

Chapter 1 : Self-Knowledge (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

In philosophy, "self-knowledge" standardly refers to knowledge of one's own sensations, thoughts, beliefs, and other mental states. At least since Descartes, most philosophers have believed that our knowledge of our own mental states differs markedly from our knowledge of the external world (where this includes our knowledge of others' thoughts).

Issues about knowledge of the self include: These issues are closely connected with referential semantics, the mind-body problem, the metaphysics of personal identity, and moral psychology, respectively. This section briefly sketches some prominent views about knowledge of the self arising from debates in these areas.

Self-Identification In self-attributing a mental state, I recognize the state as mine in some sense, and my self-attribution partially consists in a reference to myself. This reference is reflexive, in that I think of myself as myself and not, e. Nozick underscores the significance of being able to thus refer to oneself: This raises the question: None of the following utterances appears to make sense when the first component expresses knowledge gained in the appropriate way: If in identifying myself as the one who is hot and sticky, I used some information beyond the information involved in determining that someone is hot and sticky, then I could possibly be justified in believing that someone was hot and sticky but mistaken in thinking that it was me. Others deny that self-identification is direct, claiming instead that it occurs by way of some sort of description. While Rovane sees intentional states as the anchor to self-reference, Howell provides an alternative descriptive picture, in which the self is identified through awareness of an occurrent sensation. For instance, Rovane claims that it is unsurprising that we are reliable self-identifiers, given that understanding ourselves and our place in the world is required for genuine agency. We return to the issue of agency below. The former maintain that there is, in a real sense, no room for error about who is hot and sticky, whereas the latter will say that while such errors are possible, we simply avoid them. They thereby fit with the widely accepted belief that self-reference in the distinctively first-person mode is essentially indexical. A final issue concerns the relation between self-awareness and awareness of other persons. On the leading traditional view of this relation, one first grasps that one bears psychological properties, and reasons by analogy to the conclusion that other creatures do as well. Some recent philosophers have challenged this traditional view, contending that self-awareness is logically dependent on at least a conceptual grasp of other persons. This strategy for supporting dualism has few current proponents. It is clearly possible to be relatively certain that there is water in the tub, while doubting that there is H₂O in the tub; yet water is identical to H₂O. Many contemporary materialists are similarly concerned to restrict the deliverances of introspection, arguing that while mental states appear, to introspection, to be non-physical, the grasp which introspection affords is partial at best, and systematically misleading at worst. However, there are materialists who take the opposite tack: These arguments employ three types of self-reflection: The argument for materialism from proprioceptive awareness, due to Brewer, is as follows. Presumably, introspective awareness of mental states justifies the claim that we are mental beings, by virtue of its epistemic character. But proprioceptive awareness of physical states shares this epistemic character; so we are equally justified in the claim that we are physical beings. This argument falls short of disproving dualism, for it leaves open the question how our mental nature is related to our physical nature. Brewer also builds an alternative argument along these lines, which seeks to rule out dualism by focusing on introspective awareness of sensations. This argument takes introspective awareness of sensations as intrinsically mental and, at the same time, intrinsically physical. Like the previous argument, it claims that awareness of physical properties is epistemologically equivalent to awareness of mental properties. But it goes further, contending that introspection provides an awareness of physical and mental properties, in sensations, as inextricable. It thus tries to block the possibility of distinctness between the mental subject and the physical subject. A final argument to show that self-knowledge supports materialism, advanced by Cassam, uses a somewhat different approach. It says that in becoming aware of our own perceptual states and taking these states to represent a physical world, we are driven to conceive of ourselves as physical objects. Broadly Cartesian objections to introspection-based arguments for materialism illuminate possible ways that the ontological conclusion can be flawed, consistent with the introspective evidence. A similar argument could be

made against the claim that sensations are intrinsically spatial, and that perceptual states represent a physical world. Proponents of these arguments for materialism could respond by claiming either that knowledge of oneself as a mental thing is less certain than this alleged contrast implies, or that knowledge of oneself as a physical thing is more certain than it implies.

Personal Identity

The ontological views described in the previous subsection have no immediate consequences for personal identity. For it may be that the criteria of persistence through time, for persons, differ from the criteria of persistence for other material objects even if, as materialists contend, a person at a time is necessarily constituted by some matter or other. See the entry on personal identity. In particular, the individual has no special insight into whether her current apparent memories are veridical, and so has no special way to determine whether a particular prior experience was hers. Since views about first-person access played a greater part in shaping theories of personal identity during the modern period than they do today, my brief remarks here will focus on that period. But this does not allow the meditator to grasp a persisting self. For Descartes, the self, like every other substance, is not directly apprehended; it is understood only through its properties. Hume also claims that we never directly apprehend the self. Unlike Descartes, he concludes from this that there is no substantial self. For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I can never catch myself at any time without a perception, and can never observe anything but the perception. On some interpretations, what it is for an experience or action to belong to me a Lockean person is for me to appropriate it, or to impute it to myself.

Winkler

This personality extends itself beyond present existence to what is past, only by consciousness,- whereby it becomes concerned and accountable; owns and imputes to itself past actions, just upon the same ground and for the same reason as it does the present. For Hume, this means that the self is nothing over and above a constantly varying bundle of experiences. Kant repudiates the basic strategy shared by Locke and Hume, for he denies that self-awareness reveals objective facts about personal identity. And while he holds that we cannot avoid thinking of ourselves as persisting, unitary beings, he attributes this self-conception to necessary requirements for thought which do not directly support substantive ontological conclusions about the nature of the self. A couple of contemporary views about personal identity are noteworthy in this context. Since in humans an appropriately unified experience lasts no more than about three seconds, subjects are in fact very short-lived. Dainton and Bayne present a related view, which tries to avoid the result that subjects are very short-lived. On this view, personal identity is tied to the capacity for experiential continuity rather than experiential unity.

Agency

The role of self-understanding in agency is a complex topic, and we can only briefly examine some leading positions on the issue here. For instance, Taylor claims that self-reflection is imperative for being human where this means, in part, being capable of agency , [T]he human animal not only finds himself impelled from time to time to interpret himself and his goals, but he is always already in some interpretation, constituted as human by this fact. This rational evaluation issues in second-order desires, that is, desires concerning which desires to have or to act upon. For a related recent view, see Bilgrami For instance, Searle argues that intentions are always self-referential, in that when one performs an action X intentionally, the relevant intention to act includes an intention to X so as to fulfill that intention itself. In fact, on her view thoughts about actions, intentions, postures, etc. For criticism of the idea that action requires awareness of intention, see Cunning

One contemporary theory of practical reasoning, offered by Velleman , casts knowledge of the self in a particularly important role. Velleman notes that we strongly desire to understand ourselves and, in particular, to understand our reasons for acting. On his view, this desire leads us to try to discern our action-motivating desires and beliefs. But strikingly, Velleman thinks that the desire for self-understanding also leads us to model our actions on our predictions about how we will act. In this way, our expectations as to how we will act are themselves intentions to act.

