

Phil 467/855 “Early Analytic Philosophy”

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Although this class is somewhere labeled as ‘Early Analytic Philosophy’, it would be more accurate to call it ‘middle-aged analytic philosophy’. Early analytic philosophy is generally taken to be Gottlob Frege, (early) Bertrand Russell, and (early) Ludwig Wittgenstein. I propose to start with a movement called Logical Atomism (presented by Russell as a series of lectures “The Philosophy of Logical Atomism” in 1918 and a retrospective piece “Logical Atomism” in 1924). From there I intend to look at some selection of the Logical Positivists’ writings, including some parts of the sympathetic *Reconsidering Logical Positivism* by Michael Friedman (1999). I also wish to look at some of the “ordinary language philosophers” who were becoming prominent under the (intellectual) leadership of (the later) Wittgenstein (I think mostly of Ryle and Austin). Finally, I want to pay some particular attention to an article by Benson Mates (1958) “On the Verification of Statements about Ordinary Language”, and a famous rejoinder by Stanley Cavell (1958) “Must We Mean What We Say”. [They were both presented at a 1957 symposium.] This sparked a large debate, which is collected in Colin Lyas (1971) *Philosophy and Linguistics*.

There will be two short descriptive essays during the term ... short summaries of the readings or of some topic brought up in class. There will also be a final paper (10-15pp) on a topic determined in consultation between professor and student.

Graduate students taking the course as Phil 812 are required to do the two short essays during the term, give a lecture to the class on a topic chosen in consultation with the professor, and write a longer (15-20pp) final essay. Additionally, their work is expected to be better than an undergraduate’s work for the same grade.

Readings:

- B. Russell (1924) “Logical Atomism”. This is in Marsh (1956) and Ayer (1959). Those for whom this topic is exciting and important might consider reading Russell’s (1918) “The Philosophy of Logical Atomism”.
- M. Schlick (1930) “The Turning Point in Philosophy”, (1932) “Positivism and Realism” (both translated, in Ayer, 1959).
- R. Carnap (1932) “The Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language”. (translated in Ayer, 1959).
- O. Neurath (1932) “Protocol Sentences” (translated in Ayer, 1959)
- A.J. Ayer (1947) *Language, Truth, and Logic* (2nd Edition). The second edition has a longish, new introduction, with a new formulation of “the principle of verification”. [Students who are keen on Logical Positivism could read many further things in the Ayer (1959) anthology, the Rorty (1992) anthology, and also Carnap’s *The Logical Structure of the World* (at least the methodological material at the beginning).]
- P. Hempel (1950) “The Empiricist Criterion of Meaning” in Ayer (1959)

G. Ryle (1946) "Philosophical Arguments" in Ayer, 1959; (1932) "Systematically Misleading Expressions" in Rorty (1992).
F. Waismann (1956) "How I see Philosophy" in Ayer, 1959
Something by Austin (maybe from *How to do Things With Words*)
There are three articles about Austin in the Rorty volume (by Urmson, by Hampshire, and by Urmson & Warnock)
Mates (1958) "On the Verification of Statements about Ordinary Language" in Lyas (1971)
Cavell (1958) "Must We Mean What We Say?" in Lyas (1971)
Some selection of further articles in Lyas (1971)