

**Advance information on final exam Philosophy 166 Spring, 2006**

The final exam for this course will take place on Friday, June 16 from 8 am to 11 am in CSB 005 (our regular classroom).

No use of books or notes will be permitted at any time during this exam. Please don't bring blue books; I'll supply paper.

The final exam will comprehend all course materials (required readings, lectures, and handouts). This means that you will not be asked any questions that require knowledge of merely recommended readings.

The first hour and a half of the exam will consist of short-answer questions testing your understanding of course materials (readings, lectures, and handouts). Each question is to be answered in a short, paragraph-length essay. You will have some choice as to which questions to answer.

The short-answer section of the exam and the essay section will count equally toward your exam grade.

The next hour and a half of the final will consist of essay questions drawn from the list below. On the actual exam four questions will be posed and you will be required to answer one A question and one B question. Each of your two responses to essay questions counts equally for purposes of grading.

Essay questions.

A1. The form of government that Mill recommends in *Considerations on Representative Government* includes many features that aim to alleviate two problems: (a) insufficient competence in those who make and enact laws and other public policies and in those who execute them, and (b) control of government by people motivated by interests that conflict with the general welfare. In your view is the form of government that Mill recommends, shaped to mitigate problems a and b, superior or inferior to the Paris Commune type of democracy that Marx praises in *The Civil War in France*? State your reasons.

A2. In chapters VI and VIII of *Considerations on Representative Government*, Mill proposes a scheme of "plural votes" or weighted votes that departs from the principle of one-person-one-vote. Mill evidently conjectures that this plural votes scheme will operate to produce better results than any feasible alternatives; he might be right or wrong about this conjecture, given his standard for assessing results as better or worse. Either defend Mill's position against the principle of one-person-one-vote or that principle against Mill's position (or defend some third position on this issue if neither of these two alternatives strikes you as right or close to right).

A3. In *Considerations on Representative Government* Mill espouses a form of government that he takes to be an adequate response (or the best feasible response) to the problem of tyranny of the majority. Characterize the problem of tyranny of the majority and criticize or defend Mill's proposed form of government in the light of this problem.

A4. Suppose that contrary to Mill's opinion, in some circumstances the general welfare would be best advanced by restricting individual liberty in violation of Mill's liberty principle and by instituting a nondemocratic and even despotic form of government. This supposition means that these policies would be better for people, improve their quality of life overall in the long run, than any alternative policies we might follow instead. Granting this supposition, ought we to embrace liberty restriction and despotism? If acting effectively to maximize the general welfare conflicts in some circumstances with the norm of respecting individual natural rights as characterized by Locke, which should we choose, and why? (If you think the supposition you are being asked to assume is not really coherent, explain your thinking on this matter.)

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B1. Addressing an imaginary critic of communism, Marx (with Engels) writes in the *Communist Manifesto*, “But don’t wrangle with us, so long as you apply, to our intended abolition of private property, the standard of your bourgeois notions of freedom, culture, law, etc. Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property. . .” Explicate Marx’s critique of morality and justice articulated in Part II of the *Communist Manifesto* and in his *Critique of the Gotha Program*. (You may wish to consider Allen Wood’s interpretation and defense of Marx’s critique of justice.) Defend or attack Marx’s position on this issue.

B2. Paternalism is stipulated to be restriction of an adult person’s liberty against her will for her own good. Taking *On Liberty* as a whole, characterize Mill’s position as to when, if ever, paternalism would be permissible according to his liberty principle. Consider his treatment of the issue of voluntary slavery contracts and contracts involving a long-term restriction of one’s liberty and also his discussion of the example of stopping an individual from venturing on an unsafe bridge. Would Mill’s liberty principle as you interpret allow prohibition of the practice of dueling or not? Defend or criticize Mill’s views on paternalism.

B3. In an economy regulated by market exchange with private ownership, some get more and some get less. Does Marx object to this feature of market exchange? That is, is Marx an egalitarian? If so, what sort of equality is he for? If not, what is the normative standard that market exchange violate, according to Marx? Discuss Marx’s characterizations of the transition from lower stage to higher stage communism as he depicts this change in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* and the *Critique of the Gotha Program* with a view to clarifying the basis of Marx’s rejection of market exchange. Attack or defend the moral desirability of Marx’s standard of assessment as you conceive it.

B4. In Part 2 of the *Discourse on Inequality* Rousseau describes and criticizes the rise of what he takes to be undesirable status competition and social hierarchy. Summarize Rousseau’s description of this process and of what he finds objectionable about it. Does Rousseau’s depiction of humans as prone to mean-spirited status-seeking provide the basis for a sound criticism of Marx, insofar as his vision of future communist harmony rests on excessively optimistic assumptions about human nature? Why or why not?

My exam week office hours will be Tuesday 3-5 and Wednesday 1-3.