHI 6291-A

Seminar: Thursday 4:00-5:50, Room 1102 (66 West 12th Street)

Professor: Alice Crary (she series)

Office hours: Wednesdays 4-5pm [via zoom](#).

Thursdays 2:30-3:30pm in person at D1115.

Sign up for office hours on [google calendar](#).

*Please email me at crarya@newschool.edu, if you have any trouble arranging to meet me.**

Course description

Ordinary language philosophy (OLP) is a contested tradition within analytic philosophy. What should we make of it? This seminar is concerned with the significance and reception of the work of major figures in this tradition, above all, Ludwig Wittgenstein and JL Austin. Its particular focus is on discussions about the critical and political import of central themes of OLP.

The seminar is designed both for students who have and for students who have not studied these philosophers closely. In order to make subsequent course materials accessible to those unfamiliar with OLP, the first six weeks of the seminar will be dedicated to intense discussion of key portions of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* and Austin's *How to Do Things With Words*.

The nine remaining weeks of the seminar will be devoted to an exploration of the reception of themes developed in these works, with a somewhat greater emphasis on how Wittgenstein's ideas have been taken up and discussed. We will consider how, in late '50s and early '60s, figures in Anglo-American philosophy and European philosophy argued that Austin, Wittgenstein, and those in conversation with them counseled a stymied and uncritical approach to political as well as philosophical problems. We will discuss respects in which, since then, philosophers on both sides of the so-called Continental divide have continued in this vein, inviting us to regard OLP, and above all Wittgenstein, as conservative or even reactionary. This will bring us to the work of commentators, such as Stanley Cavell, Cora Diamond, and Hannah Pitkin who argue that conservative readings of this philosophical corpus are untenable. In connection with this material, we will consider the possibility of a fresh positive articulation of OLP's political interest. We will look at those who reject suggestions of conservatism and align Wittgenstein in particular with classical liberalism, strains of Marxist thought, or Frankfurt School Critical Theory, and we will conclude by considering the possibility that the tradition is politically pertinent, and contested, precisely because it equips us to challenge both late capitalism's emphasis on instrumental reason and the conception of political rationality, central to contemporary liberal thought, that is this image of reason's counterpart.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this seminar, you should be able—at a graduate-level—to (1) discuss the views of at least a few figures in the history of analytic philosophy and in OLP in particular, (2) describe interpretative issues that are central to the reception of OLP, (3) take a stand on at least some of

* In case you are looking at a hard copy of this syllabus, here are the links for my Tuesday office hours (<https://newschool.zoom.us/j/92575513091#success>) and for my google calendar (<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/selfsched?sstoken=UUJvZzdVUHpvbFRXfGRIZmF1bHR8NTQ3YzE4NDZkMjA5Yjk2NDUzYzA1ZjQ0MTMwMjkzNTI>).

these interpretative issues and defend your position, (4) discuss implications of themes of OLP for how we conceive critical and political thought, (5) illustrate your account these implications in reference to exercises of critical and political thought, (6) present your ideas about these matters clearly orally and in writing.

Required texts

Except for Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (which you are encouraged to obtain, if possible, in a bilingual English-German edition) and Austin's *How to Do Things with Words*, which you should purchase or borrow, all required and recommended materials for this course will be available either on our seminar Canvas site, in the public domain online or in seminar. If the cost of the books by Wittgenstein and Austin is prohibitive for you, or you have difficulty finding copies, please let me know. I will lend or give you copies. Lastly, those with special interests—this is by no means mandatory—might want to locate copies of Ernest Gellner's 1959 *Words and Things* and Herbert Marcuse's 1964 *One-Dimensional Man* so that they can read beyond the individual chapters that will be made available to all in the seminar.

Course requirements

All enrolled students must:

- write three (no longer than) 2-page—ungraded—response papers, and
- write one (no longer than) 15-18-page seminar paper

Response papers. At our second seminar meeting (Thursday, February 2nd), you'll be assigned to one of four groups, members of which will be responsible for producing short response papers on three occasions during the term. Response papers will be due by 8am on the day of the relevant class meeting, available to me to work your ideas into the day's presentation. You will be encouraged to comment further, in seminar, on the themes developed in your response papers. It will very likely make sense to approach different response papers in different ways, and we will have a brief discussion within the seminar about different ways to approach successive response papers throughout the semester.

