

Intro to Philosophy Final Exam Study Guide

December 11, 2015

Methodism in Epistemology: We cannot know whether we know something/we don't know how we know.

Example:Descartes

Particularism in Epistemology:We can know something without knowing how we know it. Example:Moore

Skepticism: doubt

- Limited skepticism: skepticism about a particular kind of knowledge
- moral skeptic: never have knowledge about moral matters or theological skeptic
- Absolute skepticism: we cannot have knowledge of anything or at the best a very limited amount of facts.

Moorean Shift:Moorean shift begins with the denial of the conclusion of the first argument,keeps its second premise,and ends with the denial of first premise as conclusion

Testimony: Witness saying that a miracle occurred. E.g. the people who claimed to be cured from Lourdes.

Miracle (Hume's Definition):"A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle" is strong.

Necessitation Conception of Law of Nature: law of nature is a necessary regularity. Sub specie aeternitatis

Humean Conception of Law of Nature:a law of nature is a well-established regularity. Something observed over and over again without finding discrepancy.Water boils at 100 degrees C.

Induction: If in all previously observed cases, a statement holds true, then it will continue to hold true in all unobserved cases and all future observed cases. FOCUS ON NUMBER OF PAST OBSERVATIONS.

Natural Theology:the study of God through ordinary experiences and philosophical argument. Natural theologians attempt to find arguments for God's existence that do not require special revelation from God.

Reductio Ad Absurdum: an argument which assumes a principle and shows that it leads to a contradiction. Because there are no true contradictions, the assumption must be false. Example: Guanilo's Lost Island

Inference to Best Explanation (or Abduction): If a statement provides the simplest, most comprehensive explanation of some surprising phenomenon, then you are justified in believing it. FOCUS ON EXPLANATION.

Fideism: even if there was no evidence to support God's existence, they would still be rational in believing in God

Unjustified Evils/Justified Evils:

- Unjustified: instances of suffering that neither lead to a greater good nor prevent some greater evil. Ex. New London Explosion, The Holocaust
- Justified: instances of suffering that either lead to some greater good or prevent some greater evil (vaccine shots)

Theodicy: an explanation for why God permits evils. A theodicy attempts to show that the argument from evil is unsound by arguing that one or more premises is false. Ex. Alibi

Defense (against Prob of Evil): a live hypothesis for why God might permit evils which cannot be ruled out. A defense attempts to show that, for all we know about God and his ways, there is a reason for evils, and so the argument from evil does not justify atheism. Ex. "A defense for God would be that God was unable to bring greater good without allowing evils."

Libertarian Conception of Free Will: an agent is free with respect to some action only if there are at least two action he could possibly choose and it is not determined before that time which he will choose

Compatibilist Conception of Free Will: an agent is free if his will is not impeded- if he is able to get what he wants (this conception has nothing to do with there being genuine alternative possibilities open.)

Determinism:The thesis that it is always determined ahead of time which action an agent will perform (perhaps determined by laws of nature, God's providence, or both)

Omnipotence:all powerful

Omniscience: all knowing

Moral Perfection: Whatever the correct moral standard is, God never violates it and God always does what is morally best. He is perfectly good.

Open Theism: the view that God's omniscience doesn't require that he know every future state of the world

Providence:God's power to act in the world, to direct the world towards his goals

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Principle of Control: an agent cannot be held morally responsible for something that is outside of her control.

Ex. a baby cannot be held morally responsible for creating a fire with a match due to ignorance.

Acting in Accord with Duty vs. Acting from Motive of Duty:

- an agent acts **IN ACCORD WITH DUTY** if he performs the action that a moral duty recommends in that situation
- An agent acts from the **MOTIVE OF DUTY** if his reason for performing that action is that the duty requires it.

Autonomy: an agent is autonomous if and only if her actions are not determined by anything outside of her will.

Hypothetical Imperative: a rule that tells you what you ought to do if you want to achieve some other goal.

For example, if you want to bake cookies, then you ought to buy some eggs.

Categorical Imperative: a rule that tells you what you ought to do no matter what. For example, you ought to avoid murdering people, no matter what.

Maxim: Rule

Means/Ends Distinction: If something is a means, then it has value only relative to something else. For example a shovel is valuable only insofar as it helps you dig a hole. An end has value no matter what.

Kant's Definition of a Person: A rational, autonomous being (i.e. an adult human)

Supererogation: something is supererogatory if and only if it goes well beyond the basic requirements of an imperfect duty e.g. Zell Kravinsky and Good Samaritan.

Perfect/Imperfect Duties:

- Perfect duty: a duty that can be carried out in exactly one way and does not admit of any moral differences in how you follow the duty. Perfect duty not to commit murder, suicide, or lie to others.
- Imperfect duty: a duty that can be carried out in multiple ways and does admit of moral difference in how you follow the duty. You have an imperfect duty to give to charity: You might give income, or kidney. All are in accord with duty.

Sentience: the ability to feel pleasure or pain.

Utility/Disutility: measure of pleasure or happiness ; disutility is the measure of pain

Equality of Consideration: every sentient creature deserves equal moral consideration-the amount of utility or disutility it experiences must be accounted for in deciding what to do.

Greatest Happiness Principle: the morally right action is whichever action maximizes expected utility.

Self-Defeating Theory: An ethical theory is self defeating if intentionally following the theory frustrates the aim of the theory. Ex. ethical egoism: you ought to act only to promote your self interest. To fulfill it, don't follow it.

Esoteric Utilitarianism: the morally right action is whatever action maximizes expected utility, but you should not always base your moral decisions on utilitarianism.

Negative Responsibility: you are morally responsible for what you do not prevent just as much as you are responsible for what you voluntarily do.

Virtue: a morally valuable personality trait. Virtues come in degrees. How a virtue is displayed often depends on circumstances.

Eudaimonia: the goal of human life. Eudaimonia means a state of living a life that is objectively worthwhile.

Sometimes it is translated as "flourishing" or "happiness." Other times it is translated as your intended nature.

Typically we think only rational agents can achieve eudaimonia.

Phronesis: the virtue of practical wisdom- knowing what to do in particular situations. For most virtue ethicists, phronesis is a virtue you pick after years of life experience and appropriate moral education.

Circular Theory: a theory that assumes what it is required to explain. Ex. if phronesis is the only relevant virtue, then is virtue ethics circular?

Doctrine of the Mean: virtues are personality traits that fall within the extremes of two vices. Generosity, for example, falls between stinginess and wastefulness.

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Akasia: weakness of will. Akasia happens when an agent knows what is right (what the virtuous person would do,) but cannot bring himself to actually do what is right.

Non-Moral Virtue: Non-moral virtues promote something other than a moral good. Example: being a good chef, having a good sense of humor etc.

Rational Saint: someone who is motivated to be a moral saint from a sense of duty.

Loving Saint: Someone who is motivated to be a moral saint out of love for others.

Qualitative Identity: two things are qualitatively the same if and only if they have the same properties or qualities, like identical twins

Numerical Identity: two things are numerically identical if and only if they are one and the same thing. Example: Clark Kent and Superman

Bodily Criterion of Personal Identity: A person A is the same person as person B if and only if A and B are strongly biologically connected- A and B are the same body or the bodies of A and B are connected by a chain of overlapping stages.

Psychological Criterion of Personal Identity: A person A is the same person as person B if and only if A and B are strongly psychologically connected- A shares the memories, personality, traits, and experiences as B OR A and B are connected by a sequence of overlapping psychological connections..

Cognitive Penetration: when a cognitive state penetrates a perceptual state, resulting in a change or amplification of phenomenal features of the perceptual state.

The Deprivation Account of Death: It is, in general, bad to be deprived of experiences. Further, bad things do not have to be experienced by you to be bad. EX: Friends gossiping behind your back.

Proportional Justice: If two individuals have very similar moral standing, then they should receive very similar punishments or benefits.

Universalism (about the afterlife): the theory that there is an afterlife, but no person will spend eternity in hell. Every person will eventually go to Heaven.

Sorites argument: uses assumptions 1 and 2 to argue that every single member of a series S has a property p.

Near Bias: an agent is near biased if she discounts painful or pleasurable experiences to the extent that they are scheduled further in the future. Example: Do you choose a pretty fun trip next month or incredible fun in five years?

Future Bias: an agent is future biased if she discounts painful or pleasurable experiences because they have already occurred. Example: you might prefer that your finals were in the past.

Lucretian symmetry problem: just as our pasts count to us as nothing, so should the time after we die.

1. Is this argument valid? Sound? Why or why not?

(1) Your money is safe as long as it is put in a bank.

(2) If you bury your money in the sand next to the St. Joseph river, then you have put your money in a bank.

(C) Your money is safe if you buried it in the sand next to the St. Joseph river.

- This argument is valid because the conclusion logically follows the premises. However, it is not sound because the definition of “bank” described in the first premise does not match the definition in the second, therefore making the argument unsound.

2. What is one argument for skepticism in the Meditations?

- One argument for skepticism is the Dreaming argument, shown below.