

# **Studies in Philosophy of Mind:** **Evolution and Externalism**

Philosophy 535 – Fall Term 2014 – Purdue University

Instructors:

Daniel Kelly & Daniel Smith

## **1. Course Description**

This course will explore the most interesting and provocative work to come out of two broad, often overlapping trends in current philosophy of mind. One of these is externalism. Ideas in this vein take many forms, but the common thread is an insistence that the boundaries of an individual's skin and skull are relatively unimportant when it comes to the nature and content of the mind, and the bases of judgments and behavior. For instance, some externalists have famously claimed that the content of mental states is in part determined by factors outside of the head, while others have gone even farther, arguing that mental states and cognitive processes themselves can extend beyond the borders of a person's physical, organic body. Still other approaches that have an externalist flavor emphasize different aspects of the extra-bodily environment and the different roles they can play in human psychology, often creating new terminology to talk about them (embodied cognition, embedded and situated cognition, enactive cognition, etc.)

Dovetailing with these externalist approaches are those marked by increasingly sophisticated applications of the conceptual resources of evolutionary theory to human cognition and action. Many of these also emphasize the importance of factors external to the skin and skull in shaping human cognition. We will look at one account that aims to show how humans actively engineer environments in which they live, learn, and raise children, and how the subsequent interaction with this deliberately organized structure is a key factor in explaining many ways in which humans are unique. We will also look at another approach that stresses the importance of social learning, culture and technology, not just in scaffolding current thought and action, but in driving the way the human mind evolved in the first place – and the ways it continues to evolve.

## **2. Class Meetings**

Class meets Tuesday/Thursday, 12:00-1:15pm, in Room 1248 of Beering Hall.

## **3. Office Hours and Contact Information**

Daniel Kelly

Office: 7126 Beering Hall

Office phone: 765-494-4290 (4-4290)

Email: [drkelly@purdue.edu](mailto:drkelly@purdue.edu)

Fall Term Office Hours: 11:00 – 1:00 Wednesdays & by appointment.

Daniel Smith

Office: 7131 Beering Hall

Office phone: 765-494-4284 (4-4284)

Email: [smith132@purdue.edu](mailto:smith132@purdue.edu)

Fall Term Office Hours: 1:30 – 2:30 Tuesdays and Thursdays & by appointment

#### 4. Course Requirements, Policies, and Grading

Grades on papers and exams will be given on the standard 0-100 point grading scale:

100-93:	A
92-90:	A-
89-87:	B+
86-83:	B
82-80:	B-
79-77:	C+
76-73:	C
72-70:	C-
69-60:	D
59-0:	F

**Final grades** will be determined as follows:

Participation, in class discussion:	10%
Participation, blog posts and prospectus:	10%
End of Semester Presentation:	20%
Term Paper	60%

#### **Course Blog:**

- There is a course blog, which you can get to via the course website or directly at this address:  
<http://evolutionexternalismpurduephilosophy.blogspot.com>
- Each enrolled student be required to twice post a **summary** (or outline) of an assigned reading, and twice post at least a **response** to another student's summary.
  - **Summaries** should be posted by noon the day before class (so by noon on Monday or Wednesday). Start a new entry for each of these.

- **Discussion questions** should be posted by midnight, or roughly before you go to bed, that same day, (Monday or Wednesday). Put these in the comments.
- We encourage comments and discussion on the blog in addition to the required posts. All and only invited authors, i.e. people in the class, can see or contribute to the blog.

### **End of Semester Mini Conference:**

- The last two weeks of the semester will be given over to presentation of work in progress, wherein each student will
  - Give a (roughly) twenty-minute presentation of their term paper project to the class. This should include the usual components such as a clearly stated thesis, presentation of the argument, perhaps response to an anticipated objection, etc., and can be done using handouts or via a PowerPoint presentation.
  - Get (roughly) ten minutes of feedback from the class as a whole

## 5. Course Policies

**Class sessions:** We will try to begin on time, and will usually go right up until the end of the class session. Please come on time. Do not pack up your materials until class has been dismissed.

Classes will be a mix of lecture and discussion focused on the topics raised by the readings. Students are encouraged to ask questions and participate in the conversation – this is usually the best way to get a grip on some very abstract issues and ultimately to understand philosophy. Conversations may get animated and in the course of our frank discussion of ideas we will likely not always agree with each other; but we will all keep the atmosphere respectful and inclusive. The formal attendance policy does not include anything about class participation, but:

*Class participation:* We realize that not everyone is equally outgoing or talkative in class. However, participation in class discussion almost always helps in learning philosophy. So while we highly encourage it, we do not penalize students simply for not speaking up all the time. That said, a consistent record of participation always helps a student's final grade if it is on a borderline at the end of the semester. On the other hand, students who have not been present and engaged throughout the semester will not get the benefit of the doubt in similar borderline cases, and in particularly egregious cases will have their grades dragged down.

