

Mid-term Answer Key

PHIL 105

October 11, 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. B
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. A
8. B
9. D
10. B

11. B
12. A
13. A
14. B
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. Creatures that lack moral status lack it because they lack some characteristic *C* (e.g. rationality or intelligence)
2. But there are cases of beings that possess moral status (e.g. human beings) while otherwise lacking characteristic *C* (e.g. children, mentally disabled, people in persistent vegetative states)
3. There are no other relevant differences between these “*marginal cases*” and cases of beings that possess *C*, and so possess moral status
4. Therefore, whatever confers moral status must be a characteristic that is had by *all* cases, including the “*marginal*” ones, anything else is *arbitrary*

All are cases where there is an absence of *C* 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. A creature has moral status if it has interests, and it has interests if, and only if, it is sentient. The minimal interests of a sentient creature are pleasure and the absence of pain