

**ADVANCE INFORMATION ON FINAL EXAM
FALL, 2008**

PHILOSOPHY 13

The final exam for this course will take place on Wednesday, December 10, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in CSB 002 (our regular classroom).

The final exam will comprehend all course materials (required readings, lectures, and handouts) but will emphasize the material covered after the midterm exam.

No use of books or notes will be permitted at any time during the final exam.

The final exam counts for 40 per cent of your overall course grade. (If you are enrolled in this course on a Pass/Not Pass basis, you must earn a C- or better grade on the final exam in order to get a Pass grade in the course, with one exception: If you have an A- or better average grade going into the final, you have earned a Pass grade and you are not required to take the final exam. Check with your TA on this.)

The first hour and a half of the exam will consist of short-answer questions testing comprehension of course readings. You will have some choice as to what questions to answer.

The short-answer section of the final exam counts for one-half of your exam grade and the essay section for one-half.

The final hour and a half of the exam will consist of four essay questions drawn from the list of six questions that begins toward the bottom of this page. Four questions from this list will be posed on the actual exam, and you will be asked to answer two questions.

ESSAY QUESTIONS.

On the actual final you will be asked to answer one A question and one B question.

A1. In the *Second Treatise of Government*, John Locke states, "Men being, as has been said, by nature, all free, equal, and independent, no one can by put out of this estate, and subjected to the political power of another, without his own consent." He also states, "The difficulty is, what ought to be looked upon as a *tacit consent*, and how far it binds." How does Locke deal with this difficulty? How successful is his treatment of consent and tacit consent to government, as an account of the grounds and limits of political obligation? Your discussion should include some consideration of A. John Simmons's commentary on Locke on this issue.

A2. In chapter 5 of the *Second Treatise of Government*, John Locke argues that even though the earth was initially given to mankind in common, individuals can acquire full private ownership rights over particular parts of the earth, rights that continue to exist even when land becomes scarce. State Locke's main arguments to this conclusion. Either defend Locke's position against some significant objection or develop and defend a significant objection against his position.

A3. In the *Second Treatise of Government* John Locke argues against "absolute monarchies" and affirms that persons have natural moral rights, some of which they retain in political society. When a government becomes a tyranny that massively violates people's natural moral rights, any obligation there might be to obey the government ceases, according to Locke, and people have a right to rebel. Apply John Stuart Mill's utilitarianism to the questions, under what circumstances people should obey, disobey, and overturn the government that rules the territory they inhabit. Describe a plausible case in which Mill's utilitarianism and Locke's natural rights doctrine would yield conflicting recommendations regarding people's political obligations and the moral limits of such obligations. Defend Mill's approach against Locke's or Locke's against Mill's or some third alternative against both approaches.

(See back side of this sheet for more questions.)

B1. Robert Nozick observes that the “principle of fairness” asserted by Herbert Hart and John Rawls “seems to make unanimous consent to coercive government in a state of nature unnecessary.” However, Nozick proceeds to argue that the principle of fairness “is objectionable and unacceptable,” and that even if amended, it would not show that an individual can become obligated to support and obey a coercive government without their consent. Do you agree or disagree with Nozick’s critique of the principle of fairness? For what reasons? Your discussion should include consideration of A. John Simmons’s treatment of this issue.

B2. Suppose that Kurdish people now living in Iraq, Turkey, and Iran were to seek to sever territory from these existing countries and establish their own independent sovereign state. What must be true according to the theories of secession proposed by (a) Christopher Wellman and (b) Allen Buchanan, for it to be the case that such a secession struggle would be morally justified and should be supported? Defend Wellman’s account against Buchanan OR Buchanan’s account against Wellman OR an act consequentialist approach to this issue against both Wellman’s and Buchanan’s views.

B3. The first handout of the course was an excerpt from a novel in which the character Huck Finn expresses a firm conviction that slavery, an accepted practice in his home state of Missouri at that time (1850s), is morally acceptable. On the basis of your reading of John Stuart Mill, John Locke, or another course author, identify an accepted (significant, not trivial) practice in contemporary U.S. society that you have come to regard as morally objectionable. Describe the practice, your grounds for finding it morally objectionable despite its current broad acceptance, and how your agreement or disagreement with some course author on some matter of principle underlies your dissent regarding the practice. (If you are doubtful about the validity of such claims to moral truth independent of norms affirmed in the culture of a particular society, explain the grounds for your doubts on this score.)

Arneson’s exam week office hours: Monday, December 8, 1-4, and Tuesday, December 9, 1-4, in HSS 8057.

The course web page contains a link to last year’s final exam short-answer questions. This year’s questions will be different, of course, but looking at the past year’s short-answer section may give you some idea of what sort of questions to expect.