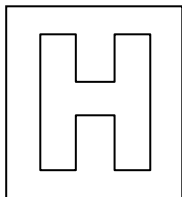


Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class

Adm No



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## 2013 Preliminary Examination 2

### Pre-University 3

**GENERAL PAPER**

**8807/02**

Paper 2

**4 September 2013**

**INSERT**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Additional Material: Answer Booklet

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**This question paper consists of 4 printed pages.**

## Stephen T. Asma writes on the value of favouritism.

- 1 From the school yard to the workplace, there is no charge more damning than 'You are being unfair!' Born out of democracy and raised in open markets, fairness has become our de facto modern creed. However, the very symbol of Capitalist America's ethics - Lady Justice - wears a blindfold as she weighs the law on her 'impartial' scale. It is no doubt that across the globe, there are raging conflicts that are stained with a volatile cocktail of income inequality that favours the rich and many have mistaken assumptions about other ethnic groups and about cultural loyalty. No one has ever championed diversity; rather, everyone fights for the inclusion of one's own kind. 5
- 2 The Anglo-American poet, W. H. Auden, claimed that American ideology reverses the traditional European value system - for Europeans, virtue precedes freedom, but for Americans, freedom precedes virtue. Auden noticed that America is so fiercely devoted to emancipation of man that they would rather freely choose vice than have virtue forced upon them. Their national stance - "You're not the boss of me" - leads one to think of freedom as an end in itself rather than a means to some virtuous end. This may be one of the reasons why Americans tend to think of morality as a set of rules rather than as virtues or modes of character. American values assert freedom from harassment and freedom to fulfil basic human capabilities, but positive and substantial notions of good are noticeably absent beyond this rudimentary ethical conversation. It may be suggested that many of the substantial ingredients of the good life such as bonds of family, friends and tribe clash incurably with this official culture of fairness and thus one needs to be reminded about the virtues of favouritism through its recognisable aspects, namely: loyalty, generosity, and gratitude. 10  
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- 3 Loyalty has immense benefits. The late American educator and psychologist, Rensis Likert, argued that the real cause of group success was not top-down management but intergroup loyalty. According to him, 'The greater the loyalty of group towards the group, the greater is the motivation among the members to achieve its goals'. This appears to be a general management application of an already well-known truth about successful families and tribes. If we have each other's back, then we survive and thrive. But the issue about loyalty is that it is not premised on optimal conditions. This implies that one needs to have another's back, even when his kin or friend is sometimes wrong. One needs to have another's back, even when his kin or friend sometimes screws up the job. Lastly, one has to extend to his kin or friend the same loyalty. Such a deep sense of indebtedness helps bond groups and people together, stabilising their social consciousness, erecting their social foundations on solid ties and relationships. 30  
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- 4 Having a shared cause (even an arbitrary one) is a monumental aspect of a meaningful life. For one thing, it sifts out many of one's competing desires and focuses his motivations. Loyalty also sparks a related virtue - resoluteness. One resolves to stay the course, even when storms try to divert us. Loyalty here develops a shared experience and a shared objective. A shared cause is what 'takes over' after the biology of family bonding does its first work, and one finds himself out in the free realm of competing allegiances. The average child finds himself already allied with a given community, but as he matures, he 40  
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- consciously gives loyalty to new shared causes - thereby bringing himself into meaningful community with others. Thus, such loyalty laced favouritism does focus the group efforts to the overall group's objectives. The tribalism seen in supra-organisations such as ASEAN and G8 Nations, is all evidence of such a mentality as if stating – 'The more we band together, the more powerful we are'. Equality and fairness have little to offer in this fundamentally biased arena of meaning. 50
- 5 Furthermore, one other disadvantage of fairness is that it leads to a lack of loyalty. Then, loyalty and fairness seem to be two of the inherently clashing values that Isaiah Berlin, the late philosopher and historian, warned us about. In a sense, the kind of loyalty valued here is loyalty to specific people, not to 'goals' or 'causes'. The truly loyal person disregards consequences and goes through thick and thin with you, while the egalitarian rule-follower is merely self-serving, taking off at the slightest scent of trouble. Thus, fairness causes people to become selfish individuals. The fairness referred here is specific to rewards and outcomes. Since all are equal, it is expected that all rewards will be fairly distributed according to one's effort, but in extreme cases, this fairness engenders a sense of entitlement and greed that kills relationships and encourages individual pursuits of goals. 55 60 65
- 6 Another crucial virtue of favouritism is generosity. Most people ally generosity on the side of fairness because fairness seeks to redistribute benefits and properties. But, favouritists can claim selfless giving as a virtue too. Greed is not possible in a real circle of favouritists and the truly avaricious must separate themselves from the bonds of family and friends in order to indulge in their vice. Unlike the bureaucratic egalitarian attempt to distribute minimal goods as far and as widely as possible, the favouritist will lavish his loved ones with benefits that cost blood, sweat, and tears. Thus, playing favourites does not encourage greed. Biased generosity, arising from practising favouritism, encourages a sharing of resources between loved ones. This is because being biased towards your loved ones means you will prioritise their needs and hence, share resources with them, while fairness on the other hand does not do so. 70 75
- 7 As Christian egalitarianism grew and appropriated ancient virtues, the idea of generosity changed slightly from sharing as *philia* (brotherly love) to sharing as *philanthropos* (love of all humanity). The early philosophers had an idea of 'loving all humanity', but it was embryonic and applied more to how the gods loved the human race, like in the example of Prometheus whose actions were considered philanthropic when he gave humanity fire. Generosity in the Christian era became redefined as giving to the poor (whether one knew the poor or not). But when one reads ancient philosophers like Aristotle and Cicero, one finds that affection is the inner spring of this generosity. Personal affection, love and care for another person drives humanity to be more generous, more consistently than the brittle notion of *philanthropos* ever will. Then it is of little wonder that in 2011, the wealthiest Americans - those with earnings in the top 20 percent - contributed on average 1.3 percent of their income to charity, retaining the rest of the 98.7 percent for themselves and their loved ones. 80 85 90

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