

# Mid-term Answer Key

PHIL 105

March 15, 2018

Be generous!

## Arg ID

1. **Claim:** Utilitarianism doesn't respect the rights or value of persons as such **Evidence:** individuals are only vessels for what *is* of value – viz. pleasure
2. **Claim:** It is ok to eat factory farmed animals because **Evidence:** one's actions are causally impotent/inefficacious with respect to the IFS
3. **Claim:** The concept of a moral right is complex and admits of no easy definition. It is not precise enough in its ordinary use to allow us to settle disputes by appeal to definition/the concept alone. **Evidence:** Opponents dispute concerning what constitutes a rights holder, and do so without demonstrating a failure to grasp what a right is, etc.

## Definitions

1. Nutritionism: defines food as any substance or stuff that provides nutritional calories
2. Necessary condition: what is required for something to be the case
3. Genealogy: an explanation of some cultural phenomenon in terms of the way it came about
4. Hedonism: the only intrinsically valuable good is pleasure
5. Sentience: the capacity for pleasure/pain (or conscious awareness)

## Multiple Choice

1. B
2. A
3. D
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. A
8. B
9. D
10. B

11. B
12. A
13. A
14. A
15. A

## Short Essay

1. Explain the “argument from marginal cases”. What is a “marginal case”? What problem does the argument from marginal cases present?

1. Animals lack moral status, and so cannot be the direct or independent objects of moral consideration [indirect duty view]
2. Animals lack moral status because they are unable to F (e.g. unable to act rationally)
3. But there are cases of beings of the kind that possesses moral status (e.g. human beings) that are unable to F (e.g. children, mentally disabled)
4. There are no other relevant differences between these marginal cases and animals
5. Since we can't treat children or the disabled like things, we can't treat animals like things either – i.e. animals have moral status
6. Therefore we have direct duties towards animals

All are cases where there is an absence of F but presence of moral status. Demonstrates the challenge of providing a universal definition of what constitutes moral status

2. Explain the difficulty in giving a precise definition of the concept of *food*. Make sure you (i) articulate what is required to give a definition of a concept; (ii) describe the reasons why there might be more than one way to define the concept of food

**Necessary conditions :** what is *required* for something to be the case.

**Sufficient conditions :** what is *enough* for something to be the case.

**Definition :** the necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of a term or concept. A proper definition should specify all and only the defined objects.

- Distinguish between food as natural kind and food as social kind

3. What is “moral hazard”? Why might the structure of the industrial food system present an instance of moral hazard?

**Moral Hazard** One party engages in “risky” actions at least in part due to the knowledge that some other party bears the cost of those risks. Typically arises when one or both of the parties possesses incomplete information about the other (“information asymmetry”).

- The actions of the IFS seem to hinge on information asymmetries and the placement of risk on consumer & gov in manner similar to the tobacco industry
- 4. What is the “basic argument” for vegetarianism? What are the limitations of this argument? How might one object to the argument?
  1. It is wrong to cause pain without a morally good reason.
  2. If it is wrong to cause pain without a morally good reason, then it is also wrong to support practices that cause pain without a morally good reason.
  3. If we can nourish ourselves without eating meat, then nourishment is not a morally good reason to cause pain to animals or to support practices that cause pain to animals.
  4. We can nourish ourselves without eating meat.
  5.  $\therefore$  Nourishment is not a morally good reason to cause pain to animals or to support practices that cause pain to animals (from 3,4)
  6.  $\therefore$  It is wrong to eat meat (from 1–2, 5)
- Arg doesn't cover animal testing or even eating of animals outside of various conditions (e.g. when meat is only nourishment, or when production isn't generating lots of pain)
- object to (2) b/c of causal inefficacy; object to (3) b/c animals lack moral standing (Hsiao's argument); object to (4) because we might be in a situation where we can only eat meat for nourishment