

Write your name: _____

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Circle the time	F, 12:30	F, 11:30	R, 11:30
of your discussion	F, 2:30	M, 11:30	R, 2:30
section below your	M, 2:30	M, 12:30	F, 3:30
TA's name:	M, 3:30	M, 1:30	M, 8:30

Test on meta-ethics - key

This test has seven sections comprising a total of twenty-six questions worth a total of 100 points. You must write the answers to questions 3–26 in the blanks that follow section I of the test, below.

I. Your name and discussion section: (2 points each)

- Write your name in the blank at the top of the page.
- Circle the time of your discussion section in the list below the blank for your name.

Answers for sections II–VII: (4 points each)

<u> C </u>	<u> B </u>	<u> B </u>	<u> C </u>	<u> C </u>	<u> C </u>	<u> B </u>	<u> A </u>	<u> B </u>	<u> D </u>	<u> D </u>	<u> D </u>
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<u> B </u>	<u> D </u>	<u> A </u>	<u> C </u>	<u> B </u>	<u> D </u>	<u> A </u>	<u> A </u>	<u> C </u>	<u> D </u>	<u> A </u>	<u> D </u>
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

II. Implication

- Let X be one statement and let Y be another. Which of the following is equivalent to the claim that Y is an implication of X?
 - X and Y are both true.
 - X and Y could both be true at the same time.
 - If X is true, then Y is true, too.
 - If Y is true, then X is true, too.

- because if some of its implications are true, then the theory is sure to be true, too
- because if some of its implications are false, then the theory is sure to be false, too
- because if more of its implications are true than false, the theory is more likely to be true than false
- because if some of its implications are true and some are false, then the theory is partly true and partly false

- Let X refer to the following *pair* of statements: "If insider trading is immoral, then some corporate officers have behaved badly. No corporate officers have behaved badly." Which of the following is an implication of X?
 - Insider trading is immoral.
 - Insider trading is not immoral.
 - Some corporate officers have behaved badly.
 - Some corporate officers have behaved badly by engaging in activities other than insider trading.

III. Cultural Relativism

- Suppose you are trying to figure out whether a certain meta-ethical theory, such as cultural relativism or simple subjectivism, is true or not. Why might it then be worthwhile for you to try to figure out what its implications are?

- Which of the following is implied by cultural relativism?
 - No moral beliefs are trans-culturally prevalent.
 - There are no moral principles on which there is universal worldwide agreement.
 - There is no universal, trans-cultural standard of morality that can be used to evaluate any particular culture's moral beliefs.
 - If someone were to try to use a universal, trans-cultural standard of morality to evaluate a particular culture's moral beliefs, one problem he or she would encounter would be making sure that that standard of morality is really correct.

7. In the following dialogue, which of the following statements is incompatible with cultural relativism?
- (A) Robert: "Child labor is found in many cultures. When children are forced to work in factories as early as the age of eight, they suffer serious consequences in terms of lost educational opportunities, limited time for peer interactions, and risks of injury or death."
- (B) Larry: "Some countries rely heavily on child labor, and would suffer devastating economic consequences if they were forced to give it up."
- (C) Robert: "Despite these consequences, the harms to children are too great to ignore. It is wrong of those cultures to force children to work."
- (D) Larry: "Perhaps those cultures could be persuaded, with carefully targeted economic incentives, to voluntarily discontinue their practices of child labor."
8. What is Rachels's objection to the cultural-differences argument?
- (A) The premise is not true.
 (B) The conclusion is not true.
 (C) The premise does not imply the conclusion.
 (D) It is not as valid in regard to geography as it is in regard to morality.
9. What is Rachels's point in saying that cultural relativism implies that moral progress never takes place?
- (A) He is saying that this is a good thing about cultural relativism because forces us to be open-minded regarding which historical changes constitute progress and which ones don't.
 (B) He is saying that this is something bad about cultural relativism because there are some historical changes that can reasonably be regarded as moral improvements.
 (C) He is just describing some aspect of cultural relativism that does not have any relevance to whether cultural relativism is a good theory or a bad one.
 (D) He is saying that regardless of whether cultural relativism is true or false, the argument most often given in support of it is a bad argument.

IV. Subjectivism

10. Simple subjectivism is commonly understood as proposing a certain "translation rule" for moral judgments such as "Lying is wrong." Let J be that moral judgment ("Lying is wrong"), let T be the statement "I feel that lying is wrong," and let S be the translation of J that simple subjectivists actually propose. Why do simple subjectivists regard S as better than T, as a translation of J?
- (A) because S, but not T, avoids using moral words and phrases
 (B) because S, but not T, avoids reference to hard-to-measure psychological states such as feelings
 (C) because S, but not T, accounts for the persistence of moral disagreement
 (D) because S, but not T, accounts for the apparent difficulty of making moral judgments
11. A common objection to simple subjectivism (one lodged by, e.g., both Rachels and, earlier, Stevenson) is that simple subjectivism cannot account for moral disagreement. Let J be the moral judgment "Lying is wrong" and let S be the translation of J that simple subjectivists propose. Which of the following translations of J would be vulnerable to the just-mentioned objection, in the same way that the translation S is?
- (A) "Thomas Jefferson would have disapproved of lying."
 (B) "My mother disapproves of lying."
 (C) "Lying tends to result in more unhappiness than happiness."
 (D) "Lying is morally permissible."
12. Which of the following statements correctly describes some aspect of how emotivism, subjectivism, and simple subjectivism are related?
- (A) All emotivists are simple subjectivists.
 (B) All simple subjectivists are emotivists.
 (C) Some, but not all, emotivists are subjectivists.
 (D) Some, but not all, subjectivists are emotivists.
13. According to emotivists, moral judgments are _____ of feelings.
- (A) accounts
 (B) descriptions
 (C) explanations
 (D) expressions

14. When Stevenson says that moral terms are often used *dynamically*, he means that

- (A) they are not always used statically
- (B) their meaning tends to change over time
- (C) they are often used energetically and vigorously
- (D) they are often used to affect others' preferences and behavior

V. Deriving Morality from Nature

15. Consider the following argument: (Premise 1:) Homosexuality is unnatural. (Premise 2:) Anything unnatural is wrong. (Conclusion:) Therefore, homosexuality is wrong. If 'unnatural' is interpreted to mean rare, or statistically uncommon, what is the problem with the argument?

- (A) Premise 1 is false.
- (B) Premise 2 is false.
- (C) The argument is invalid (i.e., the conclusion does not follow from the premises).
- (D) The argument is question-begging (i.e., one of the premises asserts what is not supposed to be arrived at until the conclusion).

16. Again, consider the following argument: (Premise 1:) Homosexuality is unnatural. (Premise 2:) Anything unnatural is wrong. (Conclusion:) Therefore, homosexuality is wrong. Suppose that 'unnatural' is interpreted to refer to the use of things for purposes other than their evolved biological purposes. Suppose also that someone—say her name is Marsha—wants to show that premise 2 is false. What sort of evidence would Marsha find helpful?

- (A) A sound argument showing that the premises do not imply the conclusion.
- (B) Credible sociological studies showing that homosexuality is very common.
- (C) A dictionary defining 'unnatural' in a way that doesn't refer to biologically evolved purposes.
- (D) An example of the morally acceptable use of something for a purpose other than its biologically evolved one(s).

17. Again, consider the following argument: (Premise 1:) Homosexuality is unnatural. (Premise 2:) Anything unnatural is wrong. (Conclusion:) Therefore, homosexuality is wrong. If 'unnatural' is interpreted to mean wrong, then the argument has a basic logical flaw. Which of the following stories describes an argument with the same flaw?

- (A) Andrews says (concludes) that the fossils he found in the Green Mountains are one million years old. His sole evidence (premise) for this is a new dating technology relying on magnets and radio waves. He says that his sole evidence (premise) for the reliability of his new technology is that it confirms that the fossils he finds are one million years old.
- (B) Bollinger says (concludes) that when he goes out without his umbrella, that causes rain. His sole evidence (premise) for this is that every time he goes out without his umbrella, it rains.
- (C) Cooper says (concludes) that short-term lenders (such as stores that lend people cash until they can bring their paychecks in a few days later) immorally prey on poor people. His sole evidence (premise) for this is that the fees they charge for loans of a few days are financially equivalent to extremely high interest rates, along with the fact that nearly all of their customers are poor people.
- (D) Danielson says (concludes) that the Freshman 15 is a common problem because of how much junk food freshmen eat. His sole evidence (premise) for this is that fast-food stores are more common in college towns than elsewhere.

