

Central Problems in Philosophy: Paper Three

Requirements

You are to submit one 6–8 page research paper on Thursday 12 May, addressing one and only one of the questions listed below. A printed copy of the paper must be submitted in class.

Guidelines

Essay guidelines are available here: <http://goo.gl/jrx25>

Questions

- Harman (1999) argues that some versions of virtue ethics presuppose a conception of virtue that evidence from psychology suggests is false. Explain and evaluate this argument, addressing at least one of the following questions:
 - Explain the Millgram experiment, explain why Harman thinks it is a problem for some versions of virtue ethics, and explain how a virtue ethicist might respond to Harman.
 - Slingerland (2011) argues that a version of Confucian virtue ethics is not vulnerable to Harman's argument. Explain and evaluate this argument.

Haslanger (2000) proposes theories of both gender and race. Explain and evaluate at least one of these theories, addressing at least one of the following questions:

- Explain the difference between conceptual, descriptive, and analytical projects, as Haslanger defines them.
- Explain how Haslanger's theory meets at least two of the four broad concerns that guide her project.
- Explain how Haslanger's theory would apply to at least one of the racial concepts that has featured in China, as described by Dikötter (2013).

References

- Frank Dikötter. 2013. “The Discourse of Race in Twentieth-Century China”, in *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions*, edited by Rotem Kowner and Walter Demel, Modern East Asia in a Global Historical Perspective, Brill, Leiden, pp. 351–368. URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/9789004237414_015.
- Gilbert Harman. 1999. “Moral Philosophy Meets Social Psychology: Virtue Ethics and the Fundamental Attribution Error”, in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. 99, pp. 315–331. Reprinted in Harman (2000).
- . 2000. *Explaining Value: and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/0198238045.001.0001>.
- Sally Haslanger. 2000. “Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them To Be?”, in *Noûs*, Vol. 34, No. 1, Mar. 2000, pp. 31–55. URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/0029-4624.00201>.
- Edward Slingerland. 2011. “The Situationist Critique and Early Confucian Virtue Ethics”, in *Ethics*, Vol. 121, No. 2, Jan. 2011, pp. 390–419. URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/658142>.