

A Priori Stream: Introduction to the A Priori

Survey Reading for preparation:

- Jenkins (2008): "A Priori Knowledge: Debates and Developments," *Philosophy Compass*
- Field (2005): "Recent Debates on the a priori" *Oxford Studies in Epistemology*.
- Restall (2009): "A Priori Truths", in Shand (ed.), *Central Issues in Philosophy*, Wiley-Backwell
- B. Russell (2014): "A Priori Justification and Knowledge", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

Collections:

- Casullo & Thurrow (2013) *The A Priori In Philosophy*. OUP.
- Shaffer and Veber (2011) *What Place for the A Priori?* Open Court
- Boghossian and Peacock (2000) *New Essays on the A Priori*. OUP.
- Moser (1987) *A priori Knowledge*. OUP.

Introduction Book

- Mares (2011) *A priori*. Acumen Press
- Cory Juhl and Eric Loomis (2009) *Analyticity*. Routledge

1. How should a priori knowledge be characterized? (2 sessions)

Seminar # 1: Independence of experience

Assigned Reading

- Boghossian and Peacocke (2000), "Introduction" in *New Essays on the A Priori*, pp. 1-10 (general considerations on the characterization of the relevant notion of experience)
- Laurence Bonjour (1998), "The concept of a priori Justification", section 1.2 (pp. 6-11) of *In Defence of Pure Reason*, (a proposal concerning how to characterize experience)
- Albert Casullo (2003) *Apriori Justification*, section 6.2 (pp.148-160.)

Additional Reading

- Williamson (2013): "How Deep is the Distinction Between the A Priori and A Posteriori?", **sections 1 and 2 only** (enabling vs evidential roles of experience)

Seminar # 2: Defeasibility

Assigned Reading

- Albert Casullo (2003), "Two Conceptions of A Priori Justification", chapter 2 of *A Priori Justification*, pp. 33-55 (discusses Kitcher and argues that apriority does not require indefeasibility).

Additional Reading

- Philip Kitcher (1983), "Epistemological Preliminaries", chapter 1 of *The Nature of Mathematical Knowledge*, pp. 13-35 (argues that apriority requires indefeasibility)

2. **How Impressive are the Extant Doubts about the A Priori?** (2 sessions)

Seminar #3: There is no a priori knowledge

Assigned Reading

- Michael Devitt (2004), "There is no A Priori", in Sosa and Steup (eds.), *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology*, pp. 105-115.
- Laurence Bonjour (2004) "Reply to Devitt" in Sosa and Steup (eds.), *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology*, pp. 115-118.

Additional Reading

- Carrie Jenkins, "Naturalistic Challenges to the A Priori" (a discussion of Quine, Maddy, and Papineau 2011).
- Hilary Kornblith (2000), "The impurity of Reason", *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*.
- James Beebe (2011) "A Priori Skepticism", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 83 (3):583-602.

Seminar #4: The A Priori is not significant

Assigned Reading

- Albert Casullo (2014), "Articulating the A Priori/A Posteriori Distinction", in Casullo (ed.), *Essays on A Priori Knowledge and Justification*.

Additional Reading

- Timothy Williamson (2013), "How Deep is the A Priori/A Posteriori Distinction?"
- David Papineau (2011), "The Philosophical Insignificance of A Priori Knowledge", in Shaffer and Veber, (eds), *What Place for the A Priori?*

3. **Why Suppose there is any A Priori knowledge?** (1 session)

Seminar #5: The need for the A Priori

Assigned Reading

- Laurence Bonjour (1998), "The Need for the A Priori", section 1.1 of *In Defence of Pure Reason*, pp. 1-6. (Sketches three arguments why the a priori should be taken seriously).
- Wright (1986): "Inventing Logical Necessity" (in Butterfield, ed, *Language, Mind and Logic*).

Additional Reading

- McFetridge (1990) “Logical Necessity: Some Issues” (in Haldane and Scruton, eds, *Logical Necessity and Other Essays*)
4. **Deflationism vs Non-Deflationism about the A priori?** (1 session)

Seminar #6: What is Deflationism about a priori knowledge

Assigned Reading

Part of Phase 2 of the project is Deflationism so we thought it be good to have a session on that topic here. Any suggestions for assigned reading? Maybe Field (2002): “Apriority as an Evaluative Concept” (in Boghossian and Peacocke, *New Essays on the A Priori*) or what about Wright (1990), “Wittgenstein on Mathematical Proof”?

Additional Reading

TBD

5. **How is A Priori Knowledge Accomplished?** (4 sessions)

Seminar #7 and #8: Analyticity-Based Accounts

Assigned Reading

- Paul Boghossian (2003): “Epistemic Analyticity: A Defense” *Grazer Philosophische Studien*
- Paul Boghossian (2003): “Blind Reasoning”, *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume 77* (1):225–248.
- Williamson (2007): *The Philosophy of Philosophy*, Chapter 4.

Additional Reading

- There are other papers in that debate but we think it’s best to focus on the classic Williamson/Boghossian at this stage.

Note: We should be discussing Russell (2007) and Jenkins (2008) – maybe dedicated book sessions on these two books in the next semester or reading groups throughout this term?

Seminar #9: Intuition-Based Accounts

Assigned Reading

- Bengson (2016) “Grasping the Third Realm” *Oxford Studies in Epistemology*, vol.5

Additional Reading

- Laurence Bonjour (1998), *In Defense of Pure Reason*, Chapter 4.
- George Bealer (1999) “A Theory of the A Priori”, *Noûs*.

Seminar #10: Self-Evidence

Assigned Reading

TBD: Robert Audi (1999) “Self-Evidence”, *Nous or* Carl Ginet (2010), “Self-Evidence”, *Logos & Episteme*

Additional Reading

Seminar # 11: Ersatz Notions: Entitlement

Assigned Reading

- Wright (2016): "Abstraction and Entitlement", *Abstractionism*, Ebert & Rossberg (ed.), OUP.

Additional Reading

- Wright (2004): "Intuition, Entitlement and the Epistemology of Logical Laws", *Dialectica*
- Sharon Berry (2013): "Default reasonableness and the mathoids", *Synthese*
- Pedersen (2016) "Hume's Principle and Entitlement", *Abstractionism* Ebert & Rossberg (ed.), OUP.