

Phil. 102: Introduction to Philosophical Inquiry

Test 3: Philosophical Ethics

Summer, 2011 GFDL

Reminder: All answers on this test must be your own work and derived without help or advice from other students enrolled in the course. Since this online course is based on the honor system, I must assume that the answers provided on your test are entirely derived from your own thought. Conclusive evidence of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty could result in failure in the course. See the syllabus section “Policies” for further information. As the final test in the course, points are deducted in accordance with the items listed in the syllabus under the sections “Evaluation,” “Grades,” and “Tests.” Be sure to review those sections before submitting your test. Statistical programs are used on both objective and essay question to verify academic honesty.

1 True–False Questions (60 points.)

Directions: Type out just the number of the following questions and state whether or not the following statements are true or false. *Do not copy the questions themselves.* If you wish to qualify your answer, you may do so, if you feel that a question is misleading or ambiguous. (However, your qualification should not change the meaning of the question into a different question.)

1. _____ If determinism is true, an event without a cause and therefore without a causal explanation is possible.
2. _____ The belief that all events in the world are predetermined is implied by philosophical fatalism.
3. _____ Neither the doctrine of hard determinism nor the doctrine of soft determinism allows for free will.
4. _____ The view that all events are made to happen by God even though human beings might have free will is called the doctrine of predestination.
5. _____ The belief that events throughout eternity have been foreordained by a supernatural power is called predestination.
6. _____ Scientific determinism is the philosophical belief that absolutely there are no uncaused events.
7. _____ Soft determinism is the philosophical point of view that all physical events are caused but all mental events are not.

8. _____ The belief that not all of our acts are determined by past events (i.e., some acts are and some acts are not determined) is called predeterminism.
9. _____ The belief that all events are made to happen by God, not necessarily by causality in nature, is true of all major religions.
10. _____ The doctrine that some specific events are fixed in advance but there might be some free play in minor events is called fatalism.
11. _____ The probability of an event is known from the experience of similar event is called *a priori* probability.
12. _____ A miracle is a violation of a law of nature.
13. _____ Fatalism is the philosophical point of view that *all* events in the world have been fixed in advance by God.
14. _____ According to *a posteriori* probability, if I flip a coin one hundred times, it is possible that the coin will come up heads every time.
15. _____ *A priori* probabilistic analysis of a fair coin toss presupposes a perfect coin—and a coin that comes up heads exactly half the time.
16. _____ The doctrine of free will is based on the assumption that all of our choices are uncaused.
17. _____ Glaucon states the belief that everyone is selfish and the only thing keeping people from doing harm to others is fear of punishment.
18. _____ According to Glaucon's account, if one is honest with oneself, then that person believes that acting unjustly is more likely to bring good to oneself than acting justly would if one can be sure that the unjust action could not be detected.
19. _____ Glaucon explains that the only reason persons obey the law in society is not because it is the right thing to do but because they seek to avoid harm from others.
20. _____ From a philosophical point of view, the "Myth of the Ring of Gyges" proves the philosophy of psychological egoism is true.
21. _____ Glaucon state the belief that justice is a compromise people make between doing wrong and having wrong done to them.
22. _____ Not all self-interested actions are selfish actions.
23. _____ The belief that all persons always act in their own self-interest is subject to the fallacy of hasty generalization.
24. _____ Plato depicts a fundamental belief of Socrates that the main reason people act ethically is to help others less fortunate than themselves.
25. _____ The theory of ethical egoism logically implies the theory of psychological egoism.

1 TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS (60 POINTS.)

26. _____ An objection to psychological egoism is that this doctrine is a circular argument because by definition it would be impossible for an action not to be in self-interest.
27. _____ When all is said and done, all human actions essentially are selfish in nature.
28. _____ de Mandeville tries to convince people that they are better off if they are selfless and helpful to others.
29. _____ According to de Mandeville, politician leaders try to convince people through flattery that honor comes from denying ones self and shame comes from seeking ones own interests.
30. _____ If you try to benefit others, according to de Mandeville, then you are acting in accordance with nature.
31. _____ The moral virtues, according to de Mandeville, were invented in order to subjugate people.
32. _____ de Mandeville believes all politicians do not seek their own interests because they are essentially public servants.
33. _____ A person who has pity for a baby about to be thrown into the fire is really looking after his own interests, according to de Manville.
34. _____ de Mandeville believes that the institution of religion is used by societal leaders as a threat of punishment if the people seek their own interest.
35. _____ The theory that each person seeks his own interest is called ethical hedonism.
36. _____ Psychological egoism is essentially an empirical generalization that all persons, regardless of circumstances and in all circumstances, pursue what they perceive to be their own good.
37. _____ From a philosophical point of view, all self-interested actions are ultimately selfish actions.
38. _____ If I act in my self-interest, then I am necessarily not acting in the interests of others.
39. _____ The linguistic refutation of ethical egoism relies on the insight that if all actions were selfish or self-interested, then calling someone “selfish” would just be claiming that the person acted.
40. _____ According to Nietzsche, the beginning of higher civilizations was made possible by the barbarians who sought power over weaker individuals.
41. _____ Nietzsche states that refraining from hurting others as the fundamental principle of society is an affirmation of life in general.
42. _____ Nietzsche implies that democracy is essentially the rise of the slave morality characterized by the vanity of individuals.

