

Phil 370: Problems in Analytic Philosophy
Tuesday and Thursday 11:35 AM-12:55 PM
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Description:

Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* is considered by many to be a seminal text of 20th century philosophy. In this course we will follow a close reading of the text, taking our cue from Wittgenstein's own description of his book: "My work consists of two parts, the one presented here plus all that I have *not* written. And it is precisely this second part that is the important point. For the ethical gets its limit drawn from the inside, as it were, by my book..." Guided by this indication we will attempt to find a unified interpretation that will grasp both parts, the logical and the ethical. The search for possible sources of influence will lead us to look into both Logical Positivism as well as Existentialism. In the course of our reading we will address the key concepts of the text, such as: limit, fact and substance, showing and saying, Solipsism and Wittgenstein's celebrated call to "throw away the ladder" with which it culminates.

Required Reading: L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (either Pears or Ogden translation)

Other Material:

- L. Wittgenstein, "A Lecture on Ethics," *Philosophical Review*, 74 (1965), pp. 3-12
- L. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-1916* New York: Harper, 1961.
- R. Carnap, "The Elimination of Metaphysics through a logical Analysis of Language," in A.J. Ayer, *Logical Positivism*, Glencoe, Ill.:Free Press, 1959
- E. Friedlander, *Signs of Sense: Reading Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2001
- S. Kierkegaard, *Journals and Papers* (excerpts will be provided in class)
- Further bibliography will be available through *myCourses*.

Evaluation: Final evaluation will be based on a short midterm paper (40%) and a final paper (60%). In the midterm the students will be asked to answer short interpretive questions with respect to specific paragraphs. The final paper will be in the form of an essay that addresses the text as a whole.

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