

## FIGS – Probability and Philosophy – Fall 2007

Elliott Sober

**Readings:** Two books are available at University Bookstore:

- (H) Ian Hacking, *An Introduction to Probability and Inductive Logic*.
- (R) Michael Resnik, *Choices*.

We also will read the following essays:

- David Hume, “On Miracles,” Section 10 of his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*.
- J. Earman, “Bayes, Hume, Price, and Miracles” (in R. Swinburne, ed., *Bayes’ Theorem*, 2002).
- T. Gilovich, R. Valone, and A. Tversky, “The Hot Hand in Basketball – On the Misperception of Random Sequences” (in *Cognitive Psychology* 1985, 17: 295-314).
- R. Wardrop, “Statistical Tests for the Hot-Hand in Basketball in a Controlled Setting” (on his web site).
- A. P. Dawid, “Bayes’ Theorem and Weighing of Evidence” (in R. Swinburne, ed., *Bayes’ Theorem*, 2002).
- N. Seserdic, “Sudden Infant Death or Murder? A Royal Confusion about Probabilities” (in *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 2007, 58: 299-329).

**Office hours:** I will hold office hours on Tuesdays 2:30-3:30 and Thursdays 12-1 in my office, 5199 Helen C. White Hall. I also will be available to meet with you at other times, by appointment.

**Requirements:** Attend all classes. Do the readings assigned and be prepared to discuss them in class. There will be two exams, a final, and a few short papers on assigned topics.

Schedule of Readings		
Week	Date	Reading
1	9/4-6	H1-5
2	9/11-13	H6-7; H11-12
3	9/18-20	H13-15
4	9/25-26	H16-19
5	10/2-4	H20-22
6	10/9-11	<b>First Exam;</b> the Monty Hall Problem (on Wikipedia) and Hot Hands (Gilovich and Wardrop)
7	10/16-18	Miracles (Hume and Earman)
8	10/23-25	H8-10; R1
9	10/30-11/1	R2
10	11/6-8	R3
11	11/13-15	R4
12	11/20	<b>Second Exam</b>
13	11/27-29	R5
14	12/4-6	R6
15	12/11-13	SIDs (Dawid and Seserdic)