Seminar papers. Your seminar paper will be due before the seminar, on the day of our last meeting, Thursday, May 11th. There will be no penalty for late papers, but, if your paper is late, you will have no guarantee of having it commented on, graded, and returned to you quickly.

Reaching me

My contact information is at the top of the first page of this syllabus. My office hours are, split between zoom and in-person meetings, are designed to accommodate your different schedules and preferences. My regular online office hours are Wednesdays 4-5pm [via zoom](#) and my regular in person office hours are Thursdays 2:30-3:30pm in my office, D1115, in the building at 6 East 16th Street, 10th floor. **Whether you are coming to zoom or in-person meetings, please sign up on [google calendar](#).** You should feel free to contact me about any course-related issue, no matter how small. I will try to respond to emails as quickly as possible. If you write to me about a substantive issue, I will likely write back and suggest that we meet to chat in person or on zoom.

Fairness, grading methods and disputes

There is good evidence to suggest that implicit or unconscious bias is a serious issue in academic settings, and that it puts members of underrepresented groups at a substantial disadvantage. One recommended strategy for combating implicit bias is to do anonymous assessment of assignments. This is not possible in a relatively small research seminar in which I will be in close conversation with you about your individual writing projects. A second recommended strategy for combating implicit bias is to attend carefully to how one interacts with students (e.g., what form of address is used, how often speaking time is granted and to whom, and how much time individual students spend speaking). Throughout the semester, I will monitor my own practice with an eye to being fair to all. A third strategy is to get anonymous feedback on pedagogy and methods well before the end of the course, and I will arrange for an anonymous survey before midterm with an eye to making improvements in the running of the seminar.

If you believe that there is something amiss with the evaluation of your work, I urge you to let me know. I am open to discussion and willing to re-read papers or give them to colleagues for assessment.

University-wide course-policies and resources

Academic honesty

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university. Students are responsible for understanding the New School's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found [here](#).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else's work as one's own, in all forms of academic endeavor (such as essays, theses, examinations, research data, creative projects, etc.), intentional or unintentional. Plagiarized material may be derived from a variety of sources, such as books, journals, Internet postings, student or faculty papers, etc. This includes the purchase or "outsourcing" of written assignments for a course. Submission of the same work or substantially overlapping material for different assignments without prior instructor approval is plagiarism. A detailed definition of plagiarism in research and writing can be found in the 8th edition of the MLA Handbook, pages 6-10. The University Learning Center provides resources and workshops to help students understand and avoid plagiarism. Resources regarding what plagiarism is, how to avoid it, and additional information about the services provided by the Learning Center can be found on [their website](#).

Student conduct in the online learning environment

Students should familiarize themselves with the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and [other policies](#) that govern continued enrollment. Contact your [Student Success Advisor](#) for division-specific policies relevant to your degree. This class is a collective learning environment and will entail sharing and discussing beliefs, opinions, and thoughts on a spectrum of issues, including

sensitive topics. Indeed, a productive and flourishing class-dynamic depends on such exchanges. And while we might not always agree, we should nevertheless remain respectful and courteous to one another in any format of exchanging ideas—online discussions, commenting on posts, and in giving feedback and asking questions. It is important to emphasize that the critical exchange of ideas doesn't have to be contentious or combative. We should refrain from impolite, offensive, and rude behavior. It is, in a word, “unnecessary.”

Attendance

According to the [University Attendance Policy](#), habitual absences may justify some grade reduction.

Other Relevant Resources

The university provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence.

These resources include:

- The New School's *Intellectual Property Rights* are available [here](#).
- *Grading Policies* are available [here](#).
- [University Libraries and Archives](#), including [Reserves](#).
- [Student Disability Services](#).

