

Topics in Philosophy of Imagination

Course Code: 34I0175

MA3, Room: B104

Thursdays, 10-12

Instructors

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Imagination is one of the most philosophically interesting faculties that humans have, as well as one of the least well-understood. It is difficult to define, yet it facilitates our interactions with the past, the future, the possible, the fictional, and the actual. In this course we will consider a number of issues related to the philosophy of imagination, including topics in the history of philosophy, philosophy of mind, aesthetics, epistemology, philosophy of science, and cognitive science.

Objectives

Since imagination is a concept that is discussed in many different disciplines, this course will expose students to issues in subfields other than their own, as well as enable students to research imagination (or a closely related topic) in a way that is relevant to their own philosophical interests. The course will help to develop critical reading, presentation and discussion skills.

Evaluation

The MA3 module requires either one final essay (~50 000 words, 25 pages), or two shorter essays (each ~25 000 words). Successful papers will display a thorough understanding of the philosophical issues and relevant texts, clarity of exposition; and quality of argument. Students will choose their own topics, which the instructors must approve at least 2 weeks before submission. The papers will be defended via oral examination.

Discussion

Students are requested to come to each class with 2-3 questions for discussion.

Meeting Schedule

Week 1, 20.02.2020: Introduction, overview of course and syllabus

Reading: Liao, Shen-Yi. 2019. "Imagination." *Stanford Online Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/imagination/>)

Week 2, 27.02.2020: Quick Historical Survey of Western Philosophy of Imagination

Required Reading: Warnock, Mary. 1976. "Imagination and Perception: Hume and Kant," in *Imagination*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Optional: Bundy, Murray. 1922. "Plato's View of the Imagination." *Studies in Philology* 19: 362-403.

Jørgensen, Dorthe. 2017. "The Philosophy of Imagination," in *Handbook of Imagination and Culture*, ed. Tania Zittoun and Vlad Glaveanu, Oxford: OUP.

Pormann, Peter. 2013. "Avicenna on medical practice, epistemology, and the physiology of the inner senses," in *Interpreting Avicenna* ed., P. Adamson. Cambridge: CUP.

Week 3, 05.03.2020: Philosophy of Mind: Can we Define Imagination?

Required Reading: Kind, Amy, 2016 "Introduction: Exploring Imagination", in Kind, Amy (ed.): *The Routledge Handbook on Philosophy of Imagination*, 1-11.

Optional: Van Leeuwen, Neil, 2013, "The Meaning of 'Imagine' Part I: Constructive Imagination", *Philosophy Compass*, 8(3): 220–230. doi:10.1111/j.1747-9991.2012.00508.

Van Leeuwen, Neil, 2014, "The Meaning of 'Imagine' Part II: Attitude and Action," *Philosophy Compass*, 9(11): 791–802. doi:10.1111/phc3.12141.

Arcangeli, Margherita: "The Two Faces of Mental Imagery", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/phpr.12589>

Week 4, 12.03.2020: Philosophy of Mind: Imagination and Memory

Required Reading: Hopkins, Robert, 2018, "Imagining the Past: On the Nature of Episodic Memory", in Macpherson, Fiona and Dorsch, Fabian (eds.): *Perceptual Memory and Perceptual Imagination*, 2018: 46–71.

Optional: Debus, Dorothea, 2016, "Imagination and Memory", in Kind, Amy (ed.): *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Imagination*: 135–148.

Loftus, Elizabeth. 2013. "How Reliable is your Memory?" Ted Talk. Available here: https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_loftus_the_fiction_of_memory?language=en;

Sinhababu, Neil, 2016, "Imagination and Belief", in Kind, Amy (ed.): *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Imagination*: 111–123.

Week 5, 19.03.2020: Epistemology

Required Reading: Kind, Amy. 2018. "How Imagination Gives Rise to Knowledge," in *Perceptual Imagination and Perceptual Memory*, eds. Fiona Macpherson and Fabian Dorsch. Oxford: OUP.

Optional: Balcerak Jackson, Magdalena. 2018. "Justification by Imagination," in Fiona Macpherson & Fabian Dorsch (eds.) *Perceptual Imagination and Perceptual Memory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Berto, Francesco 2017. "Impossible Worlds and the Logic of Imagination." *Erkenntnis* 82: 1277-1297. (Or this blogpost: <https://junkyardofthemind.com/blog/2019/5/13/logics-of-imagination>)

Williamson, Timothy. 2016. "Knowing by Imagining," in *Knowledge Through Imagination*, eds. Amy Kind and Peter Kung. Oxford: OUP.

Brown, James R. and Fehige, Yiftach. 2019. "Thought Experiments." *Stanford Online Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Available here: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/thought-experiment>.

Week 6, 26.03.2020: Cognitive Science

Required Reading: Thomas, N. 1999. "Are Theories of Imagery Theories of Imagination? An Active Perception Approach to Conscious Mental Content?" *Cognitive Science* 23: 207–245.

Optional: Iachini, Tina. 2011. "Mental Imagery and Embodied Cognition: A Multimodal Approach." *Journal of Mental Imagery* 35: 1-66.

