Theories of Meaning, Part II: Philosophical Logic. Lecture Outline & Readings.

Christopher J. Masterman (cm789@cam.ac.uk, *christophermasterman.com*)

1. Summary

'Snow is white' *means that* snow is white. This is true because of what 'Snow', 'is', and ''white' mean, as well as how they combine and contribute to the meaning of sentences in which they occur. A theory of meaning is supposed to tell us what the semantically significant parts of language mean. But what should a theory of meaning look like? Under what conditions should we think a theory of meaning is successful? In these lectures, we will look at some influential theories of meaning and explore key debates about the *structure* and *purpose* of theories of meaning.

Four lectures, every Friday in Weeks 1–4, 11am, Room 12 in Sidgwick Site Lecture Block.

2. Lecture Outlines & Reading List

Ideally, you should do the reading before the lecture and familiarise yourself with the topic that week. Lectures will build on previous weeks and so familiarity with already covered material is also ideal. Handouts will be posted on my website after the lecture. If you have any queries, questions or concerns contact me at cm789@cam.ac.uk.

Lecture I. Classical Semantic Theories, **19th January**.

– Evans & McDowell (1976). "Introduction". *Truth and Meaning: Essays in Semantics* (ed.) Evans and McDowell.

Lecture II. Davidson on Theories of Meaning, **26th January**.

– Davidson (1967). Truth and Meaning. *Synthese*, 17(3), 304–323.

– Fodor & Lepore (1992). "Donald Davidson: Meaning Holism and Radical Interpretation". *Holism: A Shopper's Guide*.

Lecture III. Dummett on Davidson on Theories of Meaning, **2 February**.

– Dummett (1976). "What Is a Theory of Meaning? (II)". *Truth and Meaning: Essays in Semantics*.

Lecture IV. McDowell on Dummett on Davidson on Theories of Meaning, **9 February**.

– McDowell (1987). "In Defence of Modesty". *Michael Dummett: Contributions to Philosophy* (ed.) Taylor, Barry.

– McDowell (1976). "Truth Conditions, Bivalence, and Verificationism". *Truth and Meaning: Essays in Semantics*.