

## Phil 104, Possible Final Exam Questions

**Six** of the following questions will appear on the final exam. You will be asked to answer **three** of them.

What does Hume mean by saying that passions are “original existences”? Why does he think that it matters?

Suppose you believe that some Roman Emperor (take your pick) is just as virtuous or vicious (take your pick) as George W. Bush, even though the former, unlike the latter, doesn't affect me, or anyone I love. What problem, or apparent problem, does this pose for Hume's explanation of our approval of virtuous actions, or disapproval of vicious actions (take your pick)? How does Hume respond?

Some categorical imperatives are not valid. (For example, “Chug!” yelled at a frat party.) However, Kant believes that one categorical imperative is valid: namely, to act only on a maxim that one can will at the same time to be a universal law. How does Kant try to “validate” it?

How do moral observations differ from scientific observations, according to Harman? Why does it matter?

Choose a plausible moral principle, that you accept (or would have accepted, before being corrupted or enlightened by something you read in this course). Can Kant's Formula of Universal Law support this principle?

Can Sidgwick's utilitarianism support the principle that you chose in response to the last question? What would Sidgwick say about the answer?

Suppose that if we recognize same-sex marriage, 5% of the population, who want to enter into same-sex marriages, would experience an increase in pleasure, whereas 40% of the population, who are made uneasy by same-sex marriages, would experience a decrease of pleasure that is one-fifth as great. What would Sidgwick say morality requires us to do? Why?

Given the same supposition as in the previous question, what would Scanlon say morality requires us to do? Why?

“Consequentialism is false. If everyone was disposed to produce the best outcome, then no one would care specially about his friends and family, and so outcomes would be worse than if everyone was otherwise disposed.” What would Parfit say in response?

“There is no fact of the matter whether torture is wrong. After all, we only believe that torture is wrong because of how we, as homo sapiens, evolved and because of our particular cultural upbringing.” What would Stroud say about this claim?

What would Dworkin say about the last claim, if made by a member of Amnesty International?