

**PHILOSOPHY 13      MIDTERM EXAM      FALL, 2001**

No use of books or notes is permitted at any time during this exam.

Part I. Essay question. This portion of the exam counts for 60 per cent of your exam grade.  
Time allowed: 30 minutes.

Answer **one** of the following two questions:

1. J. S. Mill writes that "one of the strongest obstacles to the reception of the doctrine that utility or happiness is the criterion of right and wrong has been drawn from the idea of justice."  
According to Mill, what is the difficulty that the idea of justice poses for the advocate of utilitarianism? How does Mill propose to resolve the difficulty in chapter 5 of *Utilitarianism*?  
Either defend utilitarianism against justice-based criticism or the criticism against utilitarianism.  
Your discussion should include a consideration of John Rawls's concern that utilitarianism "does not take seriously the distinction between persons."

**Or**

2. In "Selflessness and the Loss of Self" Jean Hampton argues that altruism, serving others at a sacrifice of one's own interest, is only morally acceptable under certain conditions. What are these conditions? Why is altruism morally problematic according to Hampton? Compare Hampton's evaluation of altruism with the evaluation of it that follows from Mill's utilitarianism. Which position is more defensible, in your view? For what reasons?

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Part II. Short-answer questions. Answer **six** of the following **eight** questions. This portion of the exam counts for 40 per cent of your exam grade. Time allowed: 20 minutes. (Please use the back sides of these sheets if you need more space for your answers.)

1. State the distinction between act and rule utilitarianism as formulated by J.J.C. Smart.

2. In chapter 2 of *Utilitarianism* Mill observes that "it is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied." Explain what Mill is asserting and state his argument for this claim.

3. According to Peter Singer, what are the basis and limit of our moral obligation to aid victims of catastrophes in distant lands?

4. Explain the criticism of utilitarianism that Bernard Williams develops (in his essay "A Critique of Utilitarianism") by means of his discussions of his examples of Jim and George. (Hint: No need to mention integrity.)

5. At different places in *Utilitarianism* Mill proposes different versions of the utilitarian criterion of right and wrong. State any two of these proposed versions.

6. Suppose that I would get more pleasure from watching wrestling on TV than from reading a play by Shakespeare. According to Robert Adams, does it follow that my life goes better while doing the former than doing the latter? Why or why not? According to J.J.C. Smart, does it follow that my life goes better while doing the former than doing the latter? Why or why not?

7. "Nobody could ever be motivated to conform to utilitarianism, so it's irrelevant for any real-world decision problem." --Summarize Mill's response to this objection in chapter 3 of *Utilitarianism*.

8. In his essay "Autonomy and Deontology" Thomas Nagel observes that what he calls "agent-relative deontological constraints" are puzzling and perhaps paradoxical but that the doctrine of double effect might explain and justify them. According to Nagel, what are deontological constraints, why are they puzzling, and how does double effect help to render them intelligible and defensible?