**Laptop computers:** We would prefer that you exercise enough self-restraint to keep from texting for the 75 minutes that class is in session, but since a

formal prohibition would be too difficult to enforce, this remains a preference. If we see you consistently texting or listening to your iPod/iPhone during class, it will be reflected poorly in your attendance/participation portion of your final grade. Use of laptop computers and iPads during lectures will not be allowed, however.

**Emergencies:** (See end of Syllabus for full Purdue attachment on Emergency Procedures). In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Information about emergencies changes in the course can be gotten by contacting either instructor via email or phone, or by consulting the course website (see above for that information). Purdue's Emergency Procedures Handbook and other important emergency planning information is available online at

[http://www.purdue.edu/emergency\\_preparedness/](http://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness/)

To obtain updates regarding an ongoing emergency, and to sign up for Purdue Alert text messages, go to

[www.purdue.edu/ea](http://www.purdue.edu/ea)

**Plagiarism:** With the advent of the internet, plagiarism has become an increasingly serious problem at universities around the country, particularly in classes like this one, where papers determine a substantial part of the grade.

In order to avoid plagiarizing from a source, both direct quotations *and paraphrases or summaries* of material found in traditional print media or on the internet must be acknowledged. If you have any questions about how this definition will be interpreted, please do not hesitate to discuss the matter with me.

Plagiarism and cheating on exams undermines the integrity of the academic community. When undetected, it gives the perpetrator an unfair advantage over students who are graded on the basis of their own work. In this class we will do our best to detect plagiarism and cheating. Students who are aware of violations by others should bring this to my attention. This is the right thing to do. It is also in your own self-interest.

There will be zero tolerance for plagiarism in this course. Plagiarized papers will receive a 0, the student will automatically fail the course, and their name will be handed given to the university authorities. For more on the Purdue University policy on plagiarism, see the following websites:

[http://www.purdue.edu/univregs/pages/stu\\_conduct/stu\\_regulations.html](http://www.purdue.edu/univregs/pages/stu_conduct/stu_regulations.html)

<http://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/academicintegritybrochure.php>

With each paper assignment, a handful of students may be selected at random to submit their papers to TurnItIn, an online service that maintains an enormous database of papers that it uses to check for instances of plagiarism.

**External Sources:** Using sources not listed on the syllabus in researching and writing your papers is fine, as long as they are both to the point, and are properly cited. And at all times, when in doubt, *cite your sources!* It is the best way to avoid being accused of plagiarism.

This is probably the best place to make this point, too: Wikipedia can be valuable for getting a very broad grasp of positions and debates, but when it gets into details, especially on philosophic topics, it is very often horrible – sketchy, convoluted, misinformed, and often simply wrong. If you wish to consult online resources, I suggest you use some of the other, much better sites. Most prominent is the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, but others are useful as well:

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://plato.stanford.edu/>

The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

Episteme Links <http://www.epistemelinks.com/Main/MainEncy.aspx>

## 6. Texts

Almost all of the readings will be papers or longer .pdfs that will be posted on the course website. The exception is this book, which should be available at the standard campus bookstores, and can certainly be ordered online.

Richerson, P and Boyd, R. *Not by Genes Alone: How Culture Transformed Human Evolution*. (The University of Chicago Press, 2005)

## 6. Course Website

Information and comments will often be posted on the website, which can be reached via my homepage:

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/>

To go directly to this course's website, the address is:

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/EvolutionExternalismPhilMind535Fall2014.html>

You should check it fairly regularly. Also, if there is ever a problem with the website, information will be distributed via the course listserv, which you are automatically included on if you are officially signed up for the course.

## 7. Topics and Readings

Here is a tentative list of topics and readings. We'll reserve the right to pick and choose as we go, depending on how fast we are going, and what catches our collective imagination. Specific readings and dates will be announced in class and on the webpage.

### I. Introduction

Week 1: August 25

- **Introduction and background**
  - Aug 26: Dan Smith: Morphology of the Body
  - Aug 28: Dan Kelly: Functionalism, Ev Psych & Massive Modularity
    - Haugland, 'Mind: Embodied and Embedded'
    - Fodor, *Precis of Modularity of Mind*
    - Cosmides & Tooby, 'Evolutionary Psychology: A Primer'

Week 2: September 1 (No Classes on Monday for Labor Day, doesn't affect us)

- **Distinguishing Two Forms of Externalism**
  - Sep 2: Content/semantic/passive externalism
    - Putnam, 'The Meaning of Meaning'
  - Sep 4: Active/vehicle externalism
    - Clark & Chalmers 'The Extended Mind'
    - Kosslyn, 'On the Evolution of Human Motivation: The Role of Social Prosthetic Systems'

### II. Kelly

Week 3: September 8

- **Culture, Cultural Evolution and Gene Culture Coevolution**
  - Sep 9: *Not by Genes Alone*, Richerson and Boyd, Chapters 1-2
  - Sep 11: *Not by Genes Alone*, Richerson and Boyd, Chapters 3-4 (Dan Smith out of town)

