Works by Women Philosophers

The following is a list of works by women philosophers particularly relevant to topics and debates commonly taught in PHI 107. Abstracts are provided when possible. Asterisks indicate level-appropriateness when information is available.[1]

Epistemology

- Heal, Jane. "Common Knowledge" (1978) Philosophical Quarterly 28(11): 116-131 *Intro

- Zagzebski, Linda, "The Inescapability of Gettier Problems," The Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 44, No. 174, (Jan., 1994), pp. 65-73 *Intermediate

- Zagzebski, L. (1999) What is knowledge? In *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology*, Greco and Sosa, eds. Oxford: Blackwell. 92-116

- Jennifer Nagel, "Mindreading in Gettier Cases and Skeptical Pressure Cases," in Jessica Brown & Mikkel Gerken (eds.), *Knowledge Ascriptions.* Oxford University Press (2012).

- Haack, Susan. "A Foundherentist Theory of Empirical Justification" (1999) in Pojman, The Theory of Knowledge: Classical and Contemporary Readings, 2nd edition (Wadsworth) Reprinted in Sosa et al, Epistemology: An Anthology, 2nd edition (Blackwell)] * Intro/Intermediate

- Schellenberg, Susanna. "Experience and Evidence" (2013) Mind *Intro/Intermediate

[1] See also *Women's Works* (available at http://women.aap.org.au/papers/index.html) and the *Core Readings in Philosophy by Female Authors for Undergraduate Curricula* Spreadsheet (https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AgJqzL_YyKKxdEwyd1o5c1lubFp2TGpiSlkyTE5jOXc#gid=0) for additional lists of works by women organized by area.

- Stine, Gail. “Skepticism, Relevant Alternatives, and Deductive Closure” (1976) Philosophical Studies 29: 249-261 [Reprinted in K. DeRose and T. Warfield (eds.), Skepticism: A Contemporary Reader, OUP 1999] *Intro/Intermediate

Free Will/Determinism/Moral Responsibility

- Churchland, Patricia. ‘Is Determinism Self-refuting?’ Mind 90 (January):99-101 (1981)

- Roskies, Adina, "Neuroscientific challenges to free will and responsibility," *Trends Cogn Sci.* 2006 Sep;10(9):419-23

  Abstract: Recent developments in neuroscience raise the worry that understanding how brains cause behavior will undermine our views about free will and, consequently, about moral responsibility. The potential ethical consequences of such a result are sweeping. I provide three reasons to think that these worries seemingly inspired by neuroscience are misplaced. First, problems for common-sense notions of freedom exist independently of neuroscientific advances. Second, neuroscience is not in a position to undermine our intuitive notions. Third, recent empirical studies suggest that even if people do misconstrue neuroscientific results as relevant to our notion of freedom, our judgments of moral responsibility will remain largely unaffected. These considerations suggest that neuroethical concerns about challenges to our conception of freedom are misguided.

- Wolf, Susan, "Asymmetrical Freedom," *Journal of Philosophy* 77 (March): 151-66 (1980) *Intermediate

- Wolf, Susan ‘Sanity and the Metaphysics of Responsibility’ in Feinberg, J., & Shafer-Landau, R. (Eds.) (2011). Reason and Responsibility (14th ed.).pp. 494-504. *Intro/Intermediate

Mind-Body Problem

- Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, letters to Descartes (taken from Margaret Atherton Women Philosophers of the Early Modern Period Hackett, 1994, pp.9-21) Free translation also available at Early Modern Texts. *Intro

- Gertler, Brie, "In Defense of Mind-Body Dualism" in Feinberg, J., & Shafer-Landau, R. (Eds.) (2011). Reason and Responsibility (14th ed.). pp. 303-15 *Intro/Intermediate

Philosophy of Mind

- Churchland, Patricia. 'The Hornswoggle Problem,' Journal of Consciousness Studies 3 (5-6):402-8 (1996)

  Abstract: Beginning with Thomas Nagel, various philosophers have proposed setting conscious experience apart from all other problems of the mind as "the most difficult problem." When critically examined, the basis for this proposal reveals itself to be unconvincing and counter-productive. Use of our current ignorance as a premise to determine what we can never discover is one common logical flaw. Use of "I-cannot-imagine" arguments is a related flaw. When not much is known about a domain of phenomena, our inability to imagine a mechanism is a rather uninteresting psychological fact about us, not an interesting metaphysical fact about the world. Rather than worrying too much about the meta-problem of whether or not consciousness is uniquely hard, I propose we get on with the task of seeing how far we get when we address neurobiologically the problems of mental phenomena.

