Course Description

The paradigmatic expression of self-consciousness in English is the first person pronoun ‘I’. First-personal language and thought is commonly taken to be *sui generis*, irreducible to language or thought not containing the first-person pronoun or corresponding concept. In this seminar we will explore this topic from the crossroads of philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, and epistemology. We will read classic texts by Frege, Anscombe, Perry, Lewis, and Evans among others, as well as a variety of more recent works on the topic.

In preparation for the first seminar meeting, please read Frege’s ‘The Thought’. You should also be familiar with Frege’s ‘On Sense and Reference’. (Both articles are available on Blackboard.)

Contact Information

Please CC both of us on seminar-related correspondence.

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kim Frost</th>
<th>Michael Rieppel</th>
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<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kcfrost@syr.edu">kcfrost@syr.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:morieppe@syr.edu">morieppe@syr.edu</a></td>
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<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Mo 1–2, We 1–2</td>
<td>Mo 3:30–5:30</td>
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Course Requirements
Seminar attendees are required to post a question or critical comment about the reading(s) to the Blackboard discussion forum each week (please post your comment by the evening before the seminar). Turning up regularly to discuss the readings is a requirement to pass the class. (We will let you know if you are in danger of failing either of these requirements.) Default assessment is based around one term paper plan, due Wednesday April 18 (three weeks before end of semester), and a 20–25 page paper term paper due Wednesday May 9 (last day of class). We will distribute a guide as to what’s required in the term paper plan closer to the due date.

Alternative assessment in the form of a pair of shorter papers (around 10–12 pages in length) is also possible. Talk to Mike or Kim before 31st January to get permission to do an alternative assessment.

Tentative Schedule

**Week 1**  Historical background, and setting the Fregean stage.


**Week 2**  Perry-ology


**Week 3**  Evans


**Week 4**  Anscombe

Week 5  Shoemaker


Week 6  *De se* skepticism: against Lewis.


Week 7  *De se* skepticism: against Perry.


Week 8  Replies to *de se* skeptics.


Week 9  Evans on self-identification.


Week 10  Bermúdez I


Week 11  Bermúdez II

Week 12  Bermúdez III


Week 13  Introducing Rödl


Week 14  Rödl’s Absolute Idealism