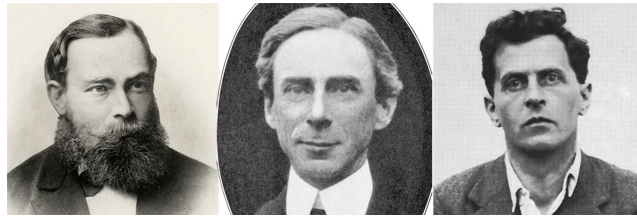


Themes from Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein

Spring 2022, Syracuse
University Michael Rieppel



Course Description

Early analytic philosophy featured groundbreaking work in the philosophy of language and logic, led by Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein among others. In this seminar we will work our way through some of the important ideas to emerge from this period, beginning with Frege's seminal *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, then turning to some of the revolutionary papers by Frege and Russell in the philosophy of language and logic, leading to Wittgenstein's obscure but fascinating *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*. Along the way we will also make forays into contemporary work that engages with issues raised by these philosophers (such as: Frege's treatment of number words, Frege's object/property distinction and sense/reference distinction, Russellian propositions, Russell's theory of descriptions, Russell's multiple relation theory of judgment, and Wittgenstein's picture theory of meaning).

Contact Information

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Office Hours: W

3:30-5:30

Course Requirements

The following is required of all seminar participants:

- Attendance, preparation, and participation in class discussions

- One question or critical comment posted to the discussion forum one day before the seminar.

Those enrolled for credit are also required to write a term paper of around 20 pages, due on the last day of class (with an outline due one month prior to that). Get in touch with me if you would prefer to instead write two shorter papers (10 pages each) over the course of the semester.

Topics

The following is a list of topics in historical sequence. Under some of the primary readings I list contemporary work could we read in connection with the primary reading. What exactly we read when will depend on seminar participants' interests.

Frege

- Frege, G. (1884). *The Foundations of Arithmetic*. Northwestern University Press, 1980 Contemporary offshoot:
 - Hofweber, T. (2005). Number Determiners, Numbers, and Arithmetic. *Philosophical Review*, 114(2):179–225
 - Moltmann, F. (2013). Reference to Numbers in Natural Language. *Philosophical Studies*, 162(3):499–536
 - Felka, K. (2014). Number Words and Reference to Numbers. *Philosophical Studies*, (168):261–282
- Frege, G. (1879). Begriffsschrift. In Geach, P. and Black, M., editors, *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, pages 1–20. Basil Blackwell, 1960
- Frege, G. (1891). Function and Concept. In Geach, P. and Black, M., editors, *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, pages 21–41. Basil Blackwell, 1960
- Frege, G. (1892b). On Concept and Object. In Geach, P. and Black, M., editors, *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, pages 42–55. Basil Blackwell, 1960
- Frege, G. (1892c). On Sense and Reference. In Geach, P. and Black, M., editors, *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, pages 56–78. Basil Blackwell, 1960
- Frege, G. (1892a). Comments on *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*. In Beaney, M., editor, *The Frege Reader*, pages 172–180. Blackwell, 1997
 - Contemporary offshoot:
 - Trueman, R. (2021). *Properties and Propositions*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK

Russell

- Russell, B. (1903). *The Principles of Mathematics*. Cambridge University Press (Ch. IV

and V)

Contemporary offshoot:

- King, J. C. (2007). *The Nature and Structure of Content*. Oxford University Press
- Russell, B. (1905). On Denoting. *Mind*, 14(56):479–493
- Russell, B. (1919). Descriptions. In *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*. Routledge
 - Contemporary offshoots:
 - Salmon, N. (2005). On Designating. *Mind*, 114(456):1069–1133
 - Elbourne, P. (2010). The Existence Entailments of Definite Descriptions. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 33(1):1–10
 - Elbourne, P. (2018). Definite Descriptions and Negative Existential Quantifiers. *Philosophical Studies*, 175:1597–1612
- Russell, B. (1912). *The Problems of Philosophy*. Oxford University Press, 1997 (Ch. V)
- Russell, B. (1913). *Theory of Knowledge*. Routledge, 1992
 - Contemporary offshoots
 - Moltmann, F. (2003). Propositional Attitudes Without Propositions. *Synthese*, (135):77– 118
 - Hawthorne, J. and Manley, D. (2012). *The Reference Book*. Oxford University Press
 - Goodman, R. (2017). Do Acquaintance Theorists Have an Attitude Problem? *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*

Wittgenstein

- Wittgenstein, L. (1922). *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Routledge
 - Cool offshoot, if not quite contemporary:
 - Sellars, W. (1962). Naming and Saying. *Philosophy of Science*, 29(1):7–26