- Patricia Churchland, 'Substance Dualism', excerpted from her _Neurophilosophy: Toward a Unified Science of the Mind-Brain_ (1986). *Intro

- Baier, Annette. "Cartesian Persons" (1981) Philosophia, 10, nos 3-4, 169-188. [Reprinted in Postures of the Mind] *Intro/Intermediate

Personal Identity:

- Schechtman, M. "Personhood and Personal Identity," The Journal of Philosophy, v.87, no.2 February, 1990 pp.71-92.

- Schechtman, M. (2005). Personal Identity and the Past. *Philosophy, Psychology and Psychiatry* 12 (1): 9-22

  Abstract: In the second edition of the Essay Concerning Human Understanding, John Locke argues that personal identity over time consists in sameness of consciousness rather than the

persistence of any substance, material or immaterial. Something about this view is very compelling, but as it stands it is too vague and problematic to provide a viable account of personal identity. Contemporary "psychological continuity theorists" have tried to amend Locke's view to capture his insights and avoid his difficulties. This paper argues that the standard approach fails because it takes Locke to be a memory theorist, and does not focus enough on his claim that we need continuity of consciousness for personal persistence. An alternative reading of Locke is offered, emphasizing the role of self-understanding in producing continuity of consciousness. This alternative overcomes the difficulties with the standard approach, and shows how it is possible to attribute unconscious psychological elements to a person, even when personal persistence is defined in terms of consciousness.

- Schechtman, M. (2004). Self-Expression and Self-Control. Ratio XVII: 409-427

Abstract: It is often said that people are 'not themselves' when they are in situations which rob them of their self-control. Strangely, these are also circumstances in which people are often said to be most fully themselves. This paper investigates the pictures of the self behind these two truisms, and the relation between them. Harry Frankfurt's work represents the first truism, and standard objections to his work the second. Each of these approaches is found to capture one independent and widely employed picture of the self. The connection each draws between being oneself and flourishing, however, suggests a point of contact between them. This point of contact is used to develop a third view of being oneself which integrates the insights of the other two.

- Schechtman, M. (2005). Experience, Agency and Personal Identity. Social Philosophy and Policy 22(2): 1-24

Abstract: Psychologically based accounts of personal identity over time start from a view of persons as experiencing subjects. Derek Parfit argues that if such an account is to justify the importance we attach to identity it will need to provide a deep unity of consciousness throughout the life of a person, and no such unity is possible. In response, many philosophers have switched to a view of persons as essentially agents, arguing that the importance of identity depends upon agential unity rather (…) than unity of consciousness. While this shift contributes significantly to the discussion, it does not offer a fully satisfying alternative. Unity of consciousness still seems required if identity is to be as important as we think it is. Views of identity based on agential unity do, however, point to a new understanding of unity of consciousness which meets Parfit's challenge, yielding an integrated view of identity which sees persons as both subjects and agents.

- Schechtman, M. (1994). The Truth About memory. Philosophical Psychology 7 (1): 3-18

Abstract: Contemporary philosophical discussion of personal identity has centered on refinements and defenses of the “psychological continuity theory”—the view that identity is created by the links between present and past provided by autobiographical experience memories.

This view is structured in such a way that these memories must be seen as providing simple connections between two discrete, well-defined moments of consciousness. There is, however, a great deal of evidence—both introspective and empirical—that autobiographical memory often does not provide such links, but instead summarizes, and condenses life experiences into, a coherent narrative. A brief exploration of some of the mechanisms of this summarizing and condensing work furthers the philosophical discussion of personal identity by showing why a view with the structure of the psychological continuity theory will not work, and by illuminating the role of autobiographical memory in the constitution of personal identity.