Chapter 2 : Life Coach. Mentoring. Change agent. Self-Knowledge

The conference will bring together established and emerging researchers with a view to exploring Agentialist accounts of self-knowledge, their problems and prospects.

What is special about self-knowledge, compared to knowledge in other domains? Self-knowledge is thought to differ from other sorts of knowledge in one or more of the following ways. Self-knowledge is especially secure, epistemically. Self-knowledge is sometimes acquired by use of an exclusively first-personal method. The differences between these are subtle. Statement 1 identifies the distinctive feature of self-knowledge as the epistemic status of a certain class of beliefs, whereas statement 2 identifies it by the method one uses in forming these beliefs. Only these first two statements construe the distinctive feature of self-knowledge as plainly epistemic; however, most who endorse 3 also claim that this agential relation grounds a special epistemic relation. A minority of philosophers denies that self-knowledge is special at all. This omniscience thesis is sometimes expressed by saying that mental states are self-intimating or self-presenting. Contemporary philosophers generally deny that we are infallible or omniscient about our mental states. Here is a simple counter-example to the claim of infallibility. But the therapist is mistaken—“Kate does not resent her mother. Hence, Kate has a false belief about her own attitude. This case also undercuts the claim of omniscience, assuming that Kate is unaware of her genuine non-resentful attitude towards her mother. If we restrict the relevant domain to beliefs formed by use of a method that is exclusively a method of attaining self-knowledge—“perhaps introspection—“we can formulate a more plausible infallibility thesis. We can generate an even more plausible thesis by limiting this restricted infallibility claim to pains and other sensations. Descartes endorsed a limited infallibility thesis of this sort. There remains sensations, emotions and appetites. These may be clearly perceived provided we take great care in our judgments concerning them to include no more than what is strictly contained in our perception—“no more than that of which we have inner awareness. But this is a very difficult rule to observe, at least with regard to sensations. A common objection to even limited infallibility claims is the idea, often attributed to Wittgenstein, that where one cannot be wrong, one cannot be right either. For instance, Wright maintains that the possibility of error is required for concept application, which is in turn required for substantial self-knowledge. The omniscience thesis seems even less plausible than the unqualified infallibility thesis. But consider the following passage from Locke. When we see, hear, smell, taste, feel, meditate, or will any thing, we know that we do so. It is more likely that Locke means that we are always conscious of our thoughts and sensations. In any case, the omniscience thesis may also be qualified. What is relevant to the most famous philosophical argument involving self-knowledge is not these general relations but, rather, the certainty of a particular instance of belief. Perhaps the most widely accepted view along these lines is that self-knowledge, even if not absolutely certain, is especially secure, in the following sense: Some theorists who take this line maintain that there is a causal gap between a perceptual state and its object, and this gap introduces sources of error that are absent in direct introspective apprehension of a sensation Gertler ; Horgan ; Siewert The notion that inner observation is the special method by which we achieve self-knowledge is central to the acquaintance and inner sense accounts see 3. On this view, we ascertain our own thoughts by looking outward, to the states of the world they represent. This view is associated with a famous passage from Evans. But arguably, some are more active: The agentialist contends that, whereas we know our itches and tickles only by observation, we can know our beliefs and intentions non-observationally, insofar as they are exercises of rational agency. But a competing approach, sometimes attributed to Wittgenstein Wright , maintains that the special authority of self-attributions is primarily a matter of social-linguistic practices, which dictate that we should treat subjects as authoritative about their own states. The first-person authority view does not require that self-attributions be epistemically grounded. But our social-linguistic practice of treating others as authorities on their own states cries out for explanation: The first-person authority view diagnoses the authority granted to self-attributions in non-epistemic terms. Strictly speaking, then, this position is not concerned with self-knowledge. However, neo-expressivist accounts see 3. For instance, Ryle suggests that the difference between self-knowledge and other-knowledge is at most a

matter of degree, and stems from the mundane fact that each of us is always present to observe our own behavior. This would quickly lead to a regress, which could be blocked only by positing a state that somehow comprehends itself. But Ryle regarded this sort of reflexivity as impossible. Interestingly, skepticism about reflexive self-awareness was already present in James. Self-consciousness, if the word is to be used at all, must not be described on the hallowed paraoptical model, as a torch that illuminates itself by beams of its own light reflected from a mirror in its own insides. Others argue that while self-attributions may constitute self-knowledge, they are not epistemically superior to other kinds of beliefs. I suspect that [that our] judgments about the world to a large extent drive our judgments about our experience. Properly so, since the former are the more secure. If psychological states are theoretical entities, both self-attributions and other-attributions will proceed by inference from observed data—presumably, behavior. See the entry on folk psychology as a theory. Skepticism of a different kind stems from a puzzle raised by Boghossian. Some philosophers take attitudes to be relational in another way as well, namely that attitude contents depend on relations to the environment: He notes that there seem to be three ways we might know our mental states: But, he argues, each of these options presents difficulties. It is thus self-verifying, and hence may constitute knowledge on the basis of nothing beyond that thought. Burge. But most cases of self-knowledge are not like this. Boghossian concludes that we face a trilemma regarding self-knowledge. Some deny the assumption that recognizing a relationally defined state requires identifying the relational properties that make it the state that it is. Burge; Heil. Others argue that self-knowledge can be privileged even if it rests on inference. Dretske; Byrne. And some maintain that we can know our attitudes through introspective observation, and that this weakens the case for relational construals of attitudes. Pitt. In a widely cited paper, Nisbett and Wilson present studies showing that subjects routinely misidentify the factors that influenced their reasoning processes. The accuracy of subject reports is so poor as to suggest that any introspective access that may exist is not sufficient to produce generally correct or reliable reports. Wilson now acknowledges this limitation. But Schwitzgebel has also suggested that our attitudes about introspection may be particularly obstinate. This conclusion is borne out by his collaboration with a psychologist Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel. The authors collect introspective reports from a single individual, who carries a beeper that sounds at random moments; when it sounds, she is to note what she is currently thinking and feeling. Strikingly, their disagreement about the reliability of introspection remains even after their lengthy discussion of the results. A crucial problem for the theory of introspection is to fix its range of reliability. This is the problem of calibration, which arises for any scientific instrument and cognitive capacity. I would subdivide the problem into two parts. One would seek to specify the operational conditions under which introspection is sufficiently reliable. The second would seek to specify the propositional contents for which it is reliable. But since there is no clear consensus as to how to evaluate the results of introspection, or what weight to accord other sources of evidence about mental states, such as external stimuli and behavior, introspection faces an especially thorny and complex problem of calibration. Williamson imagines a subject who feels cold at dawn, but gradually warms until she feels warm at noon. At some point she feels barely cold, and truly believes that she feels cold. At the next moment, she feels only very slightly warmer than at the previous moment; but since she felt barely cold at the previous moment, at this later moment she may not, in fact, feel cold. Given that sensations are usually regarded as especially accessible, the fact that one is not always in a position to know whether one is experiencing a given sensation suggests that one is not always in a position to know whether one is in any given mental state. I will briefly sketch two prominent responses to Williamson. But the argument seems not to threaten knowledge in less marginal cases: In another response, Weatherston argues that sensations may be constituents of corresponding self-attributions: This response dovetails with acquaintance accounts. If having a sensation generally allows the subject to form a self-attributing belief that appropriately incorporates that sensation, then feeling cold may be luminous after all. For even a slight difference between feeling cold and feeling not-cold will make a difference in the corresponding self-attributions. According to these accounts, our awareness of our mental states is sometimes peculiarly direct, in both an epistemic sense and a metaphysical sense. It is epistemically direct in that I am not aware of my mental state by being aware of something else. It is metaphysically direct in that no event or process mediates between my awareness and the mental state itself. By contrast, I may be

