

Philosophy Exam 2 Study Guide

October 5, 2015

(1) Key term IDs. You'll be given a list of six and will be asked to choose FIVE. The IDs can come from any part of the course so far but will be skewed towards the unit we just finished on philosophy of religion. [25 POINTS POSSIBLE]

SEPTEMBER 10 NATURAL THEOLOGY

- **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.
- God is Perfect/Creator/Necessary (does not depend on anything to exist)
- **Ontological argument:** argument that a perfect being must exist
- **Cosmological argument:** argument that a necessary causer must exist
- **Design argument:** argument that intelligent designer is best explanation
- **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.
- Guanilo's Parody: The Lost Island argument

SEPTEMBER 22 THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

- God's attributes: omnipotent, omniscient, perfectly good
- Argument from evil:
- Rational atheism: arguments that evidence justified believing God doesn't exist
- Theodicy vs. Defense:
 - **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 of the premises are false.
 - **Defense:** 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.
- **Fideism:** Fideists argue that even if there was no evidence to support God's existence, they would still be rational in believing in God.
- **Justified evils:** instances of suffering that either lead to some greater good or prevent some greater evil (vaccine shots)
- **Unjustified evils:** instances of suffering that neither lead to a greater good nor prevent some greater evil. Ex. New London Explosion
- Omniscience: God knows everything possible to know
- Omnipotence: God can perform any possible action
- God is perfectly good: God always does what's morally best

SEPTEMBER 24 THE FREE WILL DEFENSE

- **Value of Freedom:** God created mankind with free will because he thought there was a very great good in having such creatures.

- **Nature of Freedom:** If someone has free will, then it is possible for them to choose to do what is morally good and possible for them to reject what is morally good.
- **What's possible:** It is not possible for God to create someone with free will AND for God to force him to choose what is morally good.
- **Origin of Evil:** Evil in the world results from abuse of free will.
- **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)
- **Libertarian Conception of Free Will:** An agent is free with respect to some action at a time only if there are at least two actions he could 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)

SEPTEMBER 29: LIMITATION OF THE FREE WILL DEFENSE

- **Problems for the free will defense**
 - 1) **value of freedom:** is libertarian freedom valuable enough to outweigh all of the evils?
 - 2) **nature of freedom:** is libertarian freedom compatible with God's omniscience?
 - 3) **what's possible:** aren't there examples of God creating free creatures and guaranteeing they do what is right? (ex: Mary)
 - 4) **origin of evil:** aren't there lots of evils that have nothing to do with human freedom? (ex: natural disasters)
- **Providence:** God's power to act in the world, to direct the world towards his goals
- **Strong omniscience:** God knows every truth, including the truth about every future state of the world
- **Weak omniscience:** God knows every truth but there may not be truths about the future for him to know
- **Open Theism:** the view that God's omniscience does not require that He know every future state of the world
- **Argument that strong omniscience and libertarian freedom are incompatible**
 - P1) suppose God is strongly omniscient - then God has known since the beginning of time every action every person would perform for all of human history

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- P2) if libertarianism is true, then there is at least one action that is not determined before the agent decides
- P3) if God knows an action will be performed ahead of time, then it has been determined ahead of time which action the agent will perform
- C) so if God is strongly omniscient, then nobody has libertarian freedom

OCTOBER 1 FREE WILL AND MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

- **Principle of Control:** an agent cannot be held morally responsible for something outside of his control
- **Moral Luck:** Moral luck occurs for an agent when a significant aspect of what an agent does is beyond his control, yet we continue to treat him as morally responsible (or as an object of moral judgment.)
 - **Constitutive Luck:** we are often evaluated for what kind of people we are. But our characters are determined by factors outside of our control
 - **Circumstantial Luck:** We are often evaluated for rising to occasions, displaying heroism, generosity, cowardice, avarice, etc. But the circumstances we are put in are determined by factors outside of our control.
 - **Luck in antecedents:** often the causes of our action in morally important situations are determined by factors outside of our control.
 - **Luck in consequences:** often the outcomes of morally important actions are determined by factors outside of our control
- **Acting in conformity with Duty:** Performs the action that a moral duty recommends.
- **Acting from Motive of Duty:** His reason for performing the action is that duty requires it.
- **Autonomy:** An agent is autonomous if and only if her actions are not determined by anything outside of her will.

(2) Short Answers. There will be two short answer questions drawn from any topic from the natural theology lecture through our discussion of moral luck on Thursday. Each is worth 10 points. [20 POINTS POSSIBLE].

(3) Argument Analysis. For either the ontological argument, the design argument, the argument from evil or Kant's moral worth argument (which we will cover Thursday), you must answer the following questions:

(a) State the argument as clearly, succinctly and charitably as you can in premise-conclusion form. Motivate at least two premises with an example. (b) Explain one prominent strategy for resisting the argument. It could be a strategy showing it to be invalid or unsound. (c) Discuss a plausible problem or limitation for this strategy (either