

Philosophy 160
Essay Exam 3

Answer all the following questions in under four pages. Be sure to answer all parts of each question. Use 11-point Times New Roman font with double-spacing and 1-inch margins. Do not include the questions, an introduction, or any other irrelevant information. Just include your answers. These must be completed by 10:30am (the beginning of class) on Wednesday, December 18. Please keep your essay exams hidden away during the in-class exam; hand them in at the end with your in-class exam. Late exams will not be accepted. You may discuss the exam with your peers, but your answers must be your own work (if two or more exams resemble one another too closely, all the authors will lose points).

1. Consider this argument from James Rachels:

1. If an action / policy promotes the best interests of everyone involved and violates no one's rights, then it is morally right.
2. In at least some cases, properly regulated PAS for "hopelessly ill patients who are suffering in great pain" promotes the best interests of everyone involved and violates no one's rights.
3. Therefore, in at least some cases, properly regulated PAS for "hopelessly ill patients who are suffering in great pain" is morally right.

- **Explain each of the premises, one at a time.**
 - When explaining line 2, you may consider the Brittany Maynard case as an example of what Rachels has in mind. Clearly explain why Rachels believes PAS **both** promotes the best interests of everyone involved **and** violates no one's rights in this sort of case.
- Then, **evaluate the premises, one at a time.**
 - If you think line 1 is false, state what *else* an action / policy would have to do in order to be morally right.
 - When evaluating line 2, be sure to address whether **you** agree that PAS **both** maximizes utility **and** violates no one's rights in a case like the Maynard case.
- Finally, **evaluate the argument** as a whole. Is it sound?

2. Consider the following argument from Martin Luther King, Jr. (*note*: it is slightly different from the version we considered in class).

1. If a law has all four of *these features*, then it is unjust.
2. Segregation ordinances have all these features.
3. Therefore, segregation ordinances are unjust.
4. If a law is unjust, then it is morally permissible to break it, so long as one does so openly and accepts the legal penalty for doing so.
5. Therefore, it is morally permissible to break segregation ordinances, so long as one does so openly and accepts the legal penalty.

- **Explain each of the premises one at a time**, unpacking his views (lines 1, 2, and 4).
 - When explaining line 1, tell *which* four features King is talking about.
 - When explaining line 2, use an example of one the segregation ordinances that King is talking about (you must *read the article* "Letter from the Birmingham City Jail" from *The Right Thing to Do* for this).
 - When explaining line 4, tell why he thinks this reaction to unjust laws shows "the highest respect for the law."
- Then, **evaluate the premises, one at a time** (again: lines 1, 2, and 4). Clearly state whether *you* believe each of these premises is true or false and why.
- Finally, **evaluate the argument** as a whole. Is it sound?

3. Consider the following interpretation of the "unnaturalness" objection to homosexual sex acts.

1. Homosexual sex acts involve using body parts contrary to their proper functions.
2. If homosexual sex acts involve using body parts contrary to their proper functions, then such sex acts are morally wrong.
3. Therefore, homosexual sex acts are morally wrong.

- **Explain both premises, one at a time** (lines 1 and 2).
 - When explaining line 1, describe how to determine the "proper function" of body parts, according to the person who makes this sort of argument.
 - When explaining line 2, tell why the author thinks this sort of "unnaturalness" would make such sex acts wrong.
- Then, **evaluate the premises, one at a time** (again: lines 1 and 2). Clearly state whether *you* believe each of these premises is true or false and why.
 - **When evaluating line 2, consider Burton Leiser's objection to it** (say why *he* thinks line 2 is false, and evaluate his thinking; tell whether or not you agree with him).
- Finally, **evaluate the argument** as a whole. Is it sound?