aware that it rained last night only by being aware of the wet pavement; and, more controversially, my visual experience may mediate between my awareness of the pavement and the pavement itself. The claim that introspective access is both epistemically and metaphysically direct is most plausible for phenomenal states like pain. This is because how a phenomenal state appears epistemically and how it actually is its ontology or nature are, according to many philosophers, one and the same. Pain is not picked out by one of its accidental properties; rather it is picked out by the property of being pain itself, by its immediate phenomenological quality. Recently, the idea that thoughts have a distinctive phenomenology has received renewed attention Bayne and Montague ; Kriegel ; see the entry on consciousness and intentionality. Some philosophers also argue that conscious attitudes, such as judgments, have distinctive phenomenologies. The purported epistemic and metaphysical directness of introspection does not imply that we are either infallible or omniscient about our own states, since it is an open question whether we routinely engage in introspection. Acquaintance accounts hold special appeal for epistemic foundationalists, who claim that all of our knowledge rests on a foundation of beliefs that are justified, but not justified by other beliefs. Acquaintance accounts provide for highly secure beliefs that are justified by experiences rather than by other beliefs. For example, Fumerton argues that an experience can directly justify the belief that one is having that experience. In this context, the truth-maker for a belief is the mental state that makes it true: Terms in square brackets are mine.

Chapter 3 : self-knowledge | Definition of self-knowledge in English by Oxford Dictionaries

Support. Mentoring. Inspiration. Empowerment. Transformation. Self-Knowledge. Life coaching. Changes. Health + fitness, body mind + spirit. Love.

She has widely published about early modern philosophy, Neo-Kantianism and the history of philosophy mind. He worked on Ancient philosophy, esp. Heraclitus, Plato and Marcus Aurelius. He also is interested in the relation of historical and systematic perspective in Philosophy and will edit Philosophy and the Historical Perspective Proceedings of the British Academy for Oxford University Press. He is author of Fichtes Lehre vom Sein. Hegels Theorie der Wirklichkeit Frankfurt She edited Self,World, Art. Her research interests include the cinematic medium, the Caribbean, and diaspora. He specializes in early modern and modern moral and political philosophy. He is currently professor at the University of South Florida. Her specialization is in ancient Greek and Roman philosophy, especially ancient ethics, politics, and moral psychology. Most of her published articles are on Plato, but she has also published on Aristotle, the Stoics, and virtue ethics, both ancient and contemporary. She is currently writing a book entitled Desire and the Good: Other interests include the virtues; the philosophy of love and friendship; the relationship between philosophy and theology; and the relevance of philosophy to psychotherapy. He has published widely on medieval philosophy especially Christian Neoplatonism and contemporary European philosophy especially phenomenology. His books include Introduction to Phenomenology , Edmund Husserl. His research has focused on narrative strategy in Greek poetry, particularly Theocritus and Homer. His current research focuses on theories of mind in late medieval and early modern philosophy. His books include Ancient and Medieval Theories of Intentionality ed. Philosophische Emotionstheorien , The Faculties: He has published extensively on issues in ethics, moral psychology, and philosophy of mind in 19th and 20th century continental philosophy. Pauliina Remes is professor in theoretical philosophy, especially history of philosophy, in Uppsala University. She is the author of Plotinus on Self. Remes has also published articles on Plato. Ethica more geometrico demonstrata. Among his publications are Categories of the Temporal , and Self-Consciousness Christopher Shields is the George N. Homonymy in the Philosophy of Aristotle , Classical Philosophy: A Contemporary Introduction ; revised and expanded as Ancient Philosophy: He is the editor of The Vienna School Reader: Politics and Art Historical Method in the s

Chapter 4 : Ethics and Self-Knowledge: Respect for Self-Interpreting Agents - PDF Free Download

The main entry focused on knowledge of one's own mental states. Yet "self-knowledge" can also be used to refer to knowledge of the self and its nature. Issues about knowledge of the self include: (1) how it is that one distinguishes oneself from others, as the object of a self-attribution; (2).

Self-recognition in chimpanzees and man: A developmental and comparative perspective. Learning to control the environment in infancy. An essay concerning human understanding. The principles of psychology Vol. The self as a knowledgeable structure. As cited in Sedikedes, C. Self-reference and the encoding of personal information. Self-knowledge of an amnesia patient: Toward a neuropsychology of personality and social psychology. Remembering and knowing the past. Priming of semantic autobiographical knowledge: A case study of retrograde amnesia. The mental representation of trait and autobiographical knowledge about the self. Independence of episodic and semantic self-knowledge: The case from autism. The anterograde retrieval ability of a patient with amnesia due to encephalitis. Evidence for the differential impairment of remote episodic memory. Preserved and impaired self-knowledge in amnesia: To be adored or to be known? The interplay of self-enhancement and self-verification. As cited in Brown, J. Self-enhancement, self-assessment, and achievement behavior. Accuracy and bias in self-knowledge. A theory of social comparison processes. To thine own self be good, to thine own self be sure, to thine own self be true, and to thine own self be better. A review and the proposal of an integrated theory of personality. A theory of personality. The primacy of self-integrity. A theory of cognitive dissonance. Bringing social reality into harmony with the self. As cited in Suls, J. Theory and research concerning social comparisons of personal attributes. For better or worse: The impact of upward social comparisons on self-evaluations. Downward comparison principles in social psychology. Motives for social comparison. Human nature and the social order. A formalized theory of self-concept. The somewhat social self: How others affect self-appraisals. Do people know how others view them? An empirical and theoretical account. Verbal reports on mental processes". Self-knowledge and social inference: Journal of Experimental Psychology: Attitudes as temporary constructions. Effects of analyzing reasons on self-prediction. Introspecting about reasons can reduce post-choice satisfaction. Looking back and ahead. The effects of expressive behavior on the quality of emotional experience. A test of the "overjustification" hypothesis. An attributional theory of achievement motivation and emotion. Foundations of social psychology. The spontaneous self-concept as affected by personal distinctiveness. Goals and the self-identification process: Stability and malleability of the self-concept. Self-esteem, mood, and self-evaluation: Changes in mood and the way you see you. Central and peripheral self-conceptions are differentially influenced by mood: Tests of the different sensitivity hypothesis. Self-monitoring processes As cited in Brown, J. Motivated changes in the self-concept. One personality, multiple selves: Integrating personality and social roles. The distinctiveness effect in social categorization: You are what makes you unusual. Rediscovering the social group: Social comparison, self-consistency, and the concept of the self. Self-evaluation effects of interpersonal versus intergroup social comparison. Primed relational schemas as a source of self-evaluative reactions. The self and social conduct: Linking self-representations to prosocial behavior. The case for motivated reasoning. Self-perception following social interaction. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 41,

In Self-Consciousness and Self-Determination Ernst Tugendhat has scrutinized modern philosophy's preoccupation with the special nature of self-consciousness and self-knowledge.

