

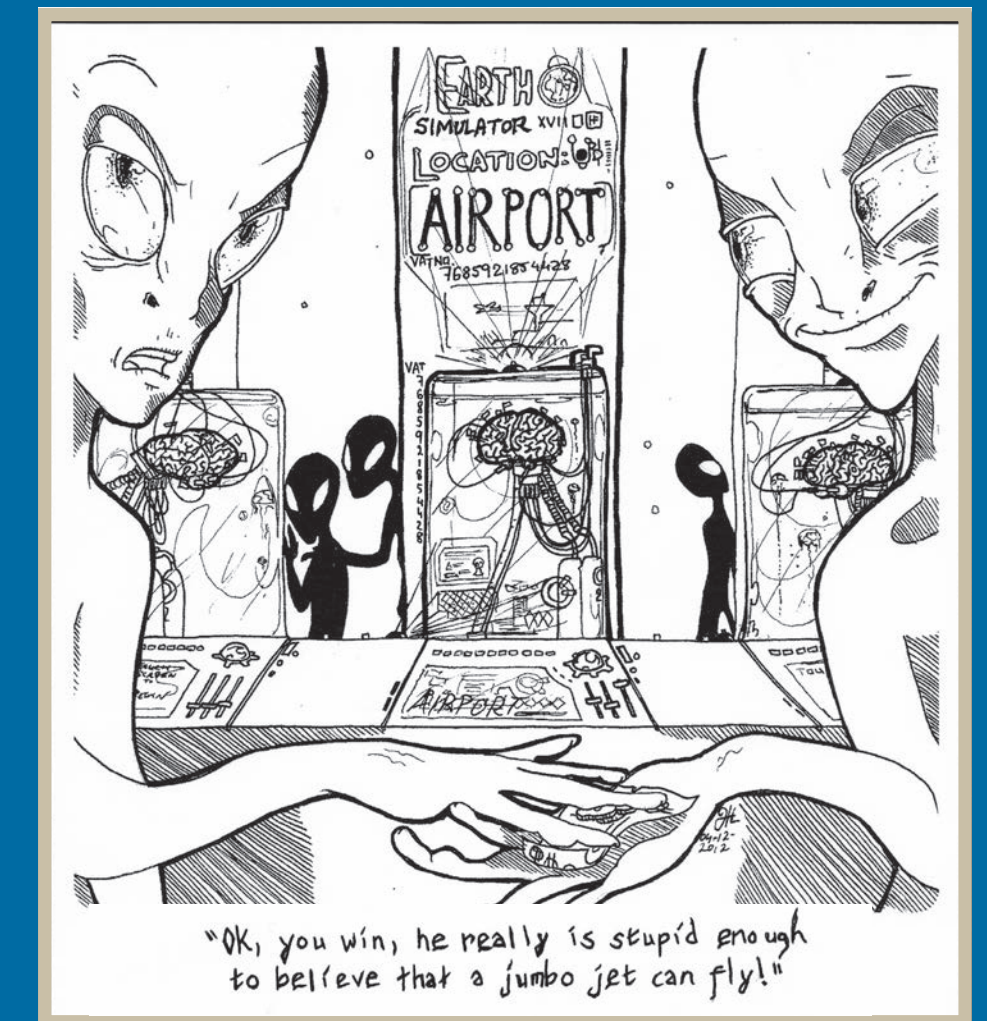
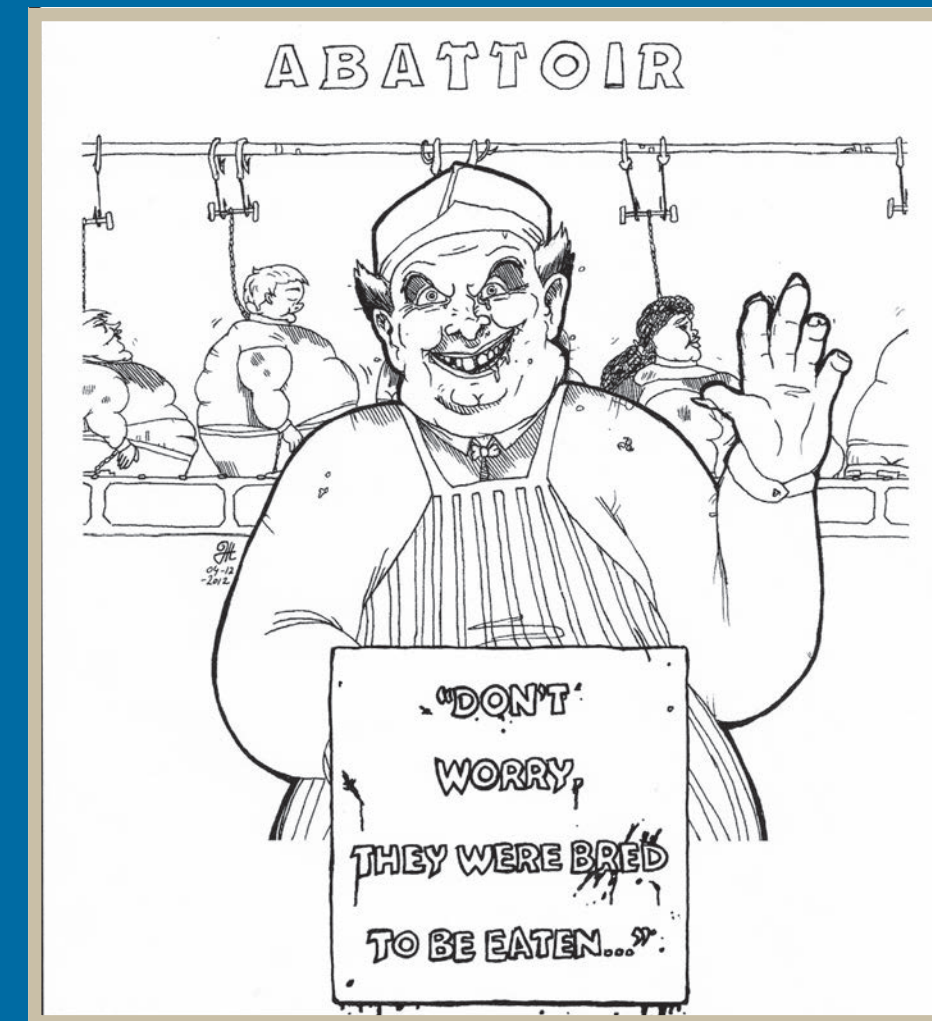
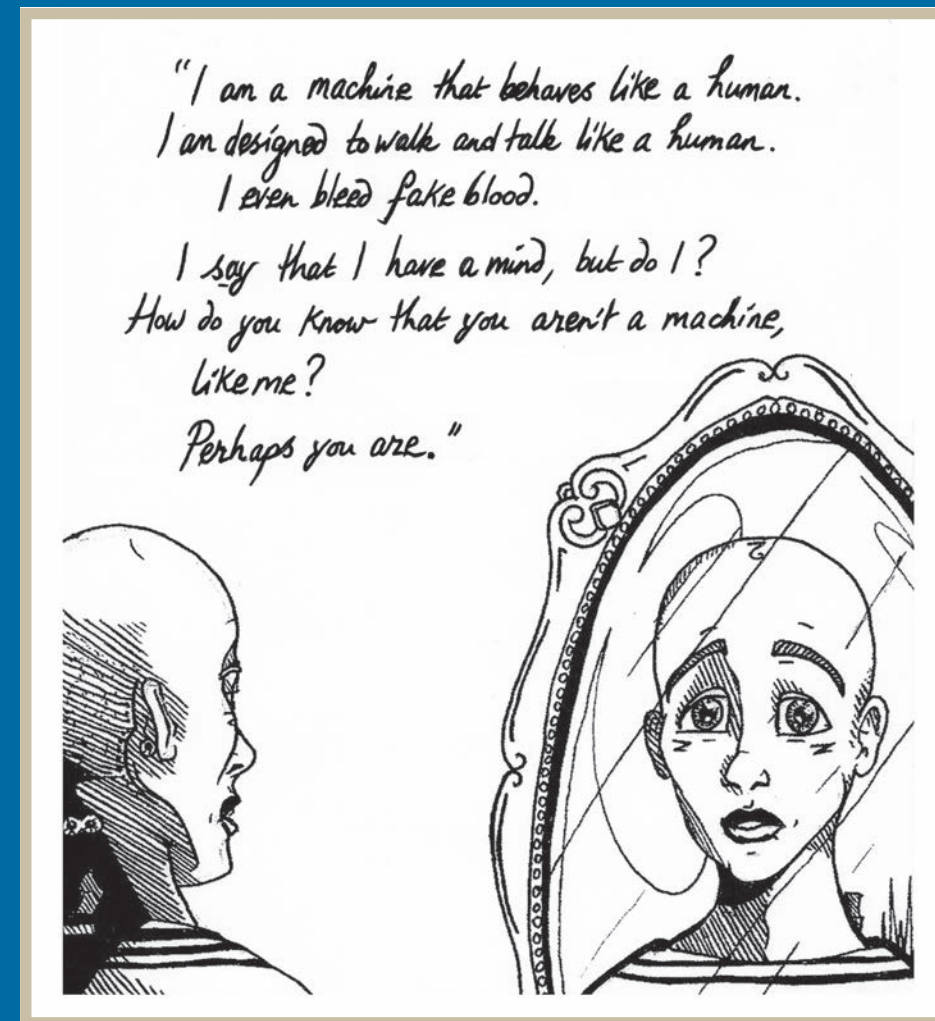
WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY?