- Teichman, J. (1985). The Definition of Person. Philosophy: The Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy 60: 175- 186

Abstract: The aim and purpose of this short essay is to prove that all philosophers since John Locke (1632-1704) have completely buggered up the analysis of the concept of "person".

- Gendler, T. (2002). Personal Identity and Thought- Experiments. Philosophical Quarterly 52 (206):34-54.

Abstract: Through careful analysis of a specific example, Parfit's 'fission argument' for the unimportance of personal identity, I argue that our judgements concerning imaginary scenarios are likely to be unreliable when the scenarios involve disruptions of certain contingent correlations. Parfit's argument depends on our hypothesizing away a number of facts which play a central role in our understanding and employment of the very concept under investigation; as a result, it fails to establish what Parfit claims, namely, that identity is not what matters. I argue that Parfit's conclusion can be blocked without denying that he has presented an imaginary case where prudential concern would be rational in the absence of identity. My analysis depends on the recognition that the features that explain or justify a relation may be distinct from the features that underpin it as necessary conditions.

- Gendler, T. (1998). Exceptional Persons: on the Limits of Imaginary Cases. Journal of Consciousness Studies 5 (5-6): 592- 610

Abstract: Ever since Locke (and particularly in the last 50 years or so) the philosophical literature on personal identity has centred on arguments of a certain type. These arguments use an assumed convergence of response to purely imaginary cases to defend revisionary conclusions about common-sense beliefs concerning the nature or importance of personal identity. So, for instance, one is asked to contemplate a case in which A's brain is transplanted into B's body, or a case in which some of C's memories are implanted in D's brain, or a case in which information about the arrangement of the molecules which compose E is used to create an exact replica of E at another point in space-time.

Thinking about these cases is supposed to help us tease apart the relative roles played by features that coincide in all (or almost all) actual cases, but which seem to be conceptually distinguishable. So, for instance, even though we can ordinarily assume that the beliefs, desires, memories, etc. which are associated with a given body will not come to be associated with another body, it does not seem to be in principle impossible that such a state of affairs should come about. Indeed, it seems that we can describe a mechanism by which such a situation might come about: for instance, A's brain (and with it A's beliefs, desires and memories) might be transplanted into B's body. And since the scenario described strikes us as something of which we can make sense, it seems we can make judgments of fact or value about which of the two factors really matters in making A who she is. We might ask, for instance, whether it would be true to say that A had survived in a body that used to belong to B, or whether it would be right to punish the B-bodied human being for A's actions, or whether if we were A before the intended operation, we ought to worry about what would be happening to the B-bodied person afterwards. And on the basis of these judgments about what we would say in the imaginary case, we can return to the actual case having learned something about which features are essential and which accidental to our judgments concerning the nature or value of personal identity. My goal in this paper is to suggest reasons for thinking that this methodology may be less reliable than its proponents take it to be, for interesting and systematic reasons.

- Anita Allen, "Forgetting yourself," in Diana Meyers, ed. Feminists Rethink the Self (Boulder: Westview, 1996), 104-123.

- Janet Levin, "Functionalism," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2008)

Existence of God/ Problem of Evil

- Eleonore Stump, 'The Problem of Evil', _Faith and Philosophy_ (1985). *Intro/Intermediate

Abstract: This paper considers briefly the approach to the problem of evil by Alvin Plantinga, Richard Swinburne, and John Hick and argues that none of these approaches is entirely satisfactory. The paper then develops a different strategy for dealing with the problem of evil by expounding and taking seriously three Christian claims relevant to the problem: Adam fell; natural evil entered the world as a result of Adam's fall; and after death human beings go either to heaven or hell. Properly interpreted, these claims form the basis for a consistent and coherent Christian solution to the problem of evil.

- Elizabeth Anderson - "If God is Dead, Is Everything Permitted?" In Philosophers without Gods, OUP 2012 edited by Louise Anthony.

- Overall,Christine. “Miracles as Evidence Against the Existence of God”(1985) Southern Journal of Philosophy (Also in Robert Larmer, Questions of Miracle) *Intro

- McCord Adams, Marilyn, “Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God” (1989) Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume 63: 297-310 [Also available in a 1990 OUP collection, The Problem of Evil, edited by Marilyn McCord Adams and Robert Merrihew Adams] *Intro/Intermediate