Week 4: September 15

- **Culture, Cultural Evolution and Gene Culture Coevolution**
  - Sep 16: *Not by Genes Alone*, Richerson and Boyd, Chapter 5-6

- Sep 18: *Not by Genes Alone*, Richerson and Boyd, Chapter 6-7

Week 5: September 22

- **Niche Construction and Engineering the Epistemic Niche**
  - Sep 26: Sterelny, *Thought In a Hostile World*, Chapter 6
  - Sep 28: Sterelny, *Thought In a Hostile World*, Chapter 7

Week 6: September 29

- **Niche Construction and Engineering the Epistemic Niche**
  - Sep 30: Sterelny, *Thought In a Hostile World*, Chapter 8
  - Oct 1: Sterelny, *Thought In a Hostile World*, Chapter 9  
Sterelny (2010) “Minds: extended or scaffolded?”

Week 7: October 6

- **Loose Ends**
  - Oct 7: Guest Lecture by Andreas de Block (KU Leuven)
  - Oct 9: Selected Reading TBD

### III. Smith

Week 8: October 13

- Oct 14: No Class, Fall break
- Oct 16: Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*

Week 9: October 20

- Oct 21: Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*
- Oct 23: (Dan Smith out of town) Selected Readings TBD

Week 10: October 27

- Oct 28: Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*
- Oct 30: Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*

Week 11: November 3

- Nov 4: Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*
- Nov 6: Malafouris, *How Things Shape the Mind: A Theory of Material Engagement*  
(Dan Kelly out of town)

Week 12: November 10

- Nov 11: Malafouris, *How Things Shape the Mind: A Theory of Material Engagement*
- Nov 13: Malafouris, *How Things Shape the Mind: A Theory of Material Engagement*

### IV. Mallon

Week 13: November 17

- **Turn in a 2 page prospectus of final paper**
- Nov 18 & 20: Guest Lectures by Ron Mallon (Washington University)
- We'll be reading and discussing sections of a draft of Prof Mallon's forthcoming book, working Title: *Naturalistic Social Construction and Human Classification*
  - Introduction
  - Chapter 1: Was the Concept of Race Invented
  - Chapters 2 and 3: Setting out a Social Role account
  - Chapter 7 and 8: About Performative Account

Week 14: November 24 (No Class Thursday 11/27, Thanksgiving)

- Nov 25: Selected Readings TBD
- Nov 27: No Class, Thanksgiving

## **V. Mini-Conference**

Week 15: December 1

- Dec 2: Grad Student Mini-conference
- Dec 4: Grad Student Mini-conference

Week 16: December 8

- Dec 9: Grad Student Mini-conference
- Dec 11: Grad Student Mini-conference





## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SYLLABUS ATTACHMENT

**EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES** are based on a simple concept – if you hear a fire alarm inside, proceed outside. If you hear a siren outside, proceed inside.

- **Indoor Fire Alarms** mean to stop class or research and immediately **evacuate** the building.
  - Proceed to your Emergency Assembly Area away from building doors. **Remain outside** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.
- **All Hazards Outdoor Emergency Warning Sirens** mean to immediately seek shelter (**Shelter in Place**) in a safe location within the closest building.
  - “Shelter in place” means seeking immediate shelter inside a building or University residence. This course of action may need to be taken during a tornado, a civil disturbance including a shooting or release of hazardous materials in the outside air. Once safely inside, find out more details about the emergency\*. **Remain in place** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.

*\*In both cases, you should seek additional clarifying information by all means possible...Purdue Home page, email alert, TV, radio, etc...review the Purdue Emergency Warning Notification System multi- communication layers at*

[http://www.purdue.edu/ehps/emergency\\_preparedness/warning-system.html](http://www.purdue.edu/ehps/emergency_preparedness/warning-system.html)

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES:**

- Review the **Emergency Procedures Guidelines**  
[https://www.purdue.edu/emergency\\_preparedness/flipchart/index.html](https://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness/flipchart/index.html)
- Review the **Building Emergency Plan** (available from the building deputy) for:
  - Evacuation routes, exit points, and emergency assembly area
  - when and how to evacuate the building
  - Shelter in place procedures and locations
  - Additional building specific procedures and requirements.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AWARENESS VIDEOS**

- "Shots Fired on Campus: When Lightning Strikes," is a 20-minute active shooter awareness video that illustrates what to look for and how to prepare and react to this type of incident.

See: <http://www.purdue.edu/securePurdue/news/2010/emergency-preparedness-shots-fired-on-campus-video.cfm> (Link is also located on the EP website)

## **MORE INFORMATION**

Reference the Emergency Preparedness web site for additional information:

[http://www.purdue.edu/emergency\\_preparedness](http://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness)