

**PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE:  
THE PHILOSOPHY, LINGUISTICS AND ETHICS OF LYING**

Texts

Sissela Bok, *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*, 2nd edn (pb), Vintage Books, 1999.

Thomas L. Carson, *Lying and Deception: Theory and Practice*, Oxford U.P., 2012.

Jennifer Saul, *Lying, Misleading, and What is Said: An Exploration in Philosophy of Language and in Ethics*, Oxford U.P., 2012.

WGL contact

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Written work

Option 1: Four short papers (ca. 1500 words) during the semester, due on September 10, October 15, November 19, and December 3. Topics will be of your own choosing, but I will offer suggestions.

Or 2: If you like, after September 10 you may substitute one 3000-word paper for two consecutive shorter ones.

Or, 3: Write just one short paper due September 10 and one term paper due December 3.

Syllabus

August 27: Background. Basics of lying and deception. *Reading*: Bok, Appendix (pp. 250-88); J.E. Mahon, "The Definition of Lying and Deception," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2008)  
<<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/lying-definition/>>.

September 3: Carson on the definitions. *Reading*: Carson, pp. 15-57.

- September 10: Saul and Stokke on Carson. *Reading*: Saul, Ch. 1; A. Stokke, “Lying and Asserting.” **Short paper due from everyone.**
- September 17: Saul on “what is said.” *Reading*: Saul. Chs. 2, 3.
- September 24: Lying, deception and truth. *Reading*: M. Lynch, “Deception and the Nature of Truth”  
<[http://web2.uconn.edu/philosophy/departments/lynch/Online\\_Papers\\_files/Deception%20and%20the%20nature%20of%20truth.pdf](http://web2.uconn.edu/philosophy/departments/lynch/Online_Papers_files/Deception%20and%20the%20nature%20of%20truth.pdf)>.
- October 1: Bullshit. *Reading*: H. Frankfurt, “On Truth, Lies, and Bullshit”; Carson, pp. 57-63.
- October 8: Self-deception. *Reading*: R. Solomon, “Self, Deception, and Self-Deception in Philosophy”; A. Rorty, “User-Friendly Self-Deception”  
<<http://sites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic1007312.files/Week%2013/user%20friendly%20self%20deception.pdf>>; A. Mele, “Have I Unmasked Self-Deception or Am I Self-Deceived?”
- October 15: The infamous Kant. *Reading*: Bok, Ch. 3; Carson, Ch. 3; J.E. Mahon, “The Truth about Kant on Lies”; D. Sussman, “On the Supposed Duty of Truthfulness: Kant on Lying in Self-Defense.” **Second short paper due.**
- October 22: Lying vs. merely misleading. *Reading*: Saul, Chs. 4, 5.
- October 29: Lying and consequentialism. *Reading*: Bok, Chs. 4, 5, 8, 14; Carson, Chs. 4, 5.
- November 5: Lying and reciprocal justice. *Reading*: Carson, Chs. 6, 7.
- November 12: Trust and fidelity. *Reading*: Bok, Chs.; 2, 11; A. Strudler, “Deception and Trust.” *Suggested* for anyone who’s interested in virtue ethics: Carson, Ch. 14.
- November 19: Lying and compromised audiences. *Reading*: Bok, Chs. 9, 10; Carson, Ch. 10. **Third short paper due.**
- December 3: Public cases. *Reading*: Bok, Ch. 13; Carson, Chs. 9, 12, 13. **Final paper due from everyone.**