If you are a student with a disability/disabled student or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Student Disability Services (SDS) at studentdisability@newschool.edu, or 212-229-5626, to coordinate all reasonable accommodation requests.

- [The New School Food Assistance](#).
- [Health and Wellness](#).

Course Evaluations

During the last two weeks of the semester, students are asked to provide feedback for each of their courses through an online survey. They cannot view grades until providing feedback or officially declining to do so. Course evaluations are a vital space where students can speak about the learning experience. It is an important process which provides valuable data about the successful delivery and support of a course or topic to both the faculty and administrators.

Instructors rely on course rating surveys for feedback on the course and teaching methods, so they can understand what aspects of the class are most successful in teaching students, and what aspects might be improved or changed in future. Without this information, it can be difficult for an instructor to reflect upon and improve teaching methods and course design. In addition, program/department chairs and other administrators review course surveys. Instructions are available online [here](#).

A final comment on course readings and other materials

A great deal of material is listed on the schedule (below) for many of our seminar meetings. This is meant to be helpful and should not be interpreted as an expression of unreasonable expectations about what can be covered during one semester. First, within the readings listed for each week, I will generally let you know ahead of time where our focus will be. Second, since some of you will have encountered portions of our material previously, the extra resources should provide opportunities for everyone, regardless of starting point, to progress in their reading. If, at any point, you have questions about any of the course materials or requirements, please reach out and talk to me.

List of seminars, readings, and assignments

Week One—Seminar introduction and first remarks on the philosophy of Wittgenstein**Th, January 26th**No required reading

You may find it helpful to read Norman Malcolm, “A Memoir” (in his *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*)—or other biographical accounts of Wittgenstein—and the Preface to Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations*

Other resources

James Conant and Cora Diamond, “On Reading the *Tractatus* Resolutely”
 Cora Diamond, “Throwing Away the Ladder”
 PMS Hacker, “Was He Trying to Whistle It?”
 Peter Winch, “The Unity of Wittgenstein’s Philosophy”

Week Two—the opening of the *Investigations***Th, February 2nd**Required reading

Wittgenstein, *Investigations*, sections 1-32 and 65-67

Warren Goldfarb, “I Want You to Bring me a Slab”

If you have time, get started on the reading for next week, since, time permitting, we will start to discuss it.

Other resources

Stanley Cavell, *Philosophical Passages*, “Notes and Afterthoughts on the Opening of the *Investigations*”

Norman Malcolm, “Language Game (2)” in *Wittgensteinian Themes*

Rush Rhees, “Wittgenstein’s Builders” in *Discussions of Wittgenstein*

Today in seminar, all enrolled students will be assigned to groups for response papers

Week Three—Wittgenstein on rule-following and a glance at his conception of philosophical method**Th, February 9th (Group I for response papers)**Required reading

Wittgenstein, *Investigations*, sections 143-202

Wittgenstein, *Investigations*, sections 89-133 and “The Big Typescript”

Other resources

Saul Kripke, *Wittgenstein on Meaning and Rules*, “Introductory” and “The Wittgensteinian Paradox”

John McDowell, “Meaning and Intentionality in Wittgenstein’s Later Philosophy”

John McDowell, “Non-Cognitivism and Rule-Following”

Stanley Cavell, “The Availability of Wittgenstein’s Later Philosophy” in *Must We Mean What We Say?*

- Stanley Cavell, "Excursus on Wittgenstein's Vision of Language"
 Stanley Cavell, "Between Avoidance and Acknowledgment," pp.370-383, in *The Claim of Reason*
 Cora Diamond, "The Difficulty of Reality and the Difficulty of Philosophy"
 Alice Crary, "The Moral Dimension of Mind: Philosophy of Psychology as a Guide to Ethics" in *Inside Ethics*
 Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, Part V
 Wittgenstein, *Investigations*, sections 203-220 and 499-500

Week Four—Wittgenstein on privacy and, more briefly, on seeing-as

Th, February 16th (Group 2 for response papers)

Required reading

- Wittgenstein, *Investigations*, sections 243-270
 Wittgenstein, *Investigations*, sections 398-402 and Part II, sections iv and xi

