

Philosophy 460 A01: Advanced Philosophy of Mind

On Human Nature: A Study of Raymond Tallis' *The Explicit Animal*

Winter Session 2019-2020: Second Term (Spring 2020)
(CRN: 22345)

General Course Information, Recommended Supplementary Reading, Schedule

1. General Course Information

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <u>Location & Time:</u> | CLE B315; Mon. & Thurs. 11:30 a.m. – 12:50 p.m. |
| <u>Instructor:</u> | Dr. David Scott |
| <u>Instructor's Office:</u> | CLE B320 |
| <u>Office Hours:</u> | Tues. 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (always only by appointment) |
| <u>Telephone & Email:</u> | 250-721-7517; djfscott@uvic.ca |

ABOUT THIS COURSE:

Raymond Tallis' work has been devoted to understanding what is distinctive about human being, and as such as frequently been hailed as "a salutary wake-up call for the humanities." Given philosophy's central place in the humanities, it can be viewed as an extended remonstrance against philosophy for its having fallen asleep at the wheel. "The distinctive features of human beings—self-hood, free will, that collective space called the human world, the sense that we lead our lives rather than simply live them as organisms do—are being discarded as illusions by many, even by philosophers, who should think a little harder and question the glamour of science rather than succumbing to it." *The Explicit Animal* endeavours "to make visible the distinctive features of human, as opposed to animal, consciousness." It argues "against neural explanations of consciousness and against the assumption that consciousness in general, and human consciousness in particular, could be explained in evolutionary terms, as an adaptation." As for Tallis himself, he is described as "[l]iterary, intellectually fretful, ... a member of a rare breed of English polymaths who has been waging a lonely war against the explanations and final theories of radical scientific reductionism... Tallis' enquiring spirit is unlikely to achieve a popular reception: but he may well exert what John Stuart Mill characterized as a 'seminal influence'." Tallis' war is said to be lonely one, because it is waged against the dominant approach of contemporary consciousness studies, the standard starting point of which has been called, by one of its chief proponents, "the objective, materialistic, third-person world of the physical sciences ... the orthodox choice today in the English-speaking world."

In this course we will be supplementing our reading of *The Explicit Animal* with selected texts concerning the nature of mind from the history of philosophy. Part of the point of this course is to indicate the perennial nature of some of Tallis' arguments, and to indicate how much his work is, effectively, an effort to call back philosophers to their roots/mission.

TEXTS AND COURSE MATERIAL:

Primary Text:

Raymond Tallis, *The Explicit Animal: A Defence of Human Consciousness* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999). [BD 418.3 T34. On reserve & available online through UVic Library catalogue.]

Supplementary Texts (incl. reserve material):

Blackburn, Simon. "Finding Psychology," invited introduction to *Mind, Causation and Action*, ed. Leslie Stevenson, Roger Squires, John Haldane (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 1-12. [BD 541 M46]
Blakemore, Colin, and Susan Greenfield, eds. *Mindwaves: Thoughts on Intelligence, Identity, and Consciousness* (1987). [BF 311 M554]
Campbell, C. A. *On Selfhood and Godhood* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1957). [BF 311 C22]

