

Phi 115
Exam 1
10/2/18

In each of the two sections below, choose one question to answer. If you have a question regarding what the question means, please don't hesitate to ask. In your Blue Book, make sure you identify what question you're answering by numbering your response with the corresponding numbering below. Good luck!

Section 1

- 1) There are objections to the cosmological argument. Summarize and evaluate at least two of them.
- 2) Does the ontological argument succeed? Why or why not?
- 3) The logical problem of evil is said to fail. Does the evidential problem of evil fare better?

Section 2

- 4) "Divine omniscience is incompatible with human freedom": explain and assess.
- 5) It has been argued that if God does not create the best of all possible worlds, then God is not morally perfect. Address some possible responses to the argument. Do they persuade?
- 6) What, in the philosophical sense, is a miracle? Can it be rational to believe that one has occurred?

Phi 115
Exam 2
11/8/18

In each of the two sections below, choose one question to answer. If you have a question regarding what the question means, please don't hesitate to ask. In your Blue Book, make sure you identify what question you're answering by numbering your response with the corresponding numbering below. Good luck!

Section 1

- 1) Perfect Being Theism maintains that God is the greatest metaphysically possible being and exists. The "linear" and the "radial" are models for that greatness. Explain these models and some of the key objections to them. In your opinion, is one to be preferred to the other?
- 2) "Type-A," "Type-B," and "Type-C" objections are traditional arguments against God's existence. How does the Maximal God Approach address them in a new way?
- 3) There are many objections to the Maximal God Approach. Summarize and evaluate at least three of them.

Section 2

- 4) By way of his "theory of natures," Peter Millican formulates a "shallow, logical" objection to the classical ontological argument. Summarize his argument and what is distinctive about it. What are some responses to it?
- 5) Parody objections—Gaunilo's Lost Island, Millican's AntiGod, and Chambers's Devil, for example—are a standard response to the classical ontological argument. Summarize two of your choice. Do they work?
- 6) The modal ontological argument says that *if* God is possible, God exists. Accordingly, the crucial issue concerns whether or not God in fact *is* possible. What are some ways of trying to justify the possibility premise? Overall, does the modal argument convince?

Phi 115
Exam 3
12/10/18

In each of the two sections below, choose one question to answer. If you have a question regarding what the question means, please don't hesitate to ask. In your Blue Book, make sure you identify what question you're answering by numbering your response with the corresponding numbering below. Good luck!

Section 1

- 1) In his 1979 article "The Problem of Evil and Some Varieties of Atheism," William Rowe writes, "Suppose in some distant forest lightning strikes a dead tree, resulting in a forest fire. In the fire a fawn is trapped, horribly burned, and lies in terrible agony for several days before death relieves its suffering. So far as we can see, the fawn's intense suffering is pointless." Is it pointless?
- 2) Richard Swinburne offers a theodicy for evil. Survey the goods that he claims justify God's permitting evil. Does his account succeed?
- 3) In reply to Rowe's evidential argument from evil, Alvin Plantinga and William Alston offer a defense for thinking why the existence of evil does not make unlikely God's existence. Summarize (and evaluate) their respective approaches to Rowe's argument. Which, if either, is the more compelling of the two?

Section 2

- 4) Paul Draper formulates the "Humean probabilistic" argument from evil. With reference to skeptical theism, explain what makes his version of the argument from evil dissimilar from Rowe's original version.
- 5) Explain the six considerations Alston claims account for why we are not in a right position to infer that God probably does not have sufficient reasons for permitting evils. Does his account lead, as some have insisted, to a more general and problematic skepticism?
- 6) Alston gives various reasons that he claims are "live possibilities" as to why God permits the evils we see. Provide an overview of them. Is his case convincing?

Extra Credit

There is Sam, Sue, and Bambi. When attempting to explain why the suffering of Sam or Sue might be justified, there are issues to consider that are not at play with Bambi. How, exactly, do these cases of human suffering differ from Bambi's?