Other resources

- John McDowell, "One Strand in the Private Language Argument"
 Cora Diamond, "Does Bismarck Have a Beetle in His Box?"
 Wittgenstein, *Investigations*, sections 221-242
 Wittgenstein, *Lectures on Philosophical Psychology, 1946–1947*, sections 281– 282 and *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, vol. 1, sections 448–450
 P.F. Strawson, "Imagination and Perception" in *Freedom and Resentment and Other Essays*

Week Five—JL Austin and speech acts

Th, February 23rd (Group 3 for response papers)

Required reading

- J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things With Words*, Lectures I-IV

Other resources

- A.J. Ayer, "Critique of Ethics and Theology," in *Language, Truth, and Logic*
 R.M. Hare, "Descriptive Meaning," in *Freedom and Reason*
 Stanley Cavell, "Austin at Criticism"
 Alice Crary, "The Happy Truth: JL Austin's *How to Do Things With Words*"
Some of you may find useful the debate between Jacques Derrida and John Searle on how to interpret Austin's HTD. We won't have time to cover this material—which Cavell comments on helpfully in his book A Pitch of Philosophy—but I will happily discuss it with anyone who wants to explore it.

Week Six— JL Austin, speech acts, and possibly a word about Gilbert Ryle

Th, March 2nd (Group 4 for response papers)

Required readings.

- J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things With Words*, Lectures V-VIII.

Other resources

- Stanley Cavell, "Austin at Criticism," in *Must We Mean What We Say?*

Gilbert Ryle, “Knowing How and Knowing That,” “Ordinary Language,” “On Forgetting the Difference Between Right and Wrong,” “A Rational Animal,” “Thinking Thoughts and Having Language,” in *Collected Papers*, volume 2

Those who take an interest in Austinian speech acts might want to look at, in addition to materials for weeks 5 and 6, Jerry Gill, Words, Deeds, Bodies, 2015 and Nakul Krishna, “How Not to Be a Chucklehead,” Aeon, November 23, 2016, <https://aeon.co/essays/how-the-thought-acts-of-the-oxford-don-j-l-austin-live-on> (accessed August 1, 2020). Or you might listen to the podcast “In Our Time,” OLP episode: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b03ggc19>, which features Stephen Mulhall, Ray Monk and Julia Tanney. Interest in Austin has exploded in the past 5 years, after many decades of relative quiet, and those with interests in it should contact me about further sources.

Week Seven—Acrimonious attacks on OLP—Ernest Gellner

Th, March 9th (Group 1 for response papers)

Required readings

Ernest Gellner, “Of Linguistic Philosophy,” Ch1 of *Words and Things: An Examination of, and an Attack on, Linguistic Philosophy*, 1959

Bertrand Russell, “Foreword” to Gellner, *Words and Things*

Ved Mehta, “A Battle Against the Bewitchment of Our Intelligence,” *The New Yorker*, December 1, 1961

Other resources.

Bertrand Russell, “The Cult of ‘Common Usage,’” *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 1953

Ernest Gellner, “Reflections on Linguistic Philosophy” I and II, *The Listener*, 1957

Anthony Giddens, “The Prospects for Social Theory Today,” in *Central Problems in Social Theory*, 1979

JC Nyíri, “Wittgenstein’s Later Work in relation to Conservatism” in B McGuinness, ed., *Wittgenstein and his Times*, 1982

David Bloor, “Positivism and Cultural Pessimism,” in *Wittgenstein: A Social Theory of Knowledge*, 1983

Those with special interest in this week’s topics might want to read Gellner’s 1959 book in its entirety. Other possible sources include Alan Wertheimer “Is Ordinary Language Analysis Conservative?” Political Theory 4, 1976 and Lynd Forguson, “Oxford and the ‘Epidemic’ of Ordinary Language Philosophy,” The Monist 84, no. 3, 2001. For a variation on these themes, see Alan Haworth, Political Philosophy After 1945, 2022.

