

*The Explicit Animal*

(CRN: 22345)

\_\_\_\_\_ : CLE B315; Mon. & Thurs. 11:30 a.m. – 12:50 p.m.  
\_\_\_\_\_ : Dr. David Scott  
\_\_\_\_\_ : CLE B320  
\_\_\_\_\_ : Tues. 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (always only by appointment)  
\_\_\_\_\_ : 250-721-7517; djfscott@uvic.ca  
  
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Raymond Tallis' work has been devoted to understanding what is distinctive about human being, and as such as frequently been hailed as "a salutary wake-up call for the humanities." Given philosophy's central place in the humanities, it can be viewed as an extended remonstrance against philosophy for its having fallen asleep at the wheel. "The distinctive features of human beings—self-hood, free will, that collective space called the human world, the sense that we lead our lives rather than simply live them as organisms do—are being discarded as illusions by many, even by philosophers, who should think a little harder and question the glamour of science rather than succumbing to it" *The Explicit Animal* endeavours "to make visible the distinctive features of human, as opposed to animal, consciousness." It argues "against neural explanations of consciousness and against the assumption that consciousness in general, and human consciousness in particular, could be explained in evolutionary terms, as an adaptation." As for Tallis himself, he is described as "[l]iterary, intellectually fretful,... a member of a rare breed of English polymaths who has been waging a lonely war against the explanations and final theories of radical scientific reductionism... Tallis' enquiring spirit is unlikely to achieve a popular reception: but he may well exert what John Stuart Mill characterized as a 'seminal influence'." Tallis' war is said to be lonely one, because it is waged against the dominant approach of contemporary consciousness studies, the standard starting point of which has been called, by one of its chief proponents, "the objective, materialistic, third-person world of the physical sciences ... the orthodox choice today in the English-speaking world."

In this course we will be supplementing our reading of *The Explicit Animal* with selected texts concerning the nature of mind from the history of philosophy. Part of the point of this course is to indicate the perennial nature of some of Tallis' arguments, and to indicate how much his work is, effectively, an effort to call back philosophers to their roots/mission.

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Raymond Tallis, *The Explicit Animal: A Defence of Human Consciousness* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999). [BD 418.3 T34. On reserve & available online through UVic Library catalogue.]

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Blackburn, Simon. "Finding Psychology," invited introduction to *Mind, Causation and Action*, ed. Leslie Stevenson, Roger Squires, John Haldane (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 1-12. [BD 541 M46]



Course outline

James, William. "The Present Dilemma in Philosophy," Lecture I of *Pragmatism*. [PDF supplied by professor.]

Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm. *Monadology*.

Course outline

Academic Honesty: Cheating of *any*



Course outline

Mon. Jan. 6 - Course Introduction: Biography & assessments of Tallis. Philosophical culture wars, cf. William James

Course outline

Mon. March 16 - *EA* Chapter Six (pp. 161-209).  
Thurs. March 19 - *EA* Chapter Six (pp. 161-209).

Mon. March 23 - *EA* Chapter Six (pp. 161-209).  
Thurs. March 26 - *EA* Chapter Seven (pp. 210-250).

Mon. March 30 - *EA* Chapter Seven (pp. 210-250).  
Thurs. April 2 - *EA* Chapter Seven (pp. 210-250).