

University of Kansas, Spring 2004
Philosophy 160: Introduction to Ethics
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Write your name: _____
Circle the time of your discussion section below your TA's name:

Dusan Galic	Jennifer Kittlaus	Bill Simkulet
M, 9:30	M, 8:30	F, 8:30
W, 3:30	M, 10:30	F, 9:30
H, 2:30	W, 3:30	F, 10:30
H, 3:30	H, 8:30	F, 11:30

Test on meta-ethics

This test has five sections. The first section (I) is worth 12 points, and each remaining section (II–V) is worth 22 points. Each multiple-choice question is worth 4 points. You must write the answers to the multiple-choice questions in the following blanks. Please also remember to write your name, above.

$\frac{D}{1}$	$\frac{F}{2}$	$\frac{J}{4}$	$\frac{N}{5}$	$\frac{R}{6}$	$\frac{X}{9}$	$\frac{D}{10}$	$\frac{H}{12}$
$\frac{J}{13}$	$\frac{N}{14}$	$\frac{T}{15}$	$\frac{X}{17}$	$\frac{C}{19}$	$\frac{H}{20}$	$\frac{I}{21}$	$\frac{P}{22}$

I. Implication

- Let X be one statement and let Y be another. Which of the following is equivalent to the claim that X is an implication of Y?
 - 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.
- Let X refer to the following *pair* of statements: "Either apples are fruits or carrots are. Apples are not fruits." Which of the following is an implication of X?
 - Apples are fruits.
 - Carrots are fruits.
 - Both apples and carrots are fruits.
 - Neither apples nor carrots are fruits.
- 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? (4 points)

II. Cultural Relativism

- What is the main idea of cultural relativism?
 - Moral beliefs vary from one culture to another.
 - Morality itself (not just moral beliefs) varies from one culture to another.
 - No culture has one particular morality that can be identified with it.
 - Morality is the same all over the world because all cultures share the same basic values.

5. What is Rachels's point in saying that cultural relativism implies that we cannot legitimately judge some societies' customs as inferior to our own?
- (M) He is saying that this is a good thing about cultural relativism because it is arrogant for us to ever judge some societies' customs as inferior to our own, and any theory (such as cultural relativism) saying we are never entitled to do this is, therefore, a good one.
 - (N) He is saying that this is something bad about cultural relativism because sometimes, some societies' customs are inferior to our own, and there's nothing wrong with saying so.
 - (O) 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.
 - (P) 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.
6. What does Rachels mean when he says that cultural relativism denies that moral progress ever takes place?
- (Q) It implies that although a society's customs may change, they typically change for the worse.
 - (R) It implies that although a society's customs may change, they cannot legitimately be said to get better or worse.
 - (S) It implies that a society's customs never change.
 - (T) It implies that organized reform, such as the movement in support of voting rights for women in the U.S., is impossible.
7. Suppose you believe that it is important to have an open mind when it comes to judging the practices of other cultures. Does this imply that you must accept cultural relativism? Or is valuing open-mindedness compatible with rejecting cultural relativism? Why or why not? (2 points for correct Yes/No, 2 points for why or why not)
8. Suppose you agree with Rachels that the cultural-differences argument is a bad argument, and thus does not provide much support for cultural relativism. Does this imply that cultural relativism is false? Why or why not? (2 points for correct Yes/No, 4 points for why or why not)

III. Subjectivism

9. What is meant by the claim that simple subjectivism cannot account for our fallibility?
- (U) that simple subjectivism provides no way to compare one person's fallibility with another's
 - (V) that simple subjectivism provides no explanation for the mistakes that people make in making moral judgments
 - (W) that simple subjectivism implies that people are never wrong about anything
 - (X) that simple subjectivism implies that making a correct moral judgment is a lot easier than it is generally thought to be
10. What is meant by the claim that simple subjectivism cannot account for moral disagreement?
- (A) that simple subjectivism provides no explanation of how moral disagreements occur
 - (B) that simple subjectivism provides no method for resolving moral disagreements
 - (C) that simple subjectivism implies that when two people are having what most people would regard as a moral disagreement, they are actually agreeing with each other
 - (D) that simple subjectivism implies that when two people are having what most people would regard as a moral disagreement, they are not really saying things that are in conflict with each other

11. Show that simple subjectivism cannot account for moral disagreement, by (1) providing two conflicting moral judgments (that is, an example of a moral disagreement), (2) explaining how simple subjectivism would translate those two moral judgments, and (3) providing some comment about how the simple-subjectivist translations fail to account for moral disagreement. (6 points—2 points for each of these three tasks)
12. How are simple subjectivism and emotivism related?
- (E) They are equivalent - anyone who is a simple subjectivist is also an emotivist, and vice versa.
 - (F) Simple subjectivism is a version, or specification, of emotivism. So, anyone who is a simple subjectivist is also an emotivist, but not everyone who is an emotivist is also a simple subjectivist.
 - (G) Emotivism is a version, or specification, of simple subjectivism. So, anyone who is an emotivist is also a simple subjectivist, but not everyone who is a simple subjectivist is also an emotivist.
 - (H) Simple subjectivism and emotivism are two incompatible views. You can be a simple subjectivist or an emotivist, but not both.
13. 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??
- (I) Premise 1 is false.
 - (J) Premise 2 is false.
 - (K) The argument is invalid (i.e., the conclusion does not follow from the premises).
 - (L) The argument is question-begging (i.e., one of the premises asserts what is not supposed to be arrived at until the conclusion).

IV. Divine-Command Theory

14. Some people think that what is right is right because God commands it. What is one problematic implication of this view?
- (M) Not everyone believes in God.
 - (N) Cruelty would not be immoral if God were to command it.
 - (O) It is impossible to know, with certainty, what God has commanded.
 - (P) Whatever you believe God has told you to do is what you ought to do.
15. What is another problematic implication of the view described in question 14?
- (Q) God does not exist.
 - (R) "God is good" is false.
 - (S) Although "God is good" remains true, God is neither all-powerful nor all-knowing.
 - (T) "God is good" is no more of a statement of praise than "God's commands are in accordance with God's commands."
16. Some people think that God commands what is right because it is right. What is the problematic implication of this view? (4 points)

17. In identifying the problematic implications of the two versions of divine-command theory, does Rachels aim to show that each version is false?
- (U) Yes, because he claims that God does not exist.
 - (V) Yes, although he allows that God might exist.
 - (W) No, he only aims to show that at least one version is false.
 - (X) No, he only aims to show that each version has some implications that some people might regard as problematic.
18. Are the two versions of divine-command theory compatible? Why or why not? (2 points for correct Yes/No, 4 points for why or why not)

V. Psychological Egoism

19. 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.
20. How is psychological egoism relevant to ethics?
- (E) It's not - ethics deals with actions, not motives.
 - (F) It's not - and the point of the chapter is to show this.
 - (G) If psychological egoism were true, then it would always be impossible for people to behave as ethics seems to require.
 - (H) If psychological egoism were true, then it would sometimes be impossible for people to behave as ethics seems to require.
21. Who would use the strategy of reinterpreting motives, and why?
- (I) A defender of psychological egoism, in order to reply to apparent counter-examples to psychological egoism.
 - (J) An opponent of psychological egoism, in order to object to psychological egoism.
 - (K) A neutral evaluator of psychological egoism, in order to assess it.
 - (L) People in everyday life, in order to convince themselves that they are not really excessively selfish.
22. Why is saying that the real reason people pay their taxes is to avoid being audited *not* an example of the strategy of reinterpreting motives?
- (M) because the strategy of reinterpreting motives only applies to voluntary behavior, not behavior that is required by law
 - (N) because the strategy of reinterpreting motives involves explaining the real reason people behave self-interestedly, and the desire to avoid being audited and fined is not a real reason
 - (O) because the strategy of reinterpreting motives involves reinterpreting apparently self-interested acts as altruistic, and paying taxes is not apparently-self-interested, since it is a net loss to the person paying
 - (P) because the strategy of reinterpreting motives involves reinterpreting apparently altruistic actions as self-interested, and paying taxes is not apparently altruistic—everyone knows people do it mainly to avoid being audited and fined
23. Why does psychological egoism become untestable, or unverifiable, or irrefutable, if it is defended using the strategy of reinterpreting motives? Is this a good thing or a bad thing? (4 points for why, 2 points for good/bad)