

Introduction to Philosophy Second Exam

Answer two of the following topics in no more than six typed pages. Make appropriate use in your answers of the course readings and of the critical analysis of the readings in class.

1. Critically examine cultural relativism as an ethical theory.
2. Critically examine Mill's two proofs for the ultimate norm of morality -- the greatest happiness for the greatest number of sentient beings. What are the moral consequences of Mill's subordination of liberty to utility? (Examine his account of the harm principle for the latter question.)
3. What is Kant's final and complete formulation of *the categorical imperative* and how does he justify it? Is the final formulation superior to the first (formal universality)? If so, explain how and why. Evaluate Jean-Paul Sartre's critique of Kantian ethics.
4. What are Aristotle's criteria for happiness, and why according to Aristotle does neither pleasure, nor honor, nor wealth constitute happiness? What is Aristotle's definition of moral excellence (virtue) and how does he justify it? Why is virtue said to be rational and vice irrational? Is Aristotle's starting point in ethical theory (human nature and the good [happiness]) preferable to Kant's starting point (rational nature and the right [obligation or duty])? Justify your answer.
5. Are the normative ethical theories of Mill, Kant, and Aristotle just for men and unsuitable for women? Does the *care ethic* entirely capture the moral reality of women? Examine the writings of Mary Wollstonecraft and Carol Gilligan in light of these questions.