

Philosophy 101

Mid-Term Review

October 16, 2014

Searle Wrap-Up

Representation & the Chinese Room

- Linguistic and imagistic symbols need interpreting to represent
- Mental states don't need interpretation to represent

Representation & the Chinese Room

- Does the Chinese room represent anything or does it only manipulate symbols?
- According to Searle the room has no representational states
 - States of the have syntax not semantics
- What's missing?
 - Biological minds?
 - Causal powers? (see Implementation objection)
 - Phenomenal consciousness?

Objections to Searle

- Systems objection
 - occupant of the room may not understand Chinese but the *room* itself does
- Implementation objection
 - programs may have only syntax, but implementations of programs may have both syntax and semantics

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Format

- ① Argument extraction (2, 10 pts)
- ② Definitions (2, 5 pts)
- ③ Multiple choice (10, 3 pts)
- ④ Short essay (2, 20 pts)

Argument Extraction

Analyze the text and extract the argument in premise/conclusion form. Determine whether it is valid and sound. Pick two of three:

- What's the conclusion of the argument?
- What support does the conclusion have – what's the evidence?
- What evidence is essential to the argument and what is extraneous?
- Is the argument valid?
- Is the argument sound?

Argument Extraction

Sample Evidence Markers

- as
- because
- for
- from
- since

Argument Extraction

Sample Conclusion Markers

- hence
- so
- then
- therefore
- thus

Argument Extraction

Valid Argument: An argument whose structure *guarantees* that, if the premises are true, the conclusion must also be true

Sound Argument: An argument which is (i) valid and (ii) has true premises

Argument Extraction

There is no reason to think that there are any absolute moral truths. We can see this when we consider different cultural outlooks concerning what is morally required. For example, indigenous Inuit culture considered infanticide to be morally permissible. But modern American culture clearly thinks infanticide is morally wrong. So what's morally right or wrong is just a matter of opinion, which can vary from culture to culture.

Argument Extraction

- ① If moral truths were absolute then they would not vary from culture to culture
- ② What's considered morally right or wrong does vary from culture to culture
- ③ \therefore There are no absolute moral truths

Argument Extraction

- Is the argument valid?
 - Yes:
 - If $A \rightarrow B$
 - $\sim B$
 - $\therefore \sim A$

Argument Extraction

- Is the argument sound?
 - No:
 - there could be cultural variance even if there were absolute moral truths
 - some cultures could just be getting things wrong—compare: “are there absolute truths about geography?”
 - the fact that some people believe the earth is flat is no reason to deny that there are absolute geographic truths

Definitions

Give the definition of the word. Pick **two** of three:

Physicalism: everything that could exist is either physical or depends on the physical

Multiple Choice

- ① Nagel's argument concerning consciousness aims to show what?
- A. *What it is like to be a bat*
 - B. *That dualism is true*
 - C. *That we cannot understand how physicalism could be true*
 - D. *That physicalism is true*

Multiple Choice

- ② True or false?: Block thinks that blindsight patients have access consciousness only.

Short Essay

Write a *short* essay—two to three paragraphs. Pick two of three:

- Explain how the knowledge argument is a challenge to physicalism. Explain Lewis's reply.
 - Explain what physicalism is
 - State the knowledge argument
 - State the challenge which the knowledge argument poses to physicalism
 - Explain Lewis's 'Ability Hypothesis'