

PHIL*6210x4390 SELECTED TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY III [0.50]

Instructor: P. Loptson

Brief Course Synopsis:

Three American Metaphysicians

This course will read and discuss selections from three important metaphysicians who worked and wrote at different times in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, at universities in the United States. We will begin with Roderick M. Chisholm (1916-1999), and his book *Person and Object* (1976). We will go on to a selection of the essays in the recent collection by Jaegwon Kim (1934-), *Essays in the Metaphysics of Mind* (2010). And then we will go back to some of the

work of the much earlier American philosopher Josiah Royce (1855-1916), notably, selections from his 1912 Oxford lectures, (somewhat misleadingly) titled *The Problem of Christianity*.

The central theme and focus in our readings from all three philosophers is the philosophy of the

(human) person, and the relation of the person to the larger wider world of nature. All three of the texts from which we will be reading explore facets of personhood and its setting, and fundamental character in time and space, within a broadly naturalistic or scientifically framed universe, but each defending a robust conception of the metaphysical and moral autonomy of the person.

Course requirements / evaluation:

- Three essays, 12-15 pages each, typed double-spaced—69 %
- Presentation, 15-20 minutes—21%
- Concluding/summary paper, 10 pages—10%