

Phil 4: Six Page Paper

Instructions:

Write six (and only six) pages on one of the following essay topics.

As a general rule, approximately four pages should be careful and sympathetic exposition of the relevant positions or arguments. Approximately two pages, at least, should reflect your critical or reflective engagement with the relevant positions or arguments. Exposition and critical engagement can be intermingled. But, as a rule, first write four pages of exposition. Then write at least two pages of critical discussion. Do not neglect either task; doing both well is essential for the assignment.

Use helpful examples and apt quotations. Carefully organize the flow of ideas. Above all, strive for clarity.

1. Immediately after Socrates' leaky jar analogy, Socrates and Callicles disagree over what makes a person's life good. Present at least two of Socrates' arguments against Callicles' position, being sure to carefully formulate them and situate your reconstruction with reference to the text. Give reasons why you think each argument does or does not succeed. Pose and answer potential objections.
2. Using an example, explain why Ryle believes there is a fundamental difference between "knowing how" and "knowing that." Explain Plato's view that moral knowledge is knowledge that. Explain Aristotle's view that moral knowledge is instead a matter of know how. Give reasons for either Plato's or Aristotle's view, considering objections and offering replies.
3. Plato and Aristotle accept what Parfit calls an "objective list" view of the good life for a person. Explain that position and explain how both experientialism and desire-based theories differ from it and from each other in view of Parfit's and Nozick's discussions. Make a case using one or more examples for one of the views in view of problems you develop for the others.