1 TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS (60 POINTS.)

43. _____ Nietzsche believes the higher-type of person is the individual who follows the morality of Christianity.
44. _____ According to Nietzsche, not all persons in a society are equal; some persons are intrinsically better than others.
45. _____ Morality, according to Nietzsche, is a passive mode of existence and is a nay-saying attitude toward life.
46. _____ Nietzsche believes that most persons are vain because they do not have the confidence to know their true abilities.
47. _____ Sartre argues that if people are to be free, then God cannot have pre-established their nature or essence.
48. _____ Sartre advises his student to join the Free French Forces rather than stay in Paris, since the student's older brother had been killed in the German offensive.
49. _____ According to Sartre, part of the meaning of "despair" is that we cannot count on the hope that we will never be put in circumstances that we cannot deal with.
50. _____ For Sartre, all human beings are born without a nature.
51. _____ Sartre argues that each person is the sole authority of his life and cannot rightfully blame others for his condition.
52. _____ Sartre believes that persons who believe that they have no genuine choices in life are in self-deception.
53. _____ Both Christian and atheistic existentialists think that the fact of man's existence is established first, and then man determines what his essence is to be.
54. _____ Existential anguish means that we are responsible for all persons, and no experiences in life can convince us what is the right thing to do.
55. _____ Sartre believes a person is wholly free except when a sweeping emotion leads that person to act.
56. _____ Sartre believes "You should conquer yourself" rather than try to conquer the situation you are in because you cannot really know the consequences of your actions
57. _____ The atheistic existentialist experiences forlornness: facing the consequences of the fact that God does not exist.
58. _____ When all is said and done, according to Sartre, at some point in our lives we need to commit ourselves entirely to religious belief.
59. _____ Sartre believes that all persons anguish over life's decisions and that those who do not are hiding their anguish.
60. _____ Sartre believes all persons have at least one thing in common and this is human nature.

2 Ethics Essay 40 points.

Use complete sentences and paragraph form to answer in careful detail and in your own words. Please remember, as well, specific examples must be *explained* not just *mentioned* in order to receive full credit. Although you may use quotations of definitions from reliable sources for part of your answer, you *must also* explain the definitions and explain examples in your own words. All exact quotations must be cited with a proper citation style such as M.L.A., A.P.A., Science, or Chicago. Helpful and quickly accessed examples are available here:

<http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/online/citex.html>

Or try one of these citation generators:

<http://citationmachine.net/>

<http://www.easybib.com/>

Part A: Answer one of the following questions. (Do not copy the question with your answer.)

1. Define and distinguish between the terms psychological and ethical egoism. Explain “The Myth of the Ring of Gyges” and how it relates to the “social contract.” How does the myth relate to the philosophies of psychological and ethical egoism? Is Plato, himself, an egoist? Explain whether or not all self-interested actions are selfish actions.
2. What is the linguistic refutation of psychological egoism? That is, explain in detail why psychological egoism is ultimately a meaningless theory? Be sure to characterize psychological egoism and explain how it differs from ethical egoism. Also explain why ethical egoism cannot properly be considered a philosophical theory at all.

Part B: Answer one of the following questions. (Do not copy the question with your answer.)

1. Explain Nietzsche’s distinction between master-morality and slave-morality. Explain why you think master morality and/or slave morality would regard Christianity as a religion which should be followed by most people. Why would the masters endorse the doctrines of Christianity for persons who are the noble type of persons?
2. What does Sartre mean when he says “existence precedes essence”? Explain the meaning of those terms as Sartre uses them and explain examples of those terms. Explain the meaning of those terms without philosophical jargon in ordinary language. In what sense does Sartre argue that “we are condemned to be free”? What does this phrase mean and how does it lead to despair? Explain the meaning of “despair” and explain (not just mention) an example of Sartre’s use of the term.