

Seminar on Meaning, Reference and Truth (P.Horwich and C.Peacocke, Wednesdays, Fall 2009I)

Course Description:

This Seminar will focus on the nature of meaning and understanding, and their relations to reference and truth. Is truth to be understood in deflationary terms? If so, how? Can meaning and understanding be elucidated independently of reference and truth? If not, why not? We will discuss the nexus of issues surrounding these problems, including: the role of use in the individuation of meaning and the elucidation of understanding; the correct elucidation of the rule-following apparently involved in understanding, and its significance for accounts of meaning and understanding; the correct account of the relation between meaning and epistemic norms; the role of the community in the explanation of meaning and understanding. We may also talk about some more specific salient areas important to resolving the general theoretical issues, including the nature of sensation language and our understanding of it; and the lessons to be learned from some paradoxes of truth and reference.

In addition to presenting new material on these topics, we also aim to expound various positions in such a way that the course will serve as a graduate-level introduction to this cluster of issues.

**\*\*The meetings of this course will alternate between Columbia and NYU.  
THE FIRST MEETING OF THE SEMINAR on 9 SEPTEMBER WILL BE AT NYU,  
5 WASHINGTON PLACE, starting at 4.30pm.\*\***