

24.400

Proseminar in philosophy I

Fall 2003

*The Problems of Philosophy*

1. According to Russell "The real table, if there is one, is not *immediately* known to us at all" (ch. 1). What sorts of things do we "immediately know"? What does all this mean, anyway? Is Russell right?
2. Explain and evaluate Russell's treatment of belief in ch. 12. How did he criticise this view in "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism"?
3. Well, how is *a priori* knowledge possible?

*Tractatus*

0. Briefly explain Wittgenstein's use of 'fact', 'state of affairs', 'name', 'object' (assume 'thing' is a synonym), 'sign', 'symbol', 'propositional sign', 'proposition', 'elementary proposition', 'pictorial form', 'logical form'.
1. Explain what Wittgenstein means by saying that "a proposition is a picture of reality". Is it?
2. On one interpretation, Tractarian "names" are proper names *and* predicates (and so properties are kinds of Tractarian object). On another interpretation, Tractarian names are proper names, and Tractarian objects are particulars. On yet another interpretation, Tractarian names are proper names, and Tractarian objects are particulars and properties. Decide between them.