

# Workshop: What We Do When We Do Philosophy

## Part I

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WARNING: This is an *interactive* workshop,  
I *will* expect audience participation!



(Mostly in Part II, though some in Part I).

# What is philosophy?

What kinds of topics?

# What kinds of methods?

# My methods

- Reading, writing, thinking
- ... and talking!

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- 1 Edge cases
- 2 Intersection
- 3 What's in there?
- 4 Tool combination

# Methodology and question-asking

- How do we use these methodologies to ask and answer questions?
- What would count as an answer to these questions?
- What would count as a *good* answer to these questions?



Why am I asking these questions?

# Why am I asking these questions?

- ① Self-reflection
- ② Impact on our history
- ③ Impact on our future

Thinking about the past:  
Methodology of the history of philosophy (and  
science)

Thinking about the past:  
Methodology **in** the history of philosophy (and  
science)

## How this applies to history (of philosophy and science)

- Where would historical philosophers put themselves on this spectrum?
- Would they put themselves on the spectrum at all?

# Defining philosophy over time

- philosophy vs. theology (in the early middle ages)
- (natural) philosophy vs. science (in the late middle ages / early modern era)
- philosophy vs. psychology (in the late 19th C)

# How we read historical texts

- As historical texts (historical curiosities)
- As philosophy *of their time*
- As philosophy *of our time*

# Thinking about the future: Consequences of our choices

- *What* we read/study from the past determines what will “count” in the future.
- *Who* we read/study from the past determines who will “count” in the future.



# Workshop: What We Do When We Do Philosophy

## Part II

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Have you done your homework??

- **Homework question 1:** Where on the spectrum do you fall?

content	methods
topic _____	techniques
depth	tools

- **Homework question 2:** If topic: What is your chair/not-chair list?  
How do you define it?
- **Homework question 3:** If method: What methods? What methods are *not* philosophical?

# More homework!

## Homework question 4

- What is analytic philosophy — content or method?
- What methods? What content?
- Who is included? Excluded?

# More homework!!

**Homework question 5:** What problems did you face in answering the previous homework problems?

# Thinking about the future: Consequences of our choices

# More homework!!!

**Homework question 6:** What is the impact (of trying to answer these questions) on:

- Your research?
- Your teaching? (What is philosophy vs. how we do philosophy?)
- Your scope of philosophy?
- Who/what gets included/excluded?

# Thinking about the future: Consequences of our choices

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# Thinking about the future: Consequences of our choices

There is no one *right* way to answer these questions. What is important is that we

- (a) know *what* our answers are
- (b) can say *why* we have answered this way
- (c) understand *how* our answers impact our practice.

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Why?

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## Why?

Because this is the only way we can work to dismantle barriers to entry and systematic structures of exclusion.