

**ADVANCE INFORMATION ON MIDTERM EXAM
PHILOSOPHY 166 SPRING, 2006**

The midterm exam for Philosophy 166 will take place in our regular classroom (Cognitive Science Bldg. Room #5) at the regular class time, 9:00-9:50 a.m., on Friday, May 5.

The exam will cover class materials up to and including the reading assigned for Wednesday, May 3.

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

The exam will consist of essay questions drawn from the list below. On the actual exam three questions will be posed, and you will be asked to write an essay in response to one of them.

1. A. John Simmons writes that according to John Locke's consent theory, "no man is obligated to support or comply with any political power unless he has personally consented to its authority over him." Examining the *Second Treatise on Government* as a whole, is it reasonable to interpret Locke as holding this position? Why or why not? On the assumption that Locke does indeed affirm the quoted claim, develop a serious objection to it, consider how Locke responds--or should respond--to the objection, and assess this response as you characterize it.
2. In chapter 5 of the *Second Treatise on Government* John Locke argues that in a state of nature the initial appropriation of unowned land as private property can be justified and that subsequently large inequalities in people's holdings of private property can be justified even under conditions of scarcity. State Locke's main arguments for these claims. Attack or defend Locke's arguments on this issue.
3. In Book I, chapter 7 of *The Social Contract* Rousseau writes, "Thus, in order for the social compact to avoid being an empty formula, it tacitly entails the commitment—which alone can give force to the others—that whoever refuses to obey the general will will be forced to do so by the entire body. This means merely that he will be forced to be free." Why according to Rousseau does being forced to obey the general will involve being forced to be free? What conceptions of the general will and of freedom does Rousseau presuppose in making this claim? Elucidate Rousseau's position on this issue and defend or attack that position.
4. "Given the characterization of individuals in modern society as formed by the social processes that Rousseau described in the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, the social contract—the solution to the problem of how to establish a morally legitimate political state—turns out to be entirely unfeasible. The people of the *Discourse* could neither establish nor sustain the social contract of *The Social Contract*."—Do you agree or disagree with the quoted statement? For what reasons? Would Rousseau agree or disagree with the quoted statement? Why or why not? In your view, is Rousseau's position on this issue excessively optimistic, excessively pessimistic, or just right?
5. Rousseau has been interpreted as maintaining that political decisions are morally legitimate only if they are correct and that democratic procedures operating under the right conditions produce laws and policies that are correct and therefore legitimate. Moreover, no nondemocratic political procedures could be legitimate. Is this a correct account of Rousseau's justification of democracy? If so, is Rousseau's justification cogent? If the first two sentences of this exam prompt are not an accurate interpretation of Rousseau's views in *The Social Contract*, , what is Rousseau's actual account of the justification of democracy, and is that account cogent?