

Philosophy 541: Lewisian Metaphysics

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Course website: <http://blogs.umass.edu/bricker/teaching/phil-541-lewisian-metaphysics>

Office hour: Wednesday 2-3

Prerequisite: Graduate student in philosophy or advanced undergraduate who has taken at least three philosophy courses including, ideally, an introduction to metaphysics.

Course Requirements: Two short papers (4-6 pages) and either a take-home final exam or a term paper. Short papers each count 25% of the grade; the final or term paper counts 50%.

Distribution and Seminar Credit (for graduate students): This course satisfies the metaphysics distribution requirement. It does not satisfy the seminar requirement.

Required Reading: All readings are either available on-line or will be made available on the course website, address above. (The readings are password protected; e-mail me if you have forgotten the password.) You may, however, want to purchase one or more of the following books by David Lewis: *On the Plurality of Worlds*; *Parts of Classes*; *Philosophical Papers, Vol. I and II*; *Papers in Metaphysics and Epistemology*. We will also read some papers from the recently published *A Companion to David Lewis*; edited by Barry Lower and Jonathan Schaffer.

Brief Course Description: David Lewis is a towering figure of late 20th century analytic philosophy whose influence has hardly waned since his death in 2001. He made seminal contributions in every area of analytic philosophy, most notably: metaphysics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, and philosophical logic. This course will focus almost exclusively on his contributions in metaphysics, covering the topics listed below.

Very Tentative Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction.

I. Possible Worlds.

Week 2: Modality: Possible Worlds and Counterparts

Week 3: Interlude: Natural Properties

Week 4: Plenitude and Actuality

Week 5: Realism and Reduction

Week 6: Haecceitism and Quidditism

II. Ontology.

Week 7: Ontological Commitment

Week 8: Mereology and Classes

Week 9: Truth and Truthmaking

II. Humean Supervenience

Week 10: Time and Persistence

Week 11: Laws and Counterfactuals

Week 12: Causation

Week 13: Objective Chance

Chronological List of Lewis's Articles and Books To Be Assigned, in whole or in part:

(most of these papers are available on-line at: <http://www.andrewmbailey.com/dkl>)

"Counterpart Theory and Quantified Modal Logic." 1968, PP1

"Holes." 1970, PP1

"Counterparts of Persons and Their Bodies." 1971, PP1

Counterfactuals. 1973

"Causation." PP2

"Counterfactuals and Comparative Possibility." 1973, PP2

"The Paradoxes of Time Travel." 1976, PP2

"Survival and Identity." 1976, PP1

"Counterfactual Dependence and Time's Arrow." 1979, PP2

"A Subjectivist's Guide to Objective Chance." 1980, PP2

"Extrinsic Properties." 1983, PME

"New Work For a Theory of Universals." 1983, PME

"Putnam's Paradox." 1984, PME

On the Plurality of Worlds. 1986

"Rearrangement of Particles: Reply to Lowe." 1988, PME

"Noneism or Allism?" 1990, PME

Parts of Classes. 1991

"Armstrong on Combinatorial Possibility." 1992, PME

"Many But Almost One." 1993, PME

"Humean Supervenience Debugged." 1994, PME

"A World of Truthmakers?" 1998, PME

"Defining 'Intrinsic'" (with Rae Langton). 1998

"Forget About the 'Correspondence Theory of Truth'." 2001

"Tensing the Copula." 2002

"Void and Object." 2004

"Causal Influence." 2000/2004

"Truthmaking and Difference Making." 2001

"Things qua Truthmakers". 2003

"Ramseyan Humility". 2009