THURSDAY MARCH 16TH—NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK

Week Eight— Additional attacks on OLP—Herbert Marcuse

Th, March 23rd (Group 2 for response papers)

Required readings

Herbert Marcuse, “The Triumph of Positive Thinking—One-dimensional Philosophy,” in *The One-Dimensional Man*, 1964

Colin Lyas, “Herbert Marcuse’s Criticism of ‘Linguistic’ Philosophy,” *Philosophical Investigations* 5, no. 3, 1982.

Other resources

Terry Eagleton, “Wittgenstein’s Friends,” *New Left Review*, 1982.

Perry Anderson, "Components of the National Culture," *New Left Review* 50, 1968.
 John Dunn, "The Future of Political Philosophy in the West" in *Rethinking Modern Political Theory*, 1985

Denis McManus, "The Mysterious Appeal of 'Wittgenstein's Conservatism'"

Alan Badiou, "Wittgenstein's Anti-Philosophy" in *Wittgenstein's Anti-Philosophy*, 2011

Those with special interest in this week's topics might want to read Marcuse's 1964 book in its entirety.

Week Nine—Wittgenstein as a relativist or as an anti-rationalist ally of radical thinkers

Th, March 30th (Group 3 for response papers)

Required readings

Robert Kirk, "Words and Worlds: Wittgenstein," in *Relativism and Reality: A Contemporary Introduction*, 1999

Hans Johann Glock, "Relativism and Radical Interpretation," in *The European Legacy*, vol.2, 1997

Richard Rorty, "The World Well Lost" and "Pragmatism, Relativism, and Irrationalism" in *Consequences of Pragmatism*, 1982

Other resources

Richard Rorty, "The Contingency of Language" in *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity* 1989

AC Grayling, "The Later Philosophy," in *Wittgenstein: A Very Short Introduction*, 2001

Today in seminar we'll do a brief, anonymous mid-term course assessment

Week Ten—Wittgenstein as an anti-rationalist ally of radical thinkers

Th, April 6th (Group 4 for response papers)

Required readings

Richard Rorty, "Solidarity or Objectivity," in *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*, 1991

Richard Rorty, "Hilary Putnam and the Relativist Menace," "Human Rights, Rationality, and Sentimentality," and "Rationality and Cultural Difference," *Truth and Progress*, 1998.

Other resources

Stanley Fish, "How Ordinary is Ordinary Language," in *Is There a Text in this Class?* 1982

Stanley Fish, "Introduction: Going Down the Anti-Formalist Road," "Dennis Martinez and the Uses of Theory," in *Doing What Comes Naturally*, 1989

Stanley Fish, "Fish Tales: A Conversation with 'The Contemporary Sophist,'" an interview conducted by G.A. Olson, in *There's No Such Thing As Free Speech*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994, esp. 292–4

Week Eleven—Resisting readings of Wittgenstein as a conservative or relativist thinker, and pursuing more liberating possibilities

Th, April 13th (Group 1 for response papers)

Required readings

Stanley Cavell, "Declining Decline," in *This New Yet Unapproachable America*, 1989

Cora Diamond, "Criticizing from the 'Outside,'" *Philosophical Investigations*, 2013

Other resources

Cora Diamond, “Truth: Defenders, Debunkers, Despisers,” in Leona Toker, ed., *Commitment in Reflection: Essays in Literature and Moral Philosophy*, 1993

Hannah Pitkin, “Introduction,” “Philosophy and the Study of Political Theory,” and “Political Theory and the Modern Predicament,” in *Wittgenstein and Justice*, 1973

T.P. Uschanov, “The Strange Death of Ordinary Language Philosophy,” 2001

Gaile Pohlhaus and John R. Wright, “Using Wittgenstein Critically” *Political Theory*, 2002

Christopher C. Robinson, “Why Wittgenstein is Not a Conservative: Conventions and Critique” and “Seeing as it Happens: Theorizing Politics Through the Eyes of Wittgenstein,” *Wittgenstein and Political Theory: The View from Somewhere*, 2009

Alice Crary, “Wittgenstein and Political Thought,” in *The New Wittgenstein*, 2000

There are several further interesting works, many of them quite recent, that might be read together with this week’s material. This includes John Gunnell, Social Inquiry after Wittgenstein and Kuhn: Leaving Everything as It Is, 2014, Peg O’Connor, Oppression and Responsibility, 2015, Michael Temelini, Wittgenstein and the Study of Politics, 2015, Sean Wilson, New Critical Thinking: What Wittgenstein Offered, 2020 and Rupert Read, Wittgenstein’s Liberatory Philosophy, 2021. If you’d like advice about how to orient yourself within this literature, please reach out to me.

Week Twelve—Wittgenstein as a traditional liberal

Th, April 20th (Group 2 for response papers)

Required readings

James Tully, “Wittgenstein and Political Philosophy: Understanding Practices of Critical Reflection,” *Political Theory*, 1989

Richard Eldridge, “Wittgenstein and the Conversation of Justice” in Cressida Hayes, ed, *The Grammar of Politics: Wittgenstein and Political Philosophy*, 2003

Other resources

Robin Holt, “Why Wittgenstein?” and “Liberal and Pragmatic Forms” in *Wittgenstein, Politics, and Human Rights*, 1997

Richard Greenleaf Brice, “Exceeding a Different Scope: Wittgenstein’s Political View,” in *Exploring Certainty: Wittgenstein and Wide Fields of Thought*, 2014

Hans Sluga, “‘What has history to do with me?’: Timelessness, Time, and Historical Contingency in Wittgenstein,” available online at <https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/voices.uchicago.edu/dist/9/177/files/2014/04/Sluga-Wittgenstein-and-History-2.pdf>, 2014

Week Thirteen—Wittgenstein and Marxism

Th, April 27th (Group 3 for response papers)

Required readings.

Gavin Kitching, “Much ado about comparatively little: class, state, and ideology,” in *Karl Marx and the Philosophy of Praxis*, 1988

Gavin Kitching and Nigel Pleasants, “Introduction” to *Marx and Wittgenstein: Knowledge, Morality and Politics*, 2002

Dmitris Gakis, “Wittgenstein, Marx, and Marxism: Some Historical Connections,” in *Humanities*, 2015

Other resources

David Rubinstein, "Marx and Wittgenstein: Social Praxis and Social Explanation," in *Studies in Soviet Thought*, 1981

Susan M. Easton, "Introduction" to *Humanist Marxism and Wittgensteinian Social Philosophy*, 1983

Week Fourteen—Wittgenstein and Critical Theory

Th, May 4th (Group 4 for response papers)

Required readings.

Nigel Pleasants, "Wittgenstein and Critical Social Theory," in *Wittgenstein and the Idea of a Critical Social Theory*, 1999

Chantal Mouffe, "Wittgenstein, Political Theory, and Democracy," available online at <https://red.pucp.edu.pe/ridei/files/2011/08/081119.pdf>, 2000

Chantal Mouffe, "Wittgenstein and the Ethos of Democracy" in Ludwig Nagel and Chantal Mouffe, eds., *The Legacy of Wittgenstein: Pragmatism or Deconstruction*, 2001

Other resources

Jürgen Habermas, *Theory of Communicative Action*, vol.1 1984, excerpt TBA

Nigel Pleasants, "Toward a critical use of Marx and Wittgenstein," in Kitching and Pleasants, eds., *Marx and Wittgenstein: Knowledge, Morality and Politics*, 2002

Jean-François Lyotard, *The Différend*, excerpt TBA

Dmitris Gakis, "Wittgenstein and Italian Theory: The case of Negri and the common," *Constellations*, 2020

Alongside the readings for this week, it might be helpful to look at emerging radical readings of Wittgenstein, including José Medina's Epistemology of Resistance, 2013 and Richard A. Jones, The Black Book: Wittgenstein and Race, 2015.

Week Fifteen—Seminar retrospective and reception

Th, May 11th

No required reading.

This afternoon's session will be dedicated to a seminar retrospective and a reception.

Final papers are due on email before our seminar meeting today