

PHI 513

TERM: 2024-2025 SPRING

COURSE TITLE: Conventionalism & Modality

TRANSCRIPT TITLE: Topics / Recent & Contemporary Philosophy / Conventionalism & Modality

Tentative list of readings for the first half of the term [subject to additions and amendments]

NOTE

The first session will be mostly just me lecturing, I hope for the one and only time during the term.

I will put down one reading item for that day (Ayer, 1936, below).

Thereafter we will try to cover one or two readings per session.

I will explain in class how copies will be made available.

There will be no meeting the MON after spring break; instead there will be a visiting speaker

Jared Warren on the FRI of that week.

The second half of the term we will go through his book *Shadows of Syntax* chapter by chapter, and look at some related work of others as time permits.

READINGS

Ayer (1936) "The A Priori" from *Language, Truth, and Logic*, the first summary account of logical positivism or empiricism in English, containing a summary of what is (or of one thing that is) called "conventionalism", echoed by many others at the time, repudiated by most, including Ayer himself by 50 years later.

Quine (1936) "Truth by Convention"

Carroll (1895) "What the Tortoise Said to Achilles" (cited by Quine)

Quine (1951) "Two Dogmas of Empiricism"

Carnap (1952) "Meaning Postulates"

Quine (1960) "Carnap on Logical Truth"

Carnap (1950) "Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology"

Quine (1951) "On Carnap's Views on Ontology"

Prior (1960) "The Runabout Inference Ticket"

Quine (1974) *The Roots of Reference* §28

Kripke (1970) selections from *Naming and Necessity*. I will try to indicate in advance which parts will be most relevant for us.