Heinz Kohut [4] initially proposed a bipolar self comprising two systems of narcissistic perfection: Kohut called the pole of ambitions the narcissistic self later, the grandiose self [5], while the pole of ideals was designated the idealized parental imago. According to Kohut, these poles of the self represented natural progressions in the psychic life of infants and toddlers. Kohut termed this form of transference a mirror transference. In this transference, the strivings of the grandiose self are mobilized and the patient attempts to use the therapist to gratify these strivings. Kohut proposed that arrests in the pole of ideals occurred when the child suffered chronic and excessive disappointment over the failings of early idealized figures. Kohut believed that narcissistic injuries were inevitable and, in any case, necessary to temper ambitions and ideals with realism through the experience of more manageable frustrations and disappointments. It was the chronicity and lack of recovery from these injuries arising from a number of possible causes that he regarded as central to the preservation of primitive self systems untempered by realism. In his later years, Kohut believed that selfobject needs were both present and quite varied in normal individuals, as well as in narcissistic individuals. To be clear, selfobjects are not external persons. Kohut and Wolf, [7] explain: Kohut relied heavily on empathy as a method of observation. Kohut did not regard empathy as curative. Empathy is a method of observation. Nevertheless, Winnicott did not undervalue the role of the false self in the human personality, regarding it in fact as a necessary form of defensive organization "a kind of caretaker, a survival suit behind the protection of which the true self was able to continue to exist. Even closer to health, we find the false self " The parent ego can consist of either the Nurturing or Critical Parent. The Nurturing Parent contains a more loving nature, whereas the Critical or Prejudiced Parent consists of preconceived ideas, thoughts, and behaviors learned from previous parents or caregivers. Some of this information can be beneficial, while others are not. The adult ego is otherwise known as our data-processing center. This ego state is able to judge information based on facts, rather than emotions or preconceived beliefs. The child ego is identified as the state that holds all of our memories, emotions, and feelings. People carry this ego state with them all of the time and can reflect back on it at any time. This state can also be divided into two segments: The Free child represents spontaneity, creativity, and a direct way of perceiving the world. The fewer people are in touch with their inner child, the less they are able to form intimate relationships with other people. The Adapted child is the state in which people are able to comply and respond with parental commands and messages. If a parental command is viewed as too strong and demanding, a child ego can rebel against it, which is why this state can also become the Rebellious Child. By knowing about their own ego states, a person can use each one in particular situations in order to enhance their experience or make new social connections. For example, a person would most likely want to be in a Free Child state along with the Adult state while attending a party in order to maximize the fun they are having while also being able to make wise choices. Straight transactions are complementary and result in clear communication among other people. On the contrary, crossed transactions are of diverging ego states that make communication either hard or frustrating. These provoke emotional stress and negative feedback. Self Jung In Jungian analysis, the Self is the central archetype of several archetypes, which are apriori or predispositions of responding to the world in particular ways. The Self, according to Jung, is the most important and difficult archetype to understand. Symbolic spiritual people, such as Christ and Mohammed, are also seen as symbols of the self, because they represent unity and equilibrium. The ego is the center of conscious identity, whereas the Self is the center of the total personality "including consciousness, the unconscious, and the ego. The Self is both the whole and the center. While the ego is a self-contained little circle off the center contained within the whole, the Self can be understood as the greater circle. Jung expresses it in this way: If I were one with the Self I would have knowledge of everything, I would speak Sanskrit, read cuneiform script, know the events that took place in pre-history be acquainted with the life of other planets, etc. Jung also called the Self an imago dei. The Self is

the source of dreams and often appears as an authority figure in dreams with the ability to perceive the future or guide one in the present. Sampson argues that the preoccupation with independence is harmful in that it creates racial, sexual and national divides and does not allow for observation of the self-in- other and other-in-self. The very notion of selfhood has been attacked on the grounds that it is seen as necessary for the mechanisms of advanced capitalism to function. In *Inventing our selves: Psychology, power, and personhood*, Nikolas Rose proposes that psychology is now employed as a technology that allows humans to buy into an invented and arguably false sense of self. It is suggested by Kohut that for an individual to talk about, explain, understand or judge oneself is linguistically impossible, since it requires the self to understand its self. This is seen as philosophically invalid, being self-referential, or reification, also known as a circular argument. Thus, if actions arise so that the self attempts self-explanation, confusion may well occur within linguistic mental pathways and processes. That results from the fact that I perform only part of my actions, the other part being conducted by my thought, expression, practical operations, and so on. The self is viewed as a combination of memories and self-images working self. Our prior knowledge of our self puts constraints on what our working self is and the working self modifies the access to our long-term memory, as well as, what it consists of. For example, an implicit theory of stability is often invoked when assessing political allegiances, therefore if this allegiance actually changes, recollection of past allegiance will be incorrect, and assumed to be the same as the current political identification. One example of this is a study by Conway and Ross, [33] which demonstrates that if a change in skill is expected, but there is no actual improvement, people will believe that their past skill state was worse than it was. Recalling Pain[edit] In general recollection of pain is fairly accurate, although differences are seen between recollection of acute and chronic pain. Research suggests that recall for acute pain is more accurate than recall for chronic pain. This is also hinted in dynamical evolutionary social psychology by Douglas Kenrick et al. The self is an automatic part of every human being, in which enables people to relate to others. The self is made up of three main parts that, incorporated, allow for the self to maintain its function. The parts of the self include: Self-knowledge, interpersonal self, and the agent self. Self-knowledge psychology Self-knowledge is sometimes referred to as self-concept. This feature allows for people to gather information and beliefs about themselves. We learn about ourselves through our looking-glass selves, introspection, social comparisons, and self-perception. In the looking-glass self proposal, a person visualizes how they appear to others, the person imagines how other people will judge them, and they then develop a response to the judgment they receive from other people. The response will likely be something viewed as pride or shame about themselves. The looking-glass self has proved to be partially accurate and inaccurate. A person can view themselves as friendly; however they may appear to be quiet and uptight to another person that may not know them very well. Although a person might not know why they are thinking or feeling in such a way, they are able to know what it is they are feeling. However, developmental stages in life might affect introspection. In a Rosenberg study, children up to a certain stage in development showed that they knew that their parents actually knew them better than they knew themselves. Also, studies done by Nisbett and Wilson uncovered the fact that people might not actually know what they are thinking all of the time. In one particular study, they discovered that many people bought the first stockings that they saw and gave the reasoning behind their choice for buying being based on the color or softness. So, in conclusion, introspection is a way of gaining knowledge about yourself through your inner emotions and thinking, however it is a conscious part of the brain. The automatic part of the brain can make us do a lot of unconscious acts that people have no reasoning for. By looking to other people, we can rate our work and behaviors as good, neutral, or bad. The most beneficial or useful comparisons are those of people that are in the same category as ourselves. For example, a high school football player would be more appropriate in comparing himself to an all-star high school football player, rather than a Super Bowl-winning football player with over 10 years of experience. An upward social comparison refers to a person comparing themselves to a person that is perceived as better than them in a particular area. This can be either motivational or discouraging to the person comparing themselves. A downward social comparison refers to a person comparing themselves to a person that is perceived as worse than them, which can make that person feel better about their self. Their behavior can give them insight as to how their feelings and emotions truly are. If a person regards their self as being smart,

however they continuously receive bad grades over the years, that person might rearrange their thinking that they are not as smart as they previously thought. In knowing about ourselves, we are more capable of knowing how to be socially acceptable and desirable. We seek out self-knowledge due to the appraisal motive, self-enhancement motive, and consistency motive. The appraisal motive describes the desire to learn the truth about oneself in general. The consistency motive is the desire to receive reinforcement of those preconceived notions that a person has about their self. This feedback will verify the thoughts and beliefs they already had relating to their self. Private self-awareness is defined as the self looking inward at oneself, including emotions, thoughts, beliefs, and feelings. All of these cannot be discovered by anyone else. Public self-awareness is defined by gathering information about your self through the perceptions of others. The actions and behaviors that others show towards a person will help that person establish a sense of how others perceive them. For example, if a person likes to sing, however many other people discourage their singing, that person can conclude that they might not be the best at singing. Therefore, in this situation, they are gaining public self-awareness about an aspect of themselves. Four factors that contribute to self-esteem are the reactions we get from other people, how we compare people to ourselves, social roles, and our identification. Our social roles can sometimes be conceived as higher intelligence or ability, such as an Olympic athlete or biotechnologist. Other social roles might be stigmatized as being negative, such as a criminal or homeless person. They are more willing to take more risks and aim for success.

Chapter 6 : Self and Self-Knowledge - Oxford Scholarship

Self-knowledge, Agency and Force 1. Introduction If resistance is met its agent complicates the situation. If now, in spite of resistance, the original tendency.

Chapter 1 Introduction Abstract The charge that an individual or group is guilty of objectifying some other individual or group, is, or once was, a fairly familiar feature of ethical and political discussion. Objectification concerns the way we treat others, the way we understand them, and the way we represent them. This Introduction outlines the aims and structure of the book, which sets out to subject the concept of objectification to a form of critical scrutiny it has not previously received. In considering why contemporary applied and professional ethics has not previously paid close attention to objectification, it uncovers an apparent crisis afflicting the ethical principle of respect for persons. This in turn leads to the identification of a distinct class of moral wrongs – which I term interpretive moral wrongs – to which objectification belongs, and which have not previously been explicitly distinguished. The primary targets of the charge were the pornography, advertising and entertainment industries, and the news media profitably combined in some sectors of the press. These were attacked both on the basis that the ways in which they depicted women were objectifying in and of themselves treating them as objects, or reducing them to the status of objects, and on the basis that they served to foster objectifying attitudes and behaviours in the population as a whole. Several features of this concept of objectification caught my attention. Firstly, there was the thought that something more all-embracing than a political ideology could be invoked in order to explain and critique everyday social behaviour. To be guilty of objectifying women, it did not seem necessary to be a card-carrying patriarchalist, and even the best-intentioned male had reason to question his own habitual attitudes and responses. One could be guilty of objectifying another without visibly doing anything to them. Thirdly, the objectification charge seemed to combine – in a manner that still strikes me as highly intriguing – elements that traditional ethical and political theories seem content to consider separately if they consider them at all. Objectification concerned the way we treat others, the way in which we know and understand them, and the way we represent them. Even, it seemed, the way we see them. Thus the idea of objectification interested me, and continues to interest me, because it registers the fact that there are important reciprocal connections between ethics, political authority, and epistemic authority, which ought to command the attention of anyone seriously concerned with the avoidance of ethical and political abuses. The final fascinating feature of the concept of objectification was that nobody seemed to know precisely what it involved, or how it worked. This latter feature has become increasingly evident during the intervening decades – in which many of the fundamental political goals of seventies and eighties feminism have supposedly been achieved, but which have simultaneously seen a proliferation of the kinds of commercial and media portrayals of women that were the prime targets of the original anti-objectification campaigners. While the concern expressed by the eighties campaigners must have had some general social impact, and certainly had an effect on me, the idea that there exists a widespread cultural objectification of women now seems to resemble one of those conceptual phantoms which, having once served as a basic structural element in our thinking or in the thinking of some of us at any rate, vanishes completely when subjected to careful critical scrutiny. Since it would be a great pity if the concept of objectification were to be lost to ethical and political discourse on the basis of the unexamined assumption that it cannot be given a clear and useful sense, the time seems overdue for it to receive sustained philosophical attention. This is particularly the case for philosophers working in the area of applied and professional ethics, for this is an area in which one still regularly finds the concept invoked. One reads for example of the objectification of patients, particularly geriatric and terminally ill patients, by healthcare professionals. Accordingly, this book has its origins in my attempt to get clear on what objectification really is. However, this task turned out to be less straightforward than was initially imagined. It proved necessary, as my enquiry progressed, to ask why contemporary applied and professional ethics has not dealt very successfully with the concept of objectification hitherto. The attempt to answer this question led me first to consider an apparent crisis currently afflicting the principle of respect for persons in applied and professional

ethics. This in turn led me to identify a distinct class of moral wrongs “ which I term interpretive moral wrongs “ that, to my knowledge, have not previously been explicitly distinguished, or theoretically analysed, as a class. Getting to grips with the only available theoretical material that seemed capable of shedding really useful light on the distinctive features of interpretive moral wrongs did, in the end, help with the initial task of understanding objectification. But it also led to something more “ to what felt to me like a rediscovery of a dimension of our ethical obligations, the existence of which seems barely to be suspected in contemporary approaches to applied and professional ethics. As a consequence of the unfolding character of the enquiry, this book embeds an interpretation of objectification in a broader narrative, which begins by considering the crisis currently afflicting the principle of respect for persons, and concludes by locating my analysis of objectification in terms of a more general ethic of self-interpretation. I will argue that it is only by finding a way to bring the class of moral wrongs that essentially embody interpretations of their victims “ which objectification is a member “ within the ambit of a contemporary ethic of self-interpretation, that we can rediscover the true contemporary relevance of the principle of respect for persons, and re-establish it on a secure footing. Although this principle has in the past been presented as the foundational ethical principle, and as being of particular relevance in applied and professional ethics, developments over recent decades suggest that a discrete principle of respect for persons may be increasingly irrelevant in practice. Recent work in biomedical ethics, animal welfare ethics, and environmental ethics tends to suggest that respect for persons is only of local significance “ since the class of moral patients is by no means co-extensive with the class of persons. Where something analogous to a principle of respect for persons does survive, in the form of a principle of respect for autonomy, it has undergone a fundamental transformation. Chapter 3 considers an example of widely recognised ethical wrong that has the potential to prompt a critical revision of the picture of the continuing relevance of the principle of respect for persons that emerged from Chapter 2. The wrong in question is that of discrimination. I offer an analysis of discrimination that suggests that it cannot be reduced to any form of straightforward unfairness or injustice, since it includes an essential interpretive element. One can only be discriminated against as a member of this or that group. By contrast, when one is bullied or exploited, one may be simply bullied or exploited. Chapter 4 discusses some potential counterexamples to the analysis of discrimination as an interpretive moral wrong. Consideration of these counterexamples leads me to identify stereotyping as an essential component in discrimination. Discrimination combines injustice with stereotyping, but stereotyping also turns out to be a significant interpretive moral wrong in its own right. Chapter 5 focuses on the concept of objectification. All three stages of objectification include an element of instrumentalisation. However, two of the three stages also involve an element of stereotyping, and thus qualify as interpretive moral wrongs. The latter forms of objectification accomplish a more comprehensive reduction of their victim to the 1. When a victim of objectification interprets herself as an object of use the wrongs associated with straightforward instrumentalisation are perpetuated and intensified. The example of sexual objectification serves here to illustrate the nature and effects of objectification, thus understood. Chapter 6 addresses some critical questions raised by the analysis of objectification in Chapter 5, and seeks to draw some more general conclusions from it. If objectification in its more developed forms involves an element of instrumentalising self-interpretation, and if as in sexual objectification the materials for such instrumentalising self-interpretations belong, inter alia, to certain common sense conceptions of who and what we are, a fully adequate analysis of objectification requires a critique of the relevant common sense beliefs and assumptions. In short, it must be radical, rather than merely reformist, in both its ambitions and its approach. I discuss and contrast reformist and radical approaches to the analysis of sexual objectification and related moral wrongs, including the Marxist concept of commodification, before going on to argue that the critique of common sense must also extend to include a critique of the common sense assumptions that apparently underlie certain scientific conceptions of human nature. This chapter, and with it Part I of the book, concludes with an examination of the normative basis of the analysis of interpretive moral wrongs. I argue that the instrumentalising or otherwise distorted self-conceptions on which interpretive moral wrongs depend not only serve to facilitate and perpetuate a range of offences against persons, but also undermine the dignity of their victims directly. Kant teaches us that human dignity is paradigmatically displayed in autonomous action. I

argue that human dignity is also exemplified in undistorted self-interpretation, and thus in self-knowledge. A concern with undistorted self-interpretation should not replace a concern with autonomous action, but undistorted self-interpretation is arguably a presupposition of autonomous action. Notwithstanding the concerns raised in Chapter 2 then, the principle of respect for persons still has a significant role to play in an ethic of self-interpretation, whose distinctive concern is with interpretive moral wrongs. In Chapter 7, which opens Part II of the book, I begin a search for sources for an ethic of respect for persons, as an ethic of self-interpretation, drawn from modern European philosophy. Hegel was perhaps the first philosopher to appreciate that an ethic of respect for persons makes sense only in the context of an ethic of recognition. I outline some salient features of the Hegelian theme of recognition, but also draw attention to its inherent essentialism – a feature that is unlikely to be regarded positively in contemporary applied and professional ethics. Nevertheless, it would suffer from two major drawbacks in such a role. Firstly, it looks to belong to an ethic of private perfection rather than one of public obligation. In Kantian terms, it looks to be a source of imperfect duties, at best. Secondly, while it has direct implications for the uncritical adoption of particular instrumentalised self-conceptions, it tells us little about the ways in which our actions potentially engender instrumentalised self-conceptions in others. Sartre explores the way that struggles over instrumentalised self-conceptions pervade human personal relationships. He also shows how the adoption of an instrumentalised self-conception, or the inculcation of an instrumentalised self-conception in another, involves not simply a failure of authenticity, but an element of mendacity. It follows that we have a perfect duty not to adopt or inculcate instrumentalised self-conceptions. However, it remains excessively voluntaristic, and focused on the sphere of personal relationships. Chapter 10 aims to address these limitations by drawing on themes from the work of Michel Foucault. In addition, Foucault focuses explicitly on the price paid for adopting a scientific self-conception – an issue of particular relevance for an ethic of self-interpretation geared to addressing issues in contemporary applied and professional ethics. Chapter 11 returns to the key question of the normative foundations of a sceptical essentialist ethic of self-interpretation. The interim conclusion of Chapter 6 – that the normative foundations of an ethic of respect for persons as self-interpreting beings lie in the importance of an undistorted self-conception in a dignified human existence – might be regarded as vulnerable to the anti-essentialist views canvassed in Chapter 7. Specifically, the notion of an undistorted self-conception may seem to imply the existence of an essential human nature, to which we potentially have access. The sceptical essentialist tradition investigated in Part II might seem to evade such criticisms only at the price of losing all normative purchase. For example, Sartrean concerns about the mendacity involved in adopting or inculcating instrumentalised self-conceptions may seem groundless, if the self is the object of invention, rather than discovery. Chapter 11 argues that the characteristically Nietzschean virtue of honesty provides a slim but reliable basis for a sceptical essentialist ethic of self-interpretation. Rejecting the idea that our nature is simply potentially discoverable does not commit us to embracing the alternative view that all conceptions of human nature are simply inventions. It can still coherently be claimed that self-conceptions may be adopted honestly or dishonestly; and thus the notion of a distorted self-conception can be glossed as a self-conception that, if adopted, would be adopted dishonestly. References 7 Chapter 11 concludes with a brief summary of the implications, for applied and professional ethics, of the expansion of the principle of respect for persons to include an ethic of honest self-interpretation. Professional roles typically involve the mastery of a body of authoritative knowledge. An adequate professional ethic of respect for persons would include an ethic of honest self-interpretation; and this would imply a duty to avoid inculcating and, where practicable, to correct dishonest self-conceptions, in both ourselves, and those whose lives we affect. A note on style: There is an established convention in philosophical writing to use gender-neutral language, or feminine forms, wherever possible. I have adopted this as my default, but in some contexts such as the discussion of master and slave in Chapter 7 it seems perverse to insist on using feminine forms. Accordingly, I have departed from the established convention where the context seemed to demand it. References Bowling, Ben, and Corretta Phillips. Racism, crime and justice. In Rhetorical spaces, 83 – Ethical issues in human experimentation. In A companion to bioethics, eds. Helga Kuhse and Peter Singer, – Inventing right and wrong. Economic and political manuscripts of

Writings of the young Marx on philosophy and society, eds. Easton and Kurt H. The concept of mind. Being and nothingness trans: Part I Respect for Persons and Interpretive Moral Wrongs Chapter 2 Fragmentation Abstract The ethical principle of respect for persons has been considered by many to be central to any adequate system of ethics. Some have gone so far as to present it as the supreme principle of morality in general.

Chapter 7 : What is SELF AS AGENT? definition of SELF AS AGENT (Psychology Dictionary)

In Self-Knowing Agents Lucy O'Brien accounts for some of the most perplexing features of first-personal self-knowledge by appealing to our awareness of ourselves as agents of mental and physical acts. This is difficult territory, as likely to lead one to hand-waving generalities as to forest-blind.

Reviewed by Robert J. This is difficult territory, as likely to lead one to hand-waving generalities as to forest-blind technicalities. This book will be must reading for those interested in the sort of privileged access marked by the "essential indexical" as well as for those interested in non-Cartesian views that allow a sort of privileged access to bodily actions. I can also see it being of interest to anyone interested in action theory, epistemology and philosophy of mind in general. In the first, she discusses the problems of first-person reference and offers her "agency account" as a solution to them. First-person reference has several distinguishing features. Such reference is guaranteed, has an irreducible cognitive significance, and is "identification free" in that it can be secured in the absence of independent avenues of identifying the referent. These peculiarities have led some, most notably Anscombe, to claim that "I" is ultimately not a referring term. She does not, however, think that we can simply ignore the important disanalogies between self-reference and other types of reference that are perceptually grounded. Thus in chapter three she considers several versions of the "perceptual model," focusing on that of Gareth Evans. The reason is that these puzzles gain traction not because "I" is linguistically perplexing but because some of its uses reflect a basic sort of self-consciousness: If one takes seriously the need to spell out the nature of self-consciousness, one will eventually appeal to a basic sort of awareness, and there does seem to be an awareness we enjoy as the originators of our judgments and actions that is independent of the awareness we have of the judgments and actions themselves. If one doubts this, one can think about cases of "thought insertion" where individuals -- usually schizophrenics -- have thoughts that, according to them, are being "spoken into their heads" by unknown interlopers. There is a phenomenology associated with the sense of authorship that is surely lacking in such cases. The identification of oneself as an object seems precisely the wrong way to ground self-consciousness, so agential awareness is a natural explanation of how we know ourselves as ourselves. The final chapter of part one aims to provide such an explanation, focusing on our awareness of our own thoughts. For a subject to have rational control over her mental life she must have the capacity to assess possibilities available to her, and be able immediately to act on such assessments. For a subject to engage in an assessment of what to do is for a subject to determine what she should do. The suggestion then is that any action produced directly on the basis of an active assessment by an agent will be an action of which the agent is aware of as hers. Nevertheless, I think there is some reason to question whether her analysis sheds much light on self-consciousness and in particular whether the "agential" part of the self-consciousness is doing much work. Rational connections between actions and self-ascriptions. A subject is rationally entitled to self-ascribe an act carried out on the basis of a consideration of how to act because of rational connections between the nature and pre-suppositions of her act and her self-ascription. Another is whether that entitlement is specifically agential. In fact, I think there is reason to believe that agential awareness must presuppose a more basic self-awareness. That depends on what "such consideration" means in this context. Someone else could, of course, be going through exactly similar deliberations and their actions can be carried out immediately on the basis of those deliberations. But then it seems as though her entitlement to self-ascribe the action depends upon her grasp of her conscious deliberations and her conscious grasp that those deliberations are hers. Why is she entitled to self-ascribe her deliberations? One almost irresistible hypothesis is that it is when those deliberations are conscious there is no question as to whether or not they are hers, just as when she is in pain there is no question as to whether or not the pain is hers. But if this is the case, it seems the entitlement conferred by consciousness is basic, not agent consciousness after all. Contrary to recent trends, she grounds all privileged self-knowledge in psychological self-knowledge. She resists Cartesianism, however, by claiming that physical actions are ultimately psychological phenomena. Though I myself remain somewhat unconvinced, this is an attractive way to avoid throwing the baby out with the Cartesian bathwater. Chapter eight is an essay on the ontology of actions. Her thesis is that actions are not

"metaphysical hybrids," each one including a purely physical part and a purely mental part, glued together by causation. Instead, she maintains that actions constitute "primitive unities. Just as the analysis of knowledge is problematized by counterexamples involving deviant evidential chains, so the analysis of action is problematized by deviant causal chains connecting intention and action. When a subject performs an action, she has authoritative knowledge that she has acted and that she has performed the particular action she has performed. This knowledge is unusual not only because it reflects epistemic authority, but also because this authority does not stem from a perception of the action. She explains this access once again in terms of agent-awareness. Acting on the basis of a grasp of the possibilities for acting will simply bring that further knowledge in tow. This is because her "active evaluation only makes sense on the assumption that she is determining what she should do and in actively evaluating her choices the agent manifests awareness that these are ways she can act. One can also evaluate a set of possibilities and then move as a result of that evaluation: This can be done unconsciously and without any special sort of self-knowledge. I am not considering the possibilities as possibilities for my action, and I am not basing my action on that consideration in the appropriate way. What is it to consider possibilities as possibilities for my action as opposed to mere possibilities for action? Even were this question answered, a gap would remain, however, because I can clearly behave as a result of my contemplating the possibilities for my action without that behavior being something I am conscious of as one of my actions: I could unconsciously scratch my head when I face a moral dilemma, for example. I have no authority in this case because when I scratch my head I am not consciously basing my action on my consideration of my possibilities. An explanation of our privileged access to our own actions would have to explain what this "conscious basing" involves and such an explanation is not forthcoming. Of course not every analysis needs to be fully reductive. The problem here is that the unexplained explanans looks very similar to the original explanandum. That is, "consciously basing bodily movements upon possibilities" seems less of an analysis or explanation of "acting with first-personal knowledge" than a different way of saying the same thing. All of the original mysteries seem intact under different headings. Chapter ten suggests that we model our understanding of bodily perception upon our understanding of the perception of secondary qualities. My feeling a pain in my foot can be analyzed into a structure not unlike that of my seeing the brownness on my desk. Pains and tickles, on her view, can be seen as "perceptible properties of parts of our bodies discriminable by bodily awareness. Nevertheless, there could be much deeper discussion of the parallels between secondary quality perception and bodily perception. Can we comprehend an equivalent of spectral inversion in the case of bodily experience? It seems plausible that our intuitions about bodily perception in various thought experiments might not map neatly onto our intuitions about secondary qualities. Her main thesis is that though bodily awareness can, perhaps, count as privileged in some way, it cannot constitute the basic awareness we have of ourselves because it is ultimately perceptual. When we act using our own bodies, however, we do gain such basic knowledge. She summarizes her view as follows: What appears critical to making bodily awareness of a body, awareness of a body as mine, is my ability to act with that body. In the absence of action the sense of ownership can, I suggest, recede, and given multiple access and knowledge of the possibility of such access, what will secure for me that the body I am aware of is mine is that this is the body that responds to my will. Overall, *Self-Knowing Agents* is a book well worth studying. It covers a wide range of interesting and difficult problems, and even where its solutions fail to convince, they do not fail to provoke. Its two sections -- the first on self-reference and the second on the knowledge of bodily action -- are both valuable, but for different reasons. The first contains a top-notch discussion of a difficult problem, concluding with an original solution. The second covers a larger range of problems with slightly less depth, but with a keen eye for interesting debates and inventive positions. It is to her credit that she spurs that literature forward and gestures at a way in which these two problems might yield to a similar approach.

Chapter 8 : Self-knowledge (psychology) - Wikipedia

The acquisition of self-knowledge is often described as one of the main goals of philosophical inquiry. At the same time, some sort of self-knowledge is often regarded as a necessary condition of our being a human agent or human subject.

Teaching Tips My colleagues and I have observed that some of our students take the same course multiple times with the goal of improving each time, but often only manage to accrue a dismal track record of failing or near-failing grades. Male undergraduates who scored in the clinically impaired range on the Wisconsin Card Sorting Test repeated more courses, withdrew from courses more often, had lower GPAs, and graduated at a lower rate than non-perseverative men. There are numerous reasons, of course, why a student might not benefit from feedback, including motivation, lack of sleep, drug use, or failure to understand the task, among others. This article addresses the specific issue of awareness of self-performance in the context of a semester-long undergraduate course on personality. Increasing emphasis on flawed self-assessment and self-awareness in my personality course has led me to consider the role of self-awareness in education more generally. It was not, however, always this way. Today, we are either less concerned with self-knowledge than in the past, or we assume that the ability to be aware of oneself as a cognitive agent is already present in our students when they arrive at college. Poor self-awareness contributes to potential negative outcomes in the form of tension or conflict between the conscious and unconscious self that is associated with personality problems and interpersonal difficulties, among others Wilson, Thus, enhancing self-knowledge is not only an academic pursuit, but also a means for optimizing functional adaptation in the world. Conceptual Framework of the Course The cognitive, affective, and personality sciences have yielded convincing evidence of the existence of multiple aspects of self. Put in a more mundane way, the conscious-unconscious distinction underlies the popular caution: When successful, students are faced with contradictory evidence between their consciously driven and unconsciously driven experiences. The overarching framework for the questioning of experience is to reveal the existence of conscious explicit; effortful and unconscious implicit; automatic processes Kihlstrom, ; Wilson, , drawing on a wide range of psychological phenomena. The course syllabus available from author reflects a simple, dual-nature model of self, the conscious, and the modern unconscious Kihlstrom, This model is revealed experientially via in class exercises and didactically via the assigned readings. These represent a broad range of personality theory along a molar-molecular dimension, where, for example, biochemical models of personality are contrasted to interpersonal theories. Practical Considerations Optical illusions represent an efficient and effective strategy for revealing the distortions reflected in our conscious perceptions. Consider as one example, the following illusion: By not giving a third choice of equal, the illusion is enhanced, although it is powerful even without this manipulation. The distribution of the responses efficiently generated with iClicker technology is projected to the class, with the majority of the class choosing B. Hardcopies of the illusion are then distributed, allowing students to physically compare the two tables by cutting out the figures and placing one on top of the other. Such an immediate experience of change in point of view leads to a discussion of unconscious sensory processes that result in conscious perceptual-cognitive distortion. Cognitive processes are also revealed to have both conscious and unconscious components. In class, we review an empirical study and discuss two different statistical strategies. Students are then asked to respond to the following: Positive emotions in young women are critical to positive life outcomes later in life. I strongly agree C. Students indicate, a second time, the degree to which positive emotion in young adulthood is critical to positive outcome later in life. The third and final component to questioning the veracity of immediate experience is illustrated using classic experiments to create false memories e. For example, the following words are presented, one at a time: Measuring Knowledge of the Self While there is little doubt, as evidenced in spontaneous expressions of surprise and questions in class, that there is a growing awareness of multiple self-perspectives among students, this is not the same as actually measuring self-knowledge. Ideally, we should be able to track self-knowledge empirically over the course of the semester. To do this, just prior to each of four exams during the semester, we asked students to submit their predicted exam score. I would like to thank Andrew Lewine for this suggestion. Students could earn

modest extra credit by making accurate predictions of how they would perform. It was expected that over the semester, the students would improve their ability to accurately predict their scores, without necessarily improving their absolute grades. Subjective reports from the students are also encouraging: It helped me get a more realistic idea of what my abilities are. And I would have to say that I personally applied the SAC point idea to my other courses when I took those exams as well. I am not expecting one grade and getting another. This has lowered my anxiety of disappointment. Consider the following spontaneous email from one of the students in the class: I have been medicated for General Anxiety Disorder for about 2 years now and the past half year I have barely even noticed any anxious thoughts. All of this talk about suppression of thoughts and feelings and conflict has begun to increase my anxiety levels again. A lot of work I have read on anxiety supports that anxiety is a life-long condition. Do you believe the pursuit of knowing thyself can eventually wipe out anxiety? Is an increase in anxiety levels a natural part in knowing thyself? Such an example is a powerful illustration of both the effectiveness of the course and its potential risks. Educators who offer the types of courses outlined in this article must be ready to engage students actively outside of class, including helping students find appropriate help if needed. This particular individual had a positive outcome: The results are encouraging, although it is recognized that much remains to be explored and tested, and that there is always room for further refinement. In addition, there are several issues that have not been addressed, such as the relationship between self-knowledge and academic performance, the contributions of practice versus education in the improvement of predicting exam performance over time, long-term benefits of enhancing self-knowledge, the extension of self-knowledge to broader domains of personality style or dispositions, self-knowledge as a cognitive process, and the role of self-knowledge in the development of critical thinking. In short, there are still questions that need to be answered by empirical science regarding the construct validity of self-knowledge, but these are important and worthwhile questions to pursue. In the meantime, the pedagogical perspective adopted for this course can proceed, for at the very least, it stimulates an informed engagement with psychological concepts.

Principles and Practices There are several principles and practices that should be considered by readers interested in using the self-awareness perspective. Error is at the core of self-awareness. None of us enthusiastically seek our mistakes, and finding them is often at the cost of some emotional unpleasantness, at least initially. It is therefore critical that the instructor appreciates the need for and facilitates an accepting and supportive environment. By using appropriate personal examples, the instructor can demonstrate an accepting attitude in addition to highlighting the value of self-awareness. After several years of being surprised by my irritation and depression and me being a trained clinical psychologist! Start with the fun stuff. We must all be seduced into self-awareness, and I know of no better tools than humor and optical illusions. However, both must be selected carefully to fit the substantive material of the lecture or discussion. In addition to the examples provided above, the interested reader can search the web for dozens of optical illusions. As for humor, Cathcart and Klein provide a treasure trove of stories, jokes, and anecdotes that explicate core principles of philosophy and are applicable to the many cognitive distortions that interfere with accurate self-awareness. It seems fitting to close this article with a Groucho Marx quote that Cathcart and Klein used in the opening dedication to their book:

Chapter 9 : Psychology of self - Wikipedia

Today, we are either less concerned with self-knowledge than in the past, or we assume that the ability to be aware of oneself as a cognitive agent is already present in our students when they arrive at college.