

# Philosophy Fall Midterm

November 19, 2019

**Please note: The outline sketches would be woefully inadequate to support an entire essay. They are meant to provide examples of possible general approaches. They should in no way be prescriptive**

# Stimulus A

Argument of the stimulus:

Eating animals is wrong because if animals ate us we would object.

Possible arguments for your paper:

Animals should be included in the circle of respect

Animals are rightly excluded from the circle of respect

Relevant evidence from units 2-3:

Descartes, Singer, Carruthers, Turing,\* Lycan\*

Relevant evidence from unit 1

Nagel, Chalmers, Dennett, Churchland on Chauvinism and functionalism

# Stimulus A - (very) skeletal outline

Thesis: Eating animals for our own pleasure is not ethical because it wrongly excludes animals from the circle of respect

Argument :

Singer on interests and equal consideration of interests

Counter argument:

Animals don't suffer (Carruthers),

Animals don't reason (Descartes)

Repair:

Animal suffering can be demonstrated thorough analogous behavior (Singer),

Reason is an arbitrary standard for respect (Singer)

Animals have consciousness that we can't understand (Nagel)

# Stimulus B

Argument of the stimulus:

Machines can have minds

Possible arguments for your paper:

Machines can have minds

Machines can't have minds

Machines should be included/excluded from the circle of respect

Relevant evidence from units 2-3:

Descartes, Singer, Carruthers, Turing,\* Lycan\*

Relevant evidence from unit 1

Nagel, Chalmers, Dennett, Churchland on Chauvinism and functionalism

# Stimulus B - (very) skeletal outline

Thesis: Machines can have minds and serve respect

Argument :

The imitation game (Turing)

Henrietta and Harry (Lycan)

Counter argument:

Imitation/programming is not understanding (Descartes)

Machines lack consciousness (Turing, Lycan)

Repair:

What humans do is essentially imitation/programming

The only way to demonstrate a being has or doesn't have consciousness is to be that being. Otherwise, we will have to make our judgments on more obvious similarities (Turing, Lycan, Nagel)

# Stimulus C

Argument of the stimulus:

Tyranny is simply manipulation of the crowd

Possible arguments for your paper:

We are free, and freedom means responsibility, we must accept responsibility for our actions

Relevant evidence from units 2-3:

Kant, Plato, Tao, Buddhism, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre

Relevant evidence from unit 1

Dennett\*

# Stimulus C - (very) skeletal outline

Thesis: Failure to accept responsibility for our actions by following (a leader, a crowd, an idea etc) leads us to inauthentic lives and ultimately to dangerous social states

Argument :

Existentialists conceptions of freedom (Sartre, Kierkegaard)

We must resist the idea of living in eternal childhood (Kant)

Comfort in a cave of deception isn't living (Plato)

Craving belonging and group purpose leads to suffering (Buddhism)

Counter argument:

Freedom is an illusion, we act based on our genetics and social structures are determined by this and not individual choice (Wilson)

Repair:

The determinist perspective may be right, but condemns us to meaninglessness.

Kierkegaard on faith and the relationship of faith to meaning