

Long Essay Questions : Moral Psychology

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0.1. Instructions

Choose any one question. Do not attempt to answer more than one question in your essay.

0.2. Using sources

Do not cite sources that are not referenced in the lecture notes already. Unless you have an excellent reason for doing so, which you must state in the essay.

Always give page numbers.

Examiners on this course frequently comment 'your essay could have been improved by focussing on fewer high-quality sources and covering them in more depth.'

0.3. Lecture Materials

Each question draws on specific sections of the lecture material, which also provide sources. Your essay should demonstrate knowledge of evidence, arguments and theories from the lecture material relevant to the thesis you aim to establish.

Examiners on this course frequently comment 'your essay could have been improved by making better use of the lecture material.'

0.4. Glossary

Use the glossary.

The lecture materials include a glossary to facilitate communication between us. You may deviate from the glossary providing you explicate your terms and providing you have good reason for doing so.

0.5. Advice

The questions below are written with a view to allowing a wide range of good answers, including some your examiners may not have foreseen. Your essay should answer the question chosen but it need not provide a complete answer. The best essays are often tightly focussed on one aspect of the question. This is fine: just be sure to explain the part of the question you are addressing and demonstrate that you are aware of what else would be needed to fully answer the question.

0.6. Structure

Open your essay by stating the thesis you will defend.

If necessary (ideally not), explain how the thesis is relevant to your chosen question.

The rest of your essay should provide a single coherent line of argument for your thesis. And nothing else.

0.7. Difficulty Level

Some questions permit answers that are relatively straightforward to establish. In general, you should not limit yourself to establishing a straightforward answer if aiming for a high mark.

0.8. Support for Planning

One of the seminars for this course will provide you with an opportunity to discuss your plans.

0.9. Marking Criteria

This course uses the standard philosophy marking criteria. Ideally your essay will demonstrate an awareness of a philosophical issue in moral psychology. We are aware that students taking this course may come from a variety of disciplines. Your essay can be written in the style of an essay from any of the disciplines covered on this course.

0.10. Citation Style

Use exactly one of the following citation styles: APA, Harvard or Chicago.

0.11. Word Count

Everything counts towards the word limit.

Acronyms, abbreviations and contractions count as the corresponding number of full words. For example, TLA counts as three words. (Hint: do not invent acronyms. Your readers are miserable enough already.)

There are many ways to count words. Your essay must be under the word limit according to any way of counting words. Your examiners' ways of counting words may not match your own, so leave a margin.

Examiners will stop reading if they hit the word limit.

0.12. Bespoke Questions

You may devise your own question through discussion with s.butterfill@warwick.ac.uk. Your question must then be submitted using a form on the Philosophy web pages and formally approved.

Do not answer a question not on this list without written approval.

1. How, if at all, do cultural differences in moral psychology explain political conflict on climate change?

1.1. Am I Ready for This Question?

Take a quiz to check whether you are ready to answer this question.

1.2. Hints

Your answer should normally focus on just one part of the debate associated with this question. Be sure to specify the thesis you aim to establish, how this contributes to partially answering the question, and the limits of your essay at the start.

Follow the general instructions for *Long Essay Questions*.

1.3. Lecture Notes

This is not an exhaustive list but may help you if you missed something. The list may grow over the weeks as lectures are added. Consider also using the search function.

The following lectures contain material relevant to answering this question.

- *Lecture 04*
- *Lecture 05*

The following section contain material relevant to answering this question.

- *Moral Reframing and Process Dissociation* in Lecture 09

1.4. Reading

If you are following the lecture notes and seminars, you should already know what to read. You do not need to consult this list. This is only for people coming to the assignment without using the lecture notes (not recommended).

- Feinberg & Willer (2013)

1.5. Further Reading

- Atari et al. (2023)
- Graham et al. (2013)

- Feinberg & Willer (2019)
- Bretter et al. (2023)

1.6. Where to Find the Reading?

In some cases the references section already includes a link to help you find the reading. (These links will not appear in this pdf.)

If there is no link in the references section, start by searching for the title (and, if that fails, by title and authors) on google scholar. If this fails, the library has resources. If those fail, please check first with others on the course. If you still have problems, you may email your seminar tutor.

2. What is Moral Foundations Theory? What, if anything, would the truth of this theory contribute to philosophical arguments about whether persistent ethical disagreement undermines moral knowledge?

2.1. Am I Ready for This Question?

Take a quiz to check whether you are ready to answer this question.

2.2. Hints

Your answer should normally focus on a single philosophical argument or objection. To write a good answer you will need to focus on a good argument or objection.

In answering this question you should assume that Moral Foundations Theory is true (even though we know that the evidence leaves room for doubt).

Follow the general instructions for *Long Essay Questions*.

2.3. Lecture Notes

This is not an exhaustive list but may help you if you missed something. The list may grow over the weeks as lectures are added. Consider also using the search function.

The following sections contain material relevant to answering this question.

- *Operationalising Moral Foundations Theory* in Lecture 04
- *Moral Foundations Theory: An Approach to Cultural Variation* in Lecture 04
- *Moral Pluralism: Beyond Harm* in Lecture 04

2.4. Reading

If you are following the lecture notes and seminars, you should already know what to read. You do not need to consult this list. This is only for people coming to the assignment without using the lecture notes (not recommended).

- Atari et al. (2023)
- McGