Course Description:

“The exercise of the muscular frame is the source of some of our chief enjoyments. This activity is followed by weariness and a desire for rest; and although unattended with any describable pleasure of local sensation, there is diffused through every part of the frame a feeling almost voluptuous.” Charles Bell (1833)

The milk has spoiled. It has a foul, sour odor, with an even worse taste. Even its pale greenish color is deeply unpleasant. Our experience of the spoiled milk is suffused with a negative, awful character. Thankfully, not all of our experiences are like this. Indeed, many of our experiences are quite pleasant. A cold glass of lemonade on a hot day, for instance, can be immensely pleasing and enjoyable. Many, perhaps most, of our conscious experiences possess some pleasant or unpleasant character. This felt positive or negative component of an experience is often called its affect (sometimes also called its valence, salience, or hedonic tone). Affect plays an immediate and powerful role in our conscious lives: it provides a rich felt awareness of the potential goods and harms in our environment, and adds value and meaning to our experiential lives. Affect so understood is distinct from the other aspects of conscious awareness: it is not simply an awareness of things around us, nor is it just an emotional or subjective reaction in us. Instead, our affective lives seem to present things to us in a certain way, bridging the gap between information processing and evaluative appraisal.

This seminar will look at recent philosophical theories of affective experience, with a slight focus on classic and recent work on pain.

**Course Requirements:** There will be one (15-20) page paper, and either one or two in-class presentations (depending on numbers).

**Format:** We will discuss two or three papers/chapters each week, for approximately one hour each. Each paper will be preceded by a student presentation of no more than 20 minutes, leaving the remainder of the time for discussion.

**Reading Schedule (subject to revision):** (an * indicates an optional but recommended reading)

**Week 1: Introduction and background**
Introduction, course mechanics, outline

**Week 2: Historical views of pleasure**

**Week 3: Recent work on pleasure**
**Week 4: Early work on Pain**


**Week 5: The Problem of Pain**

Dretske, “The Epistemology of Pain” (Aydede, Ch. 2)

Hill, “Ow! The paradox of Pain” (Aydede, Ch. 3)


**Week 6: Representationalism about pain**

Tye, “Another Look at Representationalism about Pain” (Aydede, Ch. 4)

   Responses by Aydede, Block, and Maund

Tye, “In Defense of Representationalism: Reply to Critics” (Aydede, Ch. 9)

**Week 7: Representationalism 2**


Fulkerson and Aydede, (Ms) “Affect: Representationalism’s Headache”

*Moreland Perkins, “An indirectly Realist, Representational Account of Pain(ed) Perception” (Aydede, Ch. 11)*

**Week 8: Psychofunctionalist accounts**

Austen Clark, “Painfulness is not a Quale” (Aydede, Ch. 10)

Fulkerson and Aydede, (Ms) “Affective Qualities”

**Week 9: Imperative views of pain**


**Week 10: Mixed accounts**
