

PHI 212: CONTEMPORARY MORAL ISSUES SECOND PAPER TOPICS

The (not so) Fine Print

Due Date/Time for paper: Thursday 11/5/20 @ 10:30 a.m. via Canvas.

- ***I will not accept late papers*** unless you have an excused absence (arranged in advance in almost every case). *Canvas note: If I allow someone to turn in his/her paper 1 minute late, why should I not accept a paper that is 5 minutes late? And what do I do about the student who did not turn in his/her paper one minute late because he/she thought to him/herself, "Dr. Y does not accept late papers, so it is useless to turn in my paper"? The answer is that I have to be fair to everyone, set the deadline, and let the chips fall where they may.*
- If you would like to turn in a draft for me to look over, the due date for drafts is Thursday, 10/29/20 @ 10:30 a.m. via Canvas.
- **Papers should be at least 4 but no more than 6 (double-spaced, size 12 font, 1" margin) pages.**
- The grading criteria and style requirements are in my "Writing a Philosophy 212 Paper," on my website, and will be used to assess your papers.

The Topics

Using ONLY the textbook (and the philosophers' own words, NOT Vaughn's summaries OR my website, OR any other websites, books, or sources -- unless specifically instructed to do so in the topic), and citing page numbers after every sentence quoted or paraphrased to explain the philosophers' view (not including explanations of a quotation), and relevant readings (and authors we've covered to date, when necessary), choose ONE (1) of these topics and compose an essay that answers the following questions. If you use Dr. Y's website to explain something or argue in favor or against a philosopher, be sure to give your own examples of the principle(s) involved, and have a works cited page with the link to the precise page, so you avoid plagiarizing.

1. **ABORTION:** First, have an Introduction (see "Hints" below). Then do these things/answer these questions, in separate paragraphs:
 - (1) Explain (what you think) the best overall argument is either in favor of or against the moral permissibility of abortion: Either **Warren's**, **Thomson's**, **Marquis'**, or **Beckwith's** article (only ONE of them). [Notes: (1) Explain their arguments carefully (for instance, cover *at least* 6 of Thomson's 13 analogies (major different ones that make different points); or give Warren's personhood criteria and explain it well, going through the objections she raises; or give Marquis' FLO principle, including how it applies to other moral issues and especially his assumptions at the beginning of his article; or Beckwith's objections against Thomson (do not repeat Thomson's argument; focus on what Beckwith criticizes), and the legal and ideological problems her argument. (2) Be sure to say something about each section (if the article has sections), or each page (if the article does not have sections). (3) this question is not asking which one, of all the arguments that a specific author mentioned, was their best argument. It is asking you to explain the whole position (all of the arguments/main points) of the author whom you believe has the most plausible view on the issue. (4) **ONLY** explain the view here with lots of page numbers; do not tout it and say what you like about it here.]
 - (2) Why is this the most plausible view on abortion? [Give your reasons here. These should be arguments, not just quoting or restating what your preferred author thinks. Why should I think your preferred author is making good points for his/her/their view?]
 - (3) Give a good objection to your view.
 - (4) Reply to your objection.
 - (5) Have a Conclusion (see "Hints" below).
2. **DRUGS AND AUTONOMY:** First, have an Introduction (see "Hints" below). Then do these things/answer these questions, in separate paragraphs:
 - (1) Explain (what you think) the best overall argument is either in favor of or against the moral (im)permissibility of the legalization of drugs: Either **Wilson's** or **Husak's** article (only ONE of them). [Notes: (1) Be sure to say something about each section (if the article has sections), or each page (if the article

does not have sections); and (2) this question is not asking which one, of all the arguments that a specific author mentioned, was their best argument. It is asking you to explain the whole position (all of the arguments/main points) of the author whom you believe has the most plausible view on the issue. (3) **ONLY** explain the view here with lots of page numbers; do not tout it and say what you like about it here.]

(2) Why is this the most plausible view on the issue of drug legalization? [Give your reasons here. These should be arguments, not just quoting or restating what your preferred author thinks. Why should I think your preferred author is making good points for his/her/their view?]

(3) Give a good objection to your view.

(4) Reply to your objection.

(5) Have a Conclusion (see "Hints" below).

3. **EUTHANASIA:** First, have an Introduction (see "Hints" below). Then do these things/answer these questions, in separate paragraphs:

(1) Explain (what you think) the best overall argument is either in favor of or against the moral (im)permissibility of euthanasia: Either **Callahan's** or **Lachs'** article (only **ONE** of them). [Notes: (1) Be sure to say something about each section (if the article has sections), or each page (if the article does not have sections); and (2) this question is not asking which one, of all the arguments that a specific author mentioned, was their best argument. It is asking you to explain the whole position (all of the arguments/main points) of the author whom you believe has the most plausible view on the issue. (3) **ONLY** explain the view here with lots of page numbers; do not tout it and say what you like about it here.]

(2) Why is this the most plausible view on euthanasia? [Give your reasons here. These should be arguments, not just quoting or restating what your preferred author thinks. Why should I think your preferred author is making good points for his/her/their view?]

(3) Give a good objection to your view.

(4) Reply to your objection.

