

Topics in Philosophy of Mind: Pain

PHIL 402, Spring 2009

T/R 2-3:15, BSB215

Instructor: Colin Klein
Email: cvklein@uic.edu
Office: 1420 University Hall
Office Hours: Tuesday 12-2, and by appointment.
Course Reference Number: 28703

Course Description

A survey of the philosophical literature on bodily pain and pain perception. Topics will include: the anatomy and physiology of the nociceptive system, atypical pain phenomena, philosophical theories about the nature of pain sensations, the role of pain in illness, the ethics of medical pain management, and the morality of torture.

Texts

- PD Wall *Pain: The Science of Suffering*.

Wall's book will be available at the bookstore. Other items will be made available as pdfs on Blackboard throughout the semester

Assignments

- A *Pain Journal*, to be completed by the 3rd week of class. The purpose of the journal will be to record, as accurately and comprehensively, the pains you feel over the course of a two-day period. More details about the assignment will be provided in class. *10% of Final Grade*
- A *take-home quizzes*, to be assigned on 1/29 and due the following tuesday. *20% of final grade*
- An *outline* of the final paper, due no later than the beginning of class on 4/21. *15% of Final Grade*
- A *final paper*, to be due on Monday 5/4. *30% of Final Grade*
- *Attendance and Participation*. I will expect you to come to class, to have done the reading, and to be prepared for discussion. *25% of Final Grade*

More details on each assignment will be provided as the semester progresses.

Additional Policies

- Should a due date conflict with a religious holiday you observe, you should notify me of the date by the tenth day of the term. I will make every reasonable effort to honor the request. Should you have some other conflict, you should let me know as far in advance as possible so that we can discuss your options.
- Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and will be grounds for failing the course.
- Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Please contact ODS at 312-413-2183 (voice) or 312-413-0123 (TTY). If you have a disability, please notify me and the appropriate administrative offices at the beginning of the semester so that we can make accommodations for you. We will be happy to do so.

Preliminary Schedule of Topics and Readings

Topic One: The Physical Basis of Pain

Week 1 *Introduction to Pains*
Wall Ch1-6

Week 2 *Strange Pains*
Wall Ch7
Excerpts from Ramachandran *Phantoms in the Brain*

Week 3 *Guest Lecturer: Thomas Park*
Excerpts from Kandel and Schwartz
1/29 *Take-home Quiz 1 Assigned*

Topic Two: Philosophical Accounts of Pain Sensations

Week 4 *Pains as Intransitive Bodily Sensations*
2/3 *Take-Home Quiz 1 Due*
David Armstrong, excerpt from *Bodily Sensations* p102-128

Week 5 *The Unpleasantness of Pain*
George Pitcher “The Awfulness of Pain”
RJ Hall “Are Pains Necessarily Unpleasant?”

Week 6 *Dual-Track Theories*
Daniel Dennett “Why you can’t make a computer that feels pain”
Valerie Hardcastle “When a Pain is Not”
2/19 *Class Cancelled?*

Week 7 *Representationalism*

Michael Tye “A Representational Theory of Pains and Their Phenomenal Character”

Week 8 *Objections to Representationalism*

Murat Aydede “The Main Difficulty with Pain”

Ned Block “Bodily Sensations as an Obstacle for Representationalism

Michael Tye “In Defense of Representationalism: Reply to Commentaries”

Week 9 *Imperative Theories*

Colin Klein “An Imperative Theory of Pain”

Wall Ch10

RJ Hall “If it itches, Scratch!”

Topic Three: The Context of Pain

Week 10 *Pain and Illness*

Wall Chapter 11

Virginia Woolf “On Being Ill”

Susan Sontag, Chapters 6-7 of *Illness as Metaphor* and Chapter 4 of *AIDS and its Metaphors*

Week 11 *The Placebo effect*

Wall Ch 8-9

Park and Covi “Nonblind Placebo Trial”

Hróbjartsson and Gøtzsche “Is the placebo powerless? An analysis of clinical trials comparing placebo with no treatment.”

Week 12 *The Ethics of Pain Management*

Farber et. al. “Pain: Ethics, Culture, and Informed Consent to Relief ”

Ben Rich “An Ethical Analysis of the Barriers to Effective Pain Management”

Brennan et. al. “Pain Management: A Fundamental Human Right”

Week 13 *Torture*

Elaine Scarry Introduction and Ch1 of *The Body in Pain*

Week 14 *Torture, cont'd*

4/21 *Outline of Final Paper Due*

Alan Dershowitz “Want to torture? Get a warrant”

David Sussman “What’s Wrong with Torture?”

Week 15 *Flex week*

5/4 *Final Paper Due*