

Midterm Exam Key

PHIL 105

March 16, 2017

Argument Identification (20 points)

1. (i) Utilitarianism isn't egalitarian in the manner which an advocate of human rights should endorse; (ii) Utilitarian doesn't recognize the value of individuals, only of the experiences (of pleasure and pain) of individuals
2. (i) it is morally permissible to eat animals; (ii) individuals are causally impotent with respect to factory farming/animal cruelty, so we might as well enjoy eating animals
3. (i) we can't determine whether animals have rights just by analyzing the concept; (ii) the concept of a moral right is complex and somewhat unclear and imprecise

Definitions (20 points)

1. Nutritionism : An ideology that conceives of food purely in terms of nutrients consumed for the maintenance & development of the organism's bodily health
2. Sufficient Condition : What is enough for something to be the case
3. Genealogy : an explanation of some cultural phenomenon in terms of the way it came about
4. Act Consequentialism: an act is morally right iff it maximizes the good
5. Sentience: the capacity for conscious experience

Multiple Choice (30 points)

1. D
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. C

Short Essay (30 points)

Answer only two of the four

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. ∴ We have direct duties towards animals
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
 - (i) provide necessary and sufficient conditions
 - (ii) food as vehicle for nutritional categories, vs. food as social kind
3. What is “moral hazard”? Why might the structure of our food industry 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. This typically arises when one or both of the parties possesses incomplete information about the other (“information asymmetry”).

The business model of the food industry requires making people think they either need to (i) eat more calories than is healthy; (ii) buy increasingly processed foods

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)