

Phil 432: Beginnings of Analytic Philosophy

Prompts for Paper 2

500 words max

Questions (choose *one* of these topics):

1. Identify and explain one respect in which Russell's logical atomism and Wittgenstein's view, as presented in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, are similar, and one respect in which they differ (you should support your answers with evidence from the texts.) Where they differ, is one of the views superior to the other? Why?
2. Sections 2.02–2.0212 of the *Tractatus* are sometimes thought to give an argument for the conclusion that the universe contains simple objects. Provide your own explicit reconstruction of this argument. Does your interpretation of Wittgenstein's argument succeed in establishing this conclusion?
3. Explain one of the objections to Verificationism that we looked at in class or that was raised in the assigned reading. Does the Verificationist have a good response to the objection you chose?
4. How does Carnap propose to eliminate metaphysics? How does his view differ from earlier kinds of skepticism about metaphysics? What do you regard as the strongest objection to this Carnapian view? Does that objection show that Carnap is wrong?

Instructions

- If you choose to answer one of the questions above, make sure you answer all parts of the question.
- The word limit is intentionally short. It is strict. Words over the limit will not be graded.
- If you would like to write on a different topic you may, but you should clear it with me *before you start writing the paper*.
- Whichever you choose to do, you should i) organise your paper around **arguing** for a thesis of your own and ii) demonstrate knowledge of the literature that we have studied (not *all* the literature we have studied, just some relevant part.) If you don't have much experience writing philosophy papers, you are strongly encouraged to read Jim Pryor's "How to write a philosophy paper" (easily found via google) before you start.
- **Please do not put your name on your paper.** Do put your PID number on your paper (I will be able to match this up with your name once I have finished grading.) This helps me to avoid inadvertent bias in my grading.
- Turn your paper in by emailing a .pdf file to the address below.

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