I. Administration
   A. Presentations on Thursday
   B. Reading essay #1 due Thursday
   C. Questions?

II. Interpretationalism – What
   A. Minds as coordinate systems. The interpretationalist sees minds as very much like coordinate systems, e.g., latitude/longitude, Cartesian coordinates, maps projection systems.
      1. These systems exist in one sense but not in another.
         a. In one sense, they exist because they reveal the structure of a thing that does exist, and so are isomorphic to elements in that structure.
         b. In another, though, they do not—for instance, there are no lines of latitude on the earth. (Although one might be inclined to posit them if one was otherwise convinced they did, either as non-physical aspects of the earth or perhaps as something “buried deep” within the earth.)
      2. There would be no coordinate systems without investigators interested in the structure of the objects explained with these systems.
   B. Thus, there would be no minds if there were no interpreters.

III. Weak Interpretationalism – Dennett’s “Intentional Stance”
   A. Mental notions figure into a theory that has value because of its predictive and explanatory success. Beliefs, desires, and the like are mental abstracta,
introduced because they help us get a grip on the inner workings of complicated systems.

1. Certain complicated systems exhibit behavior that can be explained and predicted using the folk psychological apparatus of propositional attitudes. In fact, this apparatus enables us explain certain scientifically important generalizations, such as shared behavioral dispositions.

2. Nevertheless, these things are mere abstracta, like centers of gravity or point masses – they are not real, concrete things.

B. Folk Psychology

1. On Dennett's view, folk psychology is not an empirical theory but an instrumentalist method of behavior prediction.

2. Dennett insists that folk psychological notions have a place in our understanding of the world and are not to be reduced or eliminated, but that the physical realm is the only real realm.

C. Distinguish between the physical stance, the design stance, and the intentional stance.

1. You can relate these constructively or destructively (i.e., pathologically)

2. The design stance is rather like a deeper, more localized intentional stance; it does reveal additional difference and detail, though

3. What is introduced from the design stance is also not real – Dennett is not a functionalist

D. Varia:

1. Mind kinds

   a. Darwinian → Skinnerian → Popperian → Gregorian

   b. We can see beliefs and desires as the very thin ontological commitments of a useful theory, but we should reserve thinking for creatures that have higher-order representations and the ability to reflect on their own situation, viz., Gregorian minds
c. Self-conscious reflection requires language – why?

2. Consciousness – does the “higher-order representations” approach really work to capture what is most salient about consciousness? Is Searle’s critique legitimate?

E. Problem: this theory doesn't explain why folk psychology is so often successful – the best explanation seems to be the very thing that Dennett's view denies, viz., that there are real things such as beliefs, etc.

IV. Eliminative Materialism

A. According to EM, much of what passes as cognitive science is dependent on a fundamentally flawed theory of the mind. This theory, which they call “folk psychology”, involves the use of propositional attitude states to explain the mind and action.

1. “Folk psychology” is typically characterized as a theory, although it's not clear what sort of theory it is. Is it an explanatory model, or is it a system of internalized abilities and expectations.

2. Note that the theory involves propositional attitudes and not qualitative states. Included in the ontology of folk psychology would be beliefs, desires, intentions, dreams, introspection, wishes, hopes, fears, etc.

B. Methodological Point: ontological commitment

C. Eventually, as cognitive neuroscience develops, this folk theory will give way to a very different way of thinking about the mind.

1. Folk psychology might be reduced to the new theory, which thereby explains it

2. Alternatively, it might be rejected as inadequate. If so, “folk psychology” would go the way of alchemy and Ptolemaic cosmology.

D. Arguments in Favor of Eliminative Materialism:

1. Explanatory Inadequacy of Folk Psychology: it can't explain what happens when the mind breaks down, whereas physical science can.

   a. Why not take it to be limited? Why must it be all-encompassing?
2. **Failure of Reduction**: the mental properties that figure into commonsense psychology will not be type-identical with properties in a more fundamental science, and so will be rejected.
   
   a. This is not a given, although it is what the Churchland’s believe.

3. **Argument from Functionalism (Stich)**: we assign content as a way of organizing our cognitive endowments, and it is better to do it syntactically. But rather than go Searle’s way and say that this reveals that the functionalist approach is lacking, run the argument the other way and argue that this shows folk psychology is baseless.
   
   a. But then is it *cognitive* science? How can it be an explanation of minds if there is no meaning?

E. **Arguments Against Eliminative Materialism**

1. Folk Psychology could not prove false.

2. EM is self-defeating. (Perhaps we kick this ladder away once we’ve climbed up…)