18. Suppose no interpretation of the word 'natural' makes both premises true and the argument neither invalid nor question-begging. Then would we be entitled to say that its conclusion must be false?

- (A) Yes, because if the conclusion cannot be supported in this way then it cannot be supported in any way, and thus must be false.
- (B) Yes, because no bad arguments have true conclusions.
- (C) No, because even a bad argument can have a true conclusion.
- (D) No, because the argument might still be a good one.

VI. Divine-Command Theory

19. Some people hold the view that what is right is right because God commands it. What is one problematic implication of this view?

- (A) Not everyone believes in God.
- (B) Adultery would not be immoral if God were to command it.
- (C) It is impossible to know, with certainty, what God has commanded.
- (D) Whatever you believe God has told you to do is what you ought to do.

20. What is another problematic implication of the view described in question 19?
- (A) God does not exist.
 - (B) "God is good" is false.
 - (C) Although "God is good" remains true, God is neither all-powerful nor all-knowing.
 - (D) "God is good" is no more of a statement of praise than "God's commands are in accordance with God's commands."
21. Some people hold the view that God commands what is right because it is right. In the following dialogue, which of the following statements is inconsistent with this view?
- (A) Matt: "I'm tired of all this talk about whether interracial marriage is immoral or not. It's easy: it's immoral, and the reason it's immoral is that God forbids it. End of story."
 - (B) Nancy: "Are you sure God forbids it? God's will can be hard to determine."
 - (C) Matt: "Actually, God's will is very easy to determine: the Bible is quite unambiguous on almost every topic."
 - (D) Nancy: "The Bible is not a reliable source for determining God's will, since it was written by fallible humans who may have attributed to God thoughts and wishes that he would, in fact, repudiate."
22. Which of the following statements conveys a logically inconsistent, or self-contradictory, response to Rachels's discussion of the two interpretations of the divine-command theory?
- (A) "Rachels says that both interpretations have problematic implications, but personally I don't find the implications he discusses to be problematic at all. I subscribe to both interpretations."
 - (B) "Rachels says that both interpretations have problematic implications, but I don't think that the implications of the second interpretation are all that worrisome. I stand by the second interpretation and all that it implies."
 - (C) "Rachels says that both interpretations have problematic implications, and I agree. I reject them both."
 - (D) "Rachels says that both interpretations have problematic implications, but I have yet to reach my own conclusion about the seriousness of the implications."

VII. Psychological Egoism

23. What does the theory known as psychological egoism say?
- (A) People always behave selfishly.
 - (B) People ought to behave self-interestedly.
 - (C) Every human action is motivated by self-interest.
 - (D) Everyone is at least occasionally motivated by self-regard.
24. How is psychological egoism relevant to ethics?
- (A) It's not - ethics deals with actions, not motives.
 - (B) It's not - and the point of the chapter is to show this.
 - (C) If psychological egoism were true, then it would always be impossible for people to behave as ethics seems to require.
 - (D) If psychological egoism were true, then it would sometimes be impossible for people to behave as ethics seems to require.
25. Who would use the strategy of reinterpreting motives, and why?
- (A) A defender of psychological egoism, in order to reply to apparent counter-examples to psychological egoism.
 - (B) An opponent of psychological egoism, in order to object to psychological egoism.
 - (C) A neutral evaluator of psychological egoism, in order to assess it.
 - (D) People in everyday life, in order to convince themselves that they are not really excessively selfish.
26. Why, according to Rachels, has something gone wrong if psychological egoism is understood so that it is irrefutable or untestable?
- (A) because then psychological egoism would certainly be true.
 - (B) because then psychological egoism would certainly be false.
 - (C) because then there is something—some kind of behavior—which, if psychological egoism were true, we could be assured would happen. That is, psychological egoism tells us something about human behavior that is not included in what everyone already knows.
 - (D) because then there is nothing—no kind of behavior—which, if psychological egoism were true, we could be assured wouldn't happen. That is, psychological egoism doesn't really tell us anything about human behavior that everyone doesn't already know.