- Chalmers, David. "The Hard Problem," in *The Conscious Mind: In Search of a Fundamental Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). [BD 418.3 C43.]
- Cornwell, J. "Review of Raymond Tallis' *The Hand: A Philosophical Inquiry in Human Being* (2003), *I Am: A Philosophical Inquiry into First-Person Being* (2004), and *The Knowing Animal: A Philosophical Inquiry into Knowledge and Truth* (2005)," in *Brain*, 12/2004, Volume 128, Issue 2, pp. 443-446. [Available through UVic Library catalogue]
- Hacker, Peter. "Languages, Minds and Brains," Ch. 31 of *Mindwaves: Thoughts on Intelligence, Identity and Consciousness*, ed. Colin Blakemore and Susan Greenfield (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 484-505. [BF 311 M554.]
- Jackson, Frank. "What Mary Didn't Know," *The Journal of Philosophy* 83 (1986): 291-295. [Available online through UVic Library catalogue.]
- Lewis, Hywel D. *The Elusive Mind* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1969). [BF 161 L48.]
- Lewis, Hywel D. *The Elusive Self*, based on The Gifford Lectures, delivered in The University of Edinburgh 1966-1968 (London & Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Ltd. 1982). [BD 450 L48.]
- McGinn, Colin. "Can We Solve the Mind-Body Problem?" *Mind*, New Series, 98 (1989), pp. 349-366. [Available online through UVic Library catalogue]
- Nagel, Thomas. "What is it Like to Be a Bat?," *Philosophical Review* 83 (1974), pp. 435-450. [Available online through UVic Library catalogue.]
- Nagel, Thomas. "Brain Bisection and the Unity of Consciousness," in *Mortal Questions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 147-164.
- Robinson, Howard. *Matter and Sense: A Critique of Contemporary Materialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). [B 825 R6.]
- Robinson, Howard, ed. *Objections to Physicalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). [B 825 O24.]
- Searle, John. "Minds, Brains, and Programs," *The Behavioural and Brain Sciences* 3 (1980), pp. 417-457. [Available online through UVic Library catalogue.]
- Stevenson, Leslie, and Roger Squires, and John Haldane, eds., *Mind, Causation and Action* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986). [BD 541 M46.]
- Tallis, Raymond. *Aping Mankind: Neuromania, Darwinitis and the Misrepresentation of Humanity* (Durham: Acumen 2011). [QP 360.5 T354 2011. Available as ebook through UVic Library]
- Tallis, Raymond. *I Am: A Philosophical Inquiry into First-Person Being* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2004). [BD 438.5 T35.]
- Teichman, Jenny. *Philosophy and the Mind* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988). [BF 38 343.]
- Vidal, Fernando. Review of *Aping Mankind: Neuromania, Darwinitis and the Misrepresentation of Humanity* (Durham: Acumen, 2011), in *ISIS* 103: 3 (2012), pp. 628-629. [Available through UVic Library catalogue.]

Supplementary Texts (Historical Material):

- Aristotle, "Intellect as Universal Instrument", *De Anima* III, 4. [PDF supplied by professor.]
- Aristotle, "Remarks on Perception," excerpts from *De Anima*. [PDF supplied by professor.]
- Aristotle, "Intrinsic (Non-instrumental) Value of Consciousness," *Metaphysics* Bk 1, Ch. 1. [PDF supplied by professor.]
- Aristotle, "Activity vs. Process," *Metaphysics* Bk. IX Ch. 6. [PDF supplied by professor.]
- Aristotle, "Doctrine of Four Causes," from *Physics* Bk. II, Ch. 3. [PDF supplied by professor.]
- Aristotle, "Form not an Additional Part," from *Metaphysics* VII, Ch. 17. [PDF supplied by professor.]
- Arnould, Antoine. "The Cartesian Circle," Objection to Descartes' Third Meditation, p. 75 of: https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1642_2.pdf
- Descartes, René. "Two Tests for Thought", in *Discourse on the Method*, Part V, pp. 22-23 of: <https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1637.pdf>
- Descartes, René. "Nature of the Mind," in *Meditations on First Philosophy* II, pp. 5-6 of: <https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1641.pdf>
- Descartes, René. "Objective Reality of Ideas", in *Meditations on First Philosophy* III, pp. 11-12 of: <https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1641.pdf> ; and in "Second Set of Replies", pp. 36-37 of: https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1642_1.pdf
- Gassendi, Pierre. "Fifth Set of Objections to Descartes' *Meditations*", pp. 138-143 of: https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1642_3.pdf

James, William. "The Present Dilemma in Philosophy," Lecture I of *Pragmatism*. [PDF supplied by professor.]

Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *Monadology*:

<https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/leibniz1714b.pdf>

Malebranche, Nicolas. "Critique of Causal Theory of Perception", *The Search After Truth* Bk. III, Pt. II, Ch. II, trans. T. M. Lennon and P. J. Olscamp (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1980), pp. 220-221. [PDF supplied by professor.]

Plato. "Principle of Sufficient Reason," *Phaedo* (95-100). [PDF supplied by professor.]

Spinoza, Benedict. *Ethics*, Pt. 1, <https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/spinoza1665part1.pdf>

MARKING SCHEME:

In-class test (25%); essay (35%); final essay (40%, due last day of exams).

