



### Topic I

“If you release the idea of an essential self, throw it naked into the surf and let the sea carry it away, then everything changes. Without it, masks take on a new expanse of possibility. They can conceal, yes, but [...] they can also clarify what is true—in precisely the same way a story can tell you something better than stark facts ever could.”

—Akwaeke Emezi (2021). *Dear Senthuran: A Black Spirit Memoir*. London: Faber & Faber Ltd, p. 40.

### Topic II

“Women may not be simply human *beings* but positioned as human *givers* when it comes to the dominant men who look to them for various kinds of moral support, admiration, attention, and so on. She is not allowed to *be* in the same ways as he is. She will tend to be in trouble when she does not give enough, or to the right people, in the right way, or in the right spirit. And, if she errs on this score, or asks for something of the same support or attention on her own behalf, there is a risk of misogynist resentment, punishment, and indignation.”

—Kate Manne (2019). *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*. Penguin Books, p. *xix*.

### Topic III

“It remains a scandal to philosophy, and to human reason in general, that we should have to accept the existence of things outside us [...] merely on trust, and have no satisfactory proof with which to counter any opponent who chooses to doubt it.”

—Immanuel Kant (1781). *Critique of Pure Reason*. Preface to the Second Edition, Bxl (footnote).

### Topic IV

“Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity.”

—Simone Weil, Letter to Joë Bousquet, April 13, 1942. In: Simone Pétrement (1976), *Simone Weil: A Life*. New York: Pantheon Books, p. 462.