

Suggested Paper Topics

1. **Jackson's Defense of Descriptivism:** Pick **ONE** of the "Objection from..." sections from Frank Jackson's defense of Descriptivism, "Reference and Description Revisited"; assess Jackson's defense.
2. **Soames's Objection to Rigidified Descriptivism:** Assess Scott Soames's objection to Rigidified Descriptivism on p. 15 of "The Modal Argument: Wide Scope and Rigidified Descriptions";
3. **Donnellan on Reference-Fixing:** Assess Keith Donnellan's objection to Kripke's claim that reference-fixing stipulations ground *a priori* knowledge in "The Contingent *A Priori* and Rigid Designation".
4. **Evans on the Causal-Historical Theory:** Evaluate Gareth Evans's "Madagascar" objection to the Causal-Historical Theory of Reference in "The Causal Theory of Names".
5. **The Empirical Critique of Kripke's Argument:** Assess the objection to Kripke's arguments against descriptivism and in favor of the causal-historical theory on the basis of culturally-correlated variation in intuitions concerning the Gödel-Schmidt case in the studies described on pp. 341-2 of "Against Arguments from Reference", by Ron Mallon, Edouard Machery, Shaun Nichols, and Stephen Stich.

Your paper should be 9-12 pages. If you find you have too little to say, that means that you aren't approaching the assignment in the right way; please don't pad your paper to make it the right length. If you find you have too much to say, you should consider cutting your topic down to a manageable size. In either case, you should feel free to consult me. In order to do well, you need not only to summarize what others (including me) have said, but also to show some original thinking. Jim Pryor has written a pretty good general guide to writing a philosophy paper, available at

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>.