Letter grades correspond to the following marks: A+ = 90 - 100, A = 85 - 89, A- = 80 - 84, B+ = 77 - 79, B = 73 - 76, B- = 70 - 72, C+ = 65 - 69, C = 60 - 64, D = 50 - 59, F = 0 - 49.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION:

In this course you can assume that all essay or exam topics are intended to test you on *the material covered in class*. You are of course permitted and encouraged to supplement class discussion of the subject with outside material, but the minimum expectation is that you deal with the material covered in class, and that you address the points raised there about that material. This does not mean that for tests and essays you are expected merely to repeat the in-class proceedings. Rather, it means that you are expected to take account of or do justice to in-class discussion. The reason for this requirement is that the tests and essays for this course constitute part of a continuous whole with the lectures and in-class discussions. They do not float free of the work done in the classroom, though of course the tests and especially the essays also provide you with room to explore topics outside of the classroom confines. Roughly speaking, "B+" and "A-" papers take account of and rise to the level of the class discussion; "A" and "A+" papers take that discussion to a higher/deeper level.

Criteria for evaluation: The criteria I use to evaluate essays are, I believe, criteria which common sense would suggest in the assessment of a philosophy essay. Primarily my concern is with content or substance. In indicating these evaluation criteria, I emphasize that philosophy is an *arts* or *humanities* subject, which means that assessing the merits of a philosophy paper ultimately requires qualitative evaluation or judgment on my part. Therefore, I do not assign precise numerical values to the following assessment criteria; nor is there a mathematical formula I can employ to judge the quality of philosophical writing. However, as a rough guide I employ a list of relative priorities, presented here in ascending order of importance:

- spelling/grammar
- organization & clarity of expression
- accuracy of exposition
- use of examples reflecting understanding of the subject
- breadth of analysis, i.e. number of points covered
- depth of analysis, i.e. how far into the issue analysis is pushed
- resourcefulness, originality and imagination
- tightness, rigor or logical coherence of analysis
- overall degree of philosophical insight

I stress that the order of these criteria is not absolute. Thus, sometimes less important criteria will be given more weight than more important ones. For instance, a student's use and analysis of examples might be so good that I am led to conclude that that student has an excellent understanding of the subject. In such a case the value I attach to the use of examples might increase significantly, and I might overlook the fact that, for instance, the student has failed to cover as many points as other students.

Academic Honesty: Cheating of *any* kind, including collusion (working with others too closely) and plagiarism from (i) books and/or articles, (ii) other students' papers, and (iii) papers or other material on the internet, is a serious academic offence. University regulations also prohibit students from submitting the same work for two different courses; in other words, plagiarizing or "recycling" one's own work is not permitted. If detected, cheating can result in dismissal from this course (with an "F"), and dismissal from the university. Here is a link to the University's Academic Integrity policy:

<https://web.uvic.ca/calendar2018-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html#>

SUBMITTING AND RETURNING GRADED WORK:

(a) All essays must be *typed* (12-font, Times), double-spaced, paginated, and contain the word-count on the front cover. Essays should be stapled, *not* paper-clipped. I will not accept essays submitted as email attachments; nor will I accept essays that exceed the maximum word limit. In cases where I think the word limit has been exceeded, I will require an electronic copy to check. I will not be available to discuss test or essay questions on the day before or on the day they are due to be submitted, as I need to avoid being swamped by last-minute enquiries.

(b) In general, I will return your graded work during class time, within two weeks of its having been submitted. If you are not there to receive your work when I return it in class, you can pick it up either from me in my office or, if you are willing to sign a waiver form, from the "Returned Work" box outside the departmental office. The Protection of Privacy Act prevents me from placing your work in that box unless you have signed the waiver form.

(c) When graded work is returned to you it will frequently be annotated with comments. If you wish to discuss your work with me, please read those comments first. To give you a chance to do this, as a matter of policy I do not discuss work on the same day as it is returned.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS / MISSED TESTS:

Late assignments will not be accepted without penalty unless justified by a medical or other academically legitimate reason, for which documentation of some kind (e.g., a medical certificate) will generally be required. Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of 5% per day (or part-day, including weekend days or part-days), for a maximum of 4 days (20%). After four days, no late assignments will be accepted. Any late assignment submitted within this four-day post-deadline period must be submitted both in hard-copy *and* in electronic form (by email), to establish a precise record of the date and time of submission.

OFFICE HOURS:

Because of demand (especially near test days or essay due-dates), if you wish to see me during my office hours you need to make an appointment. Appointments are limited to about fifteen minutes per student, so it's best to come prepared with specific questions.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES AND CLASS POLICIES:

(a) Class discussion & participation: In general, my classes tend to involve lots of discussion. I encourage and greatly value your in-class contributions, and I can assure you that other students do too. It is a frequently unacknowledged fact of the classroom that if you have a question or comment, it's likely that others have the same one too. So go ahead and ask your question, or make your comment: it helps me, you, and your classmates. And the more you talk, the less I talk, and surely that is a good thing! If, however, you are more shy or reserved but still have comments or questions, please either write me with your questions/comments or come see me during office hours.