Clemens, Anna. 2018. "When the Mind's Eye is Blind." *Scientific American*. Available here: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/when-the-minds-eye-is-blind1/>

Schacter, D. L., Addis, D. A., Hassabis, D., Martin, V. C., Spreng, R. N. and Szpunar, K. K. 2012. "The Future of Memory: Remembering, Imagining, and the Brain." *Neuron* 76: 677–694. DOI:10.1016/j.neuron.2012.11.001.

Byrne, Ruth M. J. 2007. "Precis of The Rational Imagination: How People Create Alternatives to Reality." *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 30: 439-80.

Week 7, 02.04.2020: Philosophy of Science

Required Reading: Salis, Fiora and Frigg, Roman. Forthcoming. "Capturing the scientific imagination," in *The Scientific Imagination*, eds., Peter Godfrey-Smith & Arnon Levy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Optional: Camp, Elizabeth. Forthcoming. "Imaginative Frames for Scientific Inquiry: Metaphors, Telling Facts, and Just-So Stories," in *The Scientific Imagination*, eds., Peter Godfrey-Smith & Arnon Levy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stuart, Michael T. 2019. "Everyday Scientific Imagination: A Qualitative Study of the Uses, Norms, and Pedagogy of Imagination in Science." *Science & Education* 28(6), 711-730. DOI: 10.1007/s11191-019-00067-9.

Week 8, 09.04.2020: Aesthetics: Fiction and Imagination

Required Reading: Walton, Kendall, 1990, *Mimesis as Make-Believe*, Harvard University Press: chapter 2.

Optional: Matravers, Derek, 2014, *Fiction and Narrative*, Oxford University Press, chapter 3.

Stock, Kathleen, 2016, "Imagination and Fiction", in Kind, Amy (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy of Imagination*. Routledge: 204-216.

Week 9, 23.04.2020: Aesthetics: Fiction, Imagination, Emotion

Required Reading: Radford, C., 1975, "How Can We Be Moved by the Fate of Anna Karenina?" *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplemental Vol. 49: 67-80.

Optional: Walton, Kendall, 1978, "Fearing Fictions" *Journal of Philosophy* 75.1: 5-27.

Joyce, R. 2000. "Rational Fear of Monsters." *British Journal of Aesthetics* 40.2: 209-224.

Week 10, 30.04.2020: Creativity and Imagination

Required Reading: Gaut, Berys, 2003: “Creativity and Imagination”, in Gaut, Berys and Livingston, Pailsey (eds.): *The Creation of Art*, 148-173

Optional: Hills, Alison & Bird, Alexander. 2018. “Against Creativity.” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. DOI:10.1111/phpr.12511.

Stokes, Dustin. 2014. “The Role of Imagination in Creativity,” in E. Paul & S. B. Kaufman (eds.), *The philosophy of creativity*. Oxford University Press.

Week 11, 07.05.2020: Ethics

Required Reading: Lentin, Alana, 2011. “Imagining the West, Perceiving Race: Social Sciences and Political Imagination.” Pp. 109-123 in C. Bottici and B. Challand (eds). *The Politics of Imagination*. New York: Birkbeck Law Press.

Optional: Black, Jessica & Barnes, Jennifer. 2019. “Pushing the boundaries of reality: Science fiction, creativity, and the moral imagination.” *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*. DOI:10.1037/aca0000281.

Black, Jessica; Helmy, Yomna; Robson, Olivia & Barnes, Jennifer. 2019. “Who can resist a villain? Morality, Machiavellianism, imaginative resistance and liking for dark fictional characters.” *Poetics* 74. DOI: 10.1016/j.poetic.2018.12.005.

Week 12, 14.05.2020: Non-Western approaches

Required Reading: Lynn, Richard John. 2018. “Truth and Imagination in China Opposition and Conciliation,” in *Imagination: Cross-Cultural Philosophical Analyses*, ed. Hans-Georg Moeller and Andrew K. Whitehead. New York and London: Bloomsbury, pp. 13-27.

Optional: Capra, Rudi. 2018. “Visual Zen: The Role of Imagination in Shaping a Zen Aesthetics,” in *Imagination: Cross-Cultural Philosophical Analyses*, ed. Hans-Georg Moeller and Andrew K. Whitehead. New York and London: Bloomsbury.

Week 13, 21.05.2020: Perspective taking/Empathy

Required Reading: Stueber, Karsten R., 2016, “Empathy and the Imagination” in A. Kind (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook on Philosophy of Imagination*, Routledge: 368-37.

Optional: Batson, C. D., 2009, “Two forms of perspective taking: Imagining how another feels and imagining how you would feel” in K. D. Markman, W. M. P. Klein, & J. A. Suhr (eds.), *Handbook of imagination and mental simulation*: 267–279. Psychology Press

Goldie, Peter, 2011, “Anti-empathy” in A. Coplan & P Goldie (eds.), *Empathy: Philosophical and Psychological Perspectives*: 302, Oxford University Press.