THREE PHILOSOPHY PUZZLES

Philosophy addresses some of the deepest and most fascinating puzzles. Philosophers try to use their intelligence - their *powers of reason* - to find the answers, much like a detective does when trying to solve a crime.

Philosophers may not always succeed in finding the answer. But sometimes they do. And they can often show that certain answers are wrong.

Here are three famous philosophy puzzles for you to think about.



COULD A MACHINE THINK?

Suppose technologically-advanced aliens build a machine that looks just like a human being. It looks, talks, walks and even sounds like one of us. The robot replicates human behaviour perfectly down to the last detail. We are completely taken in by their alien creation. We think it's a human. But the truth is, what we are looking at is not a flesh and blood human, but a complex piece of alien technology.

Would such a machine have a mind? Would it feel pain when we drop something on its toe and it says "Ow!". Would it enjoy the taste of an ice-cream when it took a lick with its mechanical mouth?

Of course, being designed to behave like a human, this machine will behave as if it has a mind. It will even say it has a mind. But does it? Or does it lack any *real* thoughts and feelings?

If you think this machine *really has a mind*, try to explain why.

If you think this machine merely *simulates* a mind, can you explain how you can be sure that a *real* mind is missing?

SHOULD I EAT MEAT?

We suppose it's wrong to kill and eat humans. Many of us think it's acceptable to kill and eat other sorts of creature, though, such as pigs and chickens.

But why is it wrong to kill and eat humans, but not wrong to kill and eat other animals?

Is it just because other animals aren't as intelligent as us? If that were the right explanation, it would be OK to kill and eat very stupid humans. But surely that would be wrong?

Is it just because animals are *bred* for the dinner table that it's OK to kill and eat them? But then what if we bred humans to be killed and eaten? Would it then be OK to kill and eat them?

If you think it is wrong to kill and eat humans, but acceptable to kill and eat pigs, for example, can you explain why you are justified in treating humans so differently? Could our attitude to other species be just another form of prejudice, like racism or sexism? Are we guilty of *speciesism*?

This is a controversial issue in philosophy. What do you think?

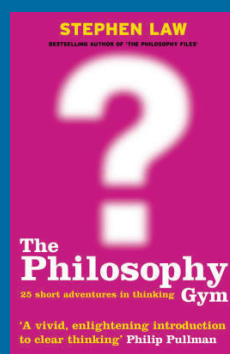
HOW DO I KNOW THIS IS ALL REAL?

How do you know you're not a disembodied brain floating in a vat, hooked up to a supercomputer that's generating a virtual world for you? In the film *The Matrix*, Neo discovers that his whole life had been lived inside such a virtual reality. How do you know that *you* aren't also living inside a similar illusory world?

But if you don't know that the world you seem to see around you is real, how can you know anything about the world outside your own mind? How can you know that you have two hands, for example? Perhaps your hands are just part of the illusion? And how can you know that the Earth goes round the Sun, or that Paris is the capital of France, or that your parents really exist?

Perhaps you can't. Of course we *think* we know these things, don't we? But do we really? What do you think?

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If you are interested in exploring these questions further, you could try reading *The Philosophy Gym*, by Dr Stephen Law, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at Heythrop College.

To find out more about studying philosophy at Heythrop College, go to: www.heythrop.ac.uk/philosophy



Heythrop College

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WHY STUDY PHILOSOPHY?

1. TRANSFERABLE SKILLS THAT EMPLOYERS VALUE

Many degree programmes focus on teaching facts to be memorized (teaching that can soon go out of date). Philosophy, on the other hand, focuses much more on developing *skills* – skills that you will find valuable whatever your chosen path in life. These skills include:

- ❖ The ability to cut through waffle
- ❖ The ability to spot errors in reasoning
- ❖ The ability to make a point with clarity and precision
- ❖ The ability to analyze complex issues and arguments
- ❖ The ability to think independently and creatively (to “think outside of the box”)
- ❖ The ability to build a strong, rigorous case

Philosophy develops an approach to thinking and problem solving that employers value – particularly when it comes to the most interesting and rewarding careers.



2. PHILOSOPHY DEGREE PROGRAMMES PRODUCE SOME OF THE MOST INTELLIGENT & ABLE UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

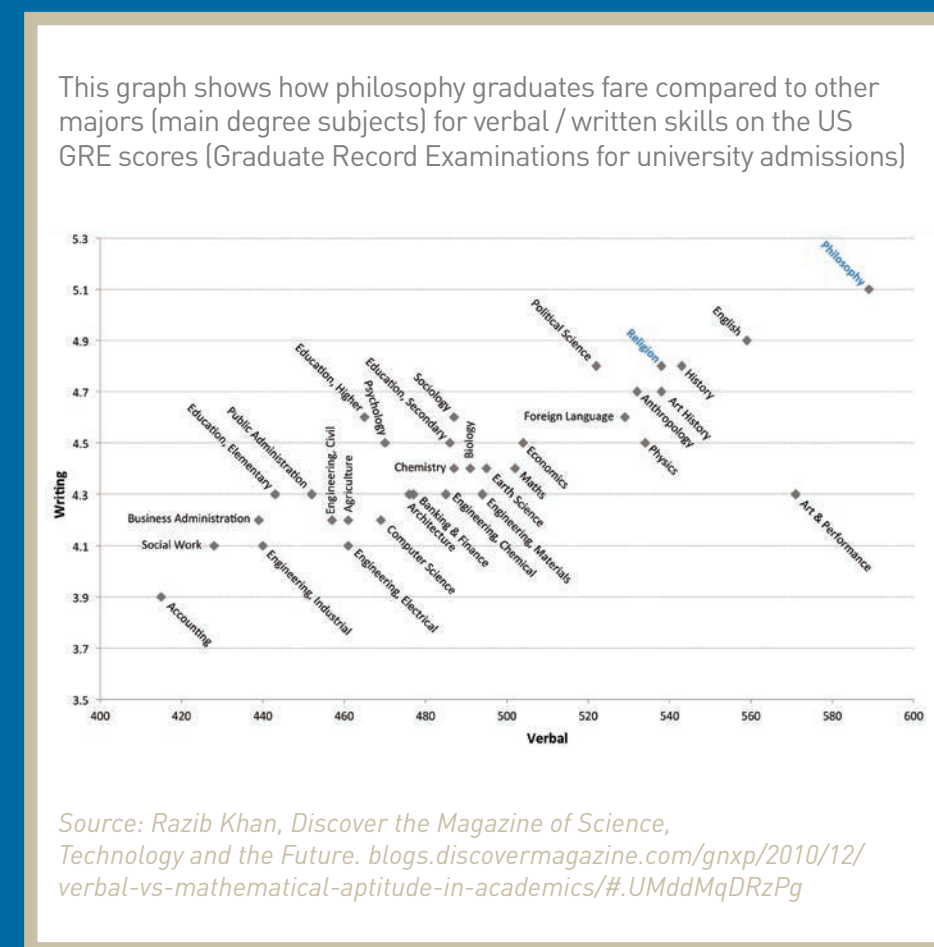
The skills philosophy programmes generate translate into higher performance on standardized tests for graduate education (GRE, LSAT, GMAT, etc.). In the GRE tests of 50 3rd year science and humanities degree majors in the U.S.:

Philosophy majors rank FIRST among all majors on the verbal section of the GRE. They even outperform those who take a degree in English.

Philosophy majors rank FIRST among all majors on the analytical section of the GRE. That’s predictable, given philosophy’s emphasis on analytical and critical thinking.

Philosophy majors rank FIRST among humanities majors and ninth among all majors on the quantitative (mathematical) section of the GRE. Only students following programmes with a large mathematical component (e.g. maths and physics) scored better.

Philosophy majors rank FIRST among all majors on the U.S. Law School Admissions Test.



3. WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A PHILOSOPHY DEGREE? “ANYTHING YOU WANT”

Philosophy graduates succeed across a wide variety of professions, including Journalism, Law, Banking and Management.

“I credit my success to my ability to logically think through problems and my writing skills, both items I attribute to my philosophy classes.”

Kim Feazle, Philosophy Graduate and Financial Analyst, Hill & Knowlton

“The quality that Philosophy graduates possess and that is lacking in non-graduates is the ability to examine a selected subject, identify key components and their relationships to each other, and assess the consequences of a component change. It is this analytical ability of philosophers that gives them the edge over their contemporaries in the modern environment.”

Tommy Attaway, Jr., Project Management Specialist, Switzerland

“[Having secured] a top job at one of the leading investment banks in the world, I asked the Board why I was chosen above the other [candidates]. Without blinking an eye, the Head of the Committee stated a list of reasons, the very first of which was “Out of all the people we considered, you were the only one who studied Philosophy... That told us immediately that you can think outside the box.” I have come to realize the answer to the question perpetually posed, “Philosophy? What are you going to with that?” is “Absolutely anything you want.”

Jordan Kotick, Vice-President J.P. Morgan, Wall Street



STUDYING PHILOSOPHY AT HEYTHROP

Here are a few reasons to study philosophy at Heythrop:

Excellent results: Heythrop students achieve remarkably good exam results. They have outperformed other better-known University of London Colleges in terms of number of first class honours degrees in philosophy, for example.

Oxbridge-style one-to-one tutorial system: Heythrop’s exam success is due in part to its *tutorial system*. Students are offered an individual, one-to-one tutorial with a member of the teaching staff to discuss in detail each of their essays.

Student satisfaction: Heythrop continues to be given an exceptionally high score in terms of student satisfaction – 91%.

A small friendly place, but part of the University of London: Heythrop is small, friendly, and located in leafy Kensington Square, close to Kensington High Street tube station. But despite its small size, Heythrop is able to offer its students all the social, academic and sporting benefits of belonging to a large and prestigious institution: the University of London.

High quality research: Heythrop College has several leading philosophers on its staff who publish cutting edge work, particularly in the areas of philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, and philosophy of religion.

“If you want to study philosophy or theology, there’s no other place to be. No other institution, anywhere, is as interested in those subjects as much as you are. That’s what’s so special about Heythrop.”

Abduttayeb Hassanali BA Philosophy graduate & MRes Philosophy student

“Heythrop is a gem in the middle of London. The small size of the college makes for better lectures and seminar group discussions, as they are much more personal.”

“Heythrop has had a big hand in shaping me a person. It’s a very cohesive environment and a place I can feel positive about who I am and not worry about other people’s opinion of me.”

Afshan Lodhi, 3rd Year BA Philosophy

Find out more about studying philosophy at Heythrop:
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