(b) Emailing me: Because of problems with SPAM and viruses transmitted by email, I have to request that whenever you email me you make sure to put something in the "subject" line of your email to identify you as a student in this course. If you don't do this, and I don't recognize your name, I will delete your email without opening it. In addition to this, I would greatly appreciate it if you observed the (still) standard

Course outline

courtesy of beginning your emails with a salutation, e.g. “Dear ...”, “Hello Dr. XX”, etc. This piece of social etiquette is rooted in the recognition that people are not simply inanimate objects (like ATM machines), but should be addressed before being spoken to.

(c) Coming late to class: The classroom is a work environment, and it can be a distraction when people arrive walk in late. So please be on time.

(d) If a person not registered in this class wishes to attend a lecture to check it out, that person needs to receive prior permission.

(e) Use of computers & hand-held media/communication devices, etc., in the class: For the purpose of taking notes, you are welcome to use laptops with quiet keyboards in the classroom. Please do not attend to computers or hand held-devices for obviously or apparently non-academic purposes, e.g., watching films, surfing the web, texting, etc.

2. Class Schedule for Winter Semester 2020*

WEEK 1: (Jan. 6 - 10)

- Mon. Jan. 6 - Course Introduction: Biography & assessments of Tallis. Philosophical culture wars, cf. William James "The Present Dilemma in Philosophy". Cf. Tallis' *Aping Mankind*, pp. 15-49.
- Thurs. Jan. 9 - *Explicit Animal (EA)*: "Overture" & Chapter One (pp. 1-17).

WEEK 2 (Jan. 13 - 17)

- Mon. Jan. 13 - *EA* Chapter Two (pp. 18-44).
- Thurs. Jan. 16 - *EA* Chapter Two (pp. 18-44).

WEEK 3 (Jan. 20 - 24)

- Mon. Jan. 20 - *EA* Chapter Three (pp. 45-101).
- Thurs. Jan. 23 - *EA* Chapter Three (pp. 45-101).

WEEK 4 (Jan. 27 - 31)

- Mon. Jan. 27 - *EA* Chapter Three (pp. 45-101).
- Thurs. Jan. 30 - *EA* Chapter Three (pp. 45-101).

WEEK 5 (Feb. 3 - 7)

- Mon. Feb. 3 - *EA* Chapter Three (pp. 45-101). **Draft exam questions distributed.**
- Thurs. Feb. 6 - *EA* Chapter Four (pp. 102-140).

WEEK 6 (Feb. 10 - 14)

- Mon. Feb. 10 - **Mid-term Exam. Essay assigned.**
- Thurs. Feb. 13 - *EA* Chapter Four (pp. 102-140).

WEEK 7 (Feb. 17 - 21)

- Mon. Feb. 17 - Mid-term break: no classes.
- Thurs. Feb. 20 - Mid-term break: no classes.

WEEK 8 (Feb. 24 - 28)

- Mon. Feb. 24 - *EA* Chapter Five (pp. 141-160).
- Thurs. Feb. 27 - **TALLIS CLASS VISIT.**

WEEK 9 (March 2 - 6)

- Mon. March 2 - *EA* Chapter Five (pp. 141-160).
- Thurs. March 5 - *EA* Chapter Six (pp. 161-209).

WEEK 10 (March 9 - 13)

- Mon. March 9 - *EA* Chapter Six (pp. 161-209).
- Thurs. March 12 - *EA* Chapter Six (pp. 161-209).
- Fri. March 13 - **Essay due.**

WEEK 11 (March 16 - 20)

Course outline

Mon. March 16 - *EA* Chapter Six (pp. 161-209).
Thurs. March 19 - *EA* Chapter Six (pp. 161-209).

WEEK 12 (March 23 - 27)

Mon. March 23 - *EA* Chapter Six (pp. 161-209).
Thurs. March 26 - *EA* Chapter Seven (pp. 210-250).

WEEK 13 (March 30 - April 2)

Mon. March 30 - *EA* Chapter Seven (pp. 210-250).
Thurs. April 2 - *EA* Chapter Seven (pp. 210-250).

FINAL EXAM PERIOD FOR THIS SEMESTER: April 6 – 24.

*** This schedule is subject to revision, as occasionally the discussion and flow of ideas in class require us to spend more time on certain subjects, less time on others, than originally anticipated.**