

## MIDTERM EXAM REVIEW GUIDE

### PHILOSOPHY 4, SPRING 2009

If you are able to answer the following questions completely and accurately, you will do quite well on the midterm. In some cases, the questions listed under an author will not appear in his article, but will appear in lecture notes from the class in which we discussed the author.

#### RUSSELL

Understand what the main topic of Russell's paper is, and the differences between the value of philosophy and the value of science. Be able to identify the primary value of philosophy and how that's different than the value of the sciences. Be able to state and explain the two common criticisms that philosophy has no value, as well as Russell's answers to each objection. Be able to explain who the "practical men" are and explain the difference in the type of knowledge philosophy provides. Be able to state and explain the two reasons philosophy doesn't get the results that science does. Be able to explain the value philosophy has even when it cannot give definite answers.

#### THOMSON

Know the difference between a moral and a legal right to abortion. Know what a counterexample is and how they're used. Be able to articulate what proposition (premise) the traditional debate about abortion has centered around and what Thomson's response is to it. Explain what two things we noted in class about rights as a build-up to understanding Thomson's arguments. What argument does Thomson offer in defense of the idea that abortion is morally permissible in cases of rape? Be sure to describe the type of argument it is, and what potential weaknesses that type of argument can be subject to that we identified in class. State, explain and provide an example that illustrates the difference between a decency-based moral ought judgment and a rights-based moral ought judgment. Explain two objections to Thomson's argument for the permissibility of abortion in cases of rape, and how Thomson could reply. What argument does Thomson offer in defense of the idea that abortion is morally permissible in cases of pregnancy where the life of the mother is at risk. State and explain what the extreme view is and what principles might be offered in support of that view. Explain Thomson's reply to each. Be sure to be able to properly state and explain the Rapidly Expanding Baby Case. What point is that case meant to establish (be careful not to overstate things here)? What is the issue of Third party intervention, and how is the coat case used to support it. State and explain the argument Thomson makes for the permissibility of abortion in cases of consensual sex where no contraception has been used, and where contraception has been used but failed. Be sure to be able to correctly articulate the Burglar Case and the People-Seed Case and articulate how they are used to support the conclusions they support. State and explain the permission principle and where in Thomson's argument it comes up (recall that this is something Thomson seeks to be assuming

in her argument). State and explain the two cases we discussed in class that relate to the permission principle, and how Thomson would reply to them. Be able to relate this to the Kitty Genovese case and explain what this shows us about the assumptions Thomson makes in her arguments.

### **MARQUIS**

Be able to identify Marquis' conclusion and his strategy for establishing its truth. Marquis also looks to circumvent the traditional debate about the personhood of the fetus because he thinks it's an intractable debate. He sites problems on both sides of the issue. What problems does he identify with defining a person as something that is biologically human? What problems does he identify with defining a person as something that (a) has a concept of self that persists through time, (b) desires its continued existence, or (c) is practically rational? State and explain the three proposals Marquis identifies for what makes killing people bad, and give his response to each. What proposal does Marquis adopt for what makes killing creatures like us wrong (be sure to give a complete account, including identifying what the future goods of a conscious life are, etc.)? According to Marquis, what makes the goods of my future good for me? Explain his answer. State and explain the reasons Marquis believes support the FLO account. State and explain how, if we accept Marquis' account, abortion is generally not morally permissible. State and explain the exceptions Marquis gives. What distinction is key to understanding the claim Marquis is making about why most abortions are immoral. State and explain the no interests objection and the contraception objection and how Marquis replies to each. State and explain the severely depressed objection, Marquis' reply to that objection, the further problem for his reply, the better reply that might be made on his behalf, the advantage of this reply, and the question this then leads us to ask.

### **WASSERSTROM**

Be able to identify the claim that Wasserstrom is taking up in his paper. Be able to state and explain the three ways this claim can be understood. What reasons does Wasserstrom give for rejecting the analytic view? State and explain Wasserstrom's thesis, and describe his argument for it (be sure to be able to identify the two reasons that might be given in support of Truman's decision to drop the bomb and how Wasserstrom responds to the 2<sup>nd</sup> one).