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TITLE: Reintroduction to Metaphysics: Method and Practice

NUMBER: NCCP 700-214

INSTRUCTOR: Peter Wolfendale

GUESTS: N/A

TIME: 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM EST; 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM GMT

DATES: Thursdays: February 26th, March 5th, March 12th, March 19th

MODULE: 2 of 2

CREDIT: 1

DESCRIPTION: The end of metaphysics was a dominant theme in early 20th century philosophy. Even though the Western philosophical tradition sundered in two, one of the few things its analytic and continental halves seemed to agree upon was that the age of metaphysics was over, either because physics had finally usurped it or because philosophy had finally rooted out the pathological desires which drove us to speak of the fundamental structure of reality. The resurgence of metaphysics in the second half of the century in both traditions certainly came as a surprise, even if it has taken until the turn of the 21st century to become ingrained in both camps. However, despite its increasing popularity, there remains much confusion about precisely what metaphysics is: how does it sit within philosophy as a whole? How does it relate to the sciences (especially physics)? How do we go about doing it? The purpose of this seminar and its subsequent followup in Spring is to reintroduce metaphysics by considering these sorts of methodological questions, and to do so by explaining the history of its rise, fall, and rise again.

REQUIREMENTS: The seminar will be composed of four two and a half hour sessions, each of which will be split between an hour and an hour and a half lecture and around an hour of group discussion. Readings will be set for each week, and students will be expected to write 400 words on some aspect of the week's topic in advance. This will be posted to the google classroom page for everyone to read and comment upon as they wish, providing some preliminary threads for the group discussion. The final assessment will consist of a 2500 word essay on a topic agreed upon with the instructor in advance.

SEMINAR SCHEDULE:

Transcendental Realism – Feb 26, Readings: Pete Wolfendale, *Essay on Transcendental Realism*, parts I-III (available here:

<https://deontologistics.files.wordpress.com/2010/05/essay-on-transcendental-realism.pdf>)

Logic and Individuation – Mar 5, Readings: Pete Wolfendale, 'Existence, Quantification and Multiplicity' in *Object-Oriented Philosophy: The Noumenon's New Clothes*, pp 236-258 (available here: <https://deontologistics.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/eqm.pdf>)

Modality and Causation – Mar 12, Readings: Stephen Mumford and Rani Lill Anjum, 'A Powerful Theory of Causation' (available here:

<http://www.generativescience.org/papers/nature/Anjum-2010-143-159.pdf>); and Gilles

Deleuze 'Tenth Series of the Ideal Game' in *The Logic of Sense* (available here:

<https://deontologistics.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/ideal-game.pdf>)

Universality, Space, and Time – Mar 19, Readings: Jack Cohen and Ian Stewart, 'Systems of Interactive Behaviour' in *The Collapse of Chaos*, chapter 6 (to be provided)

RESOURCES:

SPECULATIVE HERESY

<http://speculativeheresy.wordpress.com/>

DEONTOLOGISTICS

<http://deontologistics.wordpress.com/>