(5) Have a Conclusion (see "Hints" below).

4. **GENETIC ENGINEERING:** First, have an Introduction (see "Hints" below). Then do these things/answer these questions, in separate paragraphs:

(1) Explain (what you think) the best overall argument is either in favor of or against the moral (im)permissibility of genetic engineering: Either **Harris'** or **Glannon's** article (only **ONE** of them). [Notes: (1) Be sure to say something about each section (if the article has sections), or each page (if the article does not have sections); and (2) this question is not asking which one, of all the arguments that a specific author mentioned, was their best argument. It is asking you to explain the whole position (all of the arguments/main points) of the author whom you believe has the most plausible view on the issue. (3) **ONLY** explain the view here with lots of page numbers; do not tout it and say what you like about it here.]

(2) Why is this the most plausible view on genetic engineering? [Give your reasons here. These should be arguments, not just quoting or restating what your preferred author thinks. Why should I think your preferred author is making good points for his/her/their view?]

(3) Give a good objection to your view.

(4) Reply to your objection.

(5) Have a Conclusion (see "Hints" below).

5. **CLONING:** First, have an Introduction (see "Hints" below). Then do these things/answer these questions, in separate paragraphs:

(1) Explain (what you think) the best of **Brock's** arguments overall, *either* in favor of or against the moral permissibility of cloning. Only describe one side of his arguments. [Notes: (1) Be sure to say something about each section (if the article has sections), or each page (if the article does not have sections); and (2) this question is not asking which one, of all the arguments that a specific author mentioned, was their best argument. It is asking you to explain the whole position (all of the arguments/main points) of the author whom you believe has the most plausible view on the issue. (3) **ONLY** explain the view here with lots of page numbers; do not tout it and say what you like about it here.]

(2) Why is this the most plausible view on cloning? [Give your reasons here. These should be arguments, not just quoting or restating what your preferred author thinks. Why should I think your preferred author is making good points for his/her/their view?]

(3) Give a good objection to your view.

(4) Reply to your objection.

(5) Have a Conclusion (see "Hints" below).

HINTS: You should have your paper organized in general by paragraphs, as follows:

- **INTRODUCTION:** List every term or argument you will explain, exactly, and in order [e.g., "In this paper, I will explain X, Y, and Z (concepts) or A, B, C arguments"], be sure to mention what stance you'll be arguing -- in favor or against the philosopher. Do not write "I will then take a stance on this view (or this author)."
- **GIVE YOUR VIEW** -- Is the argument/view a sound/good one? Give your opinion in the form of an argument here. If you are arguing **IN FAVOR** of the philosopher you are covering, you should mention why the different major points are plausible and good. [In order to argue in favor of the view, you should think that you can adequately address the major objections we mentioned in class against the philosopher/author.] **IF** you defend the philosopher's view, you must defend the whole view on the subject topic (you should at least **BRIEFLY** mention why the points you explained above are plausible - don't just focus on one main point and say why you like it); do **NOT** state that you like certain parts of the person's view, but not the whole view. **IF** you are against the view, you need to mention at least one major reason why the view is implausible. *[NOTE: In these topics, for this part of the paper ("Your View"), I am not asking if you agree with the philosopher's conclusion (because you have to agree with basically every premise or point they argue to reach that conclusion); I am not asking if you disagree with their opponent as your main motivation for defending this view (you may be unsure about whether each side is right); I am not asking if this view appeals to you in some way, or if you are psychologically fond of it, or if you would LIKE for it to be true; I AM asking if this view is philosophically defensible against ALL major objections, to your knowledge.]*
- **OBJECTION TO YOUR VIEW:** Give your opponent (either your own objection or another author who does not agree with you) a whole paragraph to voice *one* (not lots of different points), *strong* (not a weak one that's easy to reply to), developed (i.e., not one or two sentences - give an example and explain it well) against your view. *NOTE: You may use an objection from an author who is opposed to your view, or one that we discussed as being a strong objection in class (or, for instance, from Dr. Y's documents on his website). However, you must have an original reply to the objection; moreover, you may not just paraphrase or quote both objections and replies from the author's article. Lastly, if you do use an objection from Dr. Y's website, you must cite it in the paper and have a Works Cited and "Yount = <<insert url here>>", so you can avoid plagiarizing Dr. Y.*
- **YOUR REPLY TO THE OBJECTION YOU JUST RAISED:** Answer the objection to the best of your ability, in more than one or two sentences. If you cannot answer the objection, switch sides and argue opposite to what you originally said (I'll have no way of knowing what you originally were going to answer). Pick the most plausible side as you see it and defend that side of the argument.
- **CONCLUSION:** State exactly whose view you explained, and then state that you argued that that view is plausible ("In conclusion, I explained X's view on the issue of Y, and argued that X has the most plausible view on this issue."). Then summarize briefly your objection(s) and reply or replies (or at least mention that you raised and responded to an objection), and perhaps say something about future implications of your view (or the issue). **NOTES:** **DO** not introduce any **NEW** objections or concepts you never raised in the paper thus far. Also, do not re-explain any of the things you've already explained or explain any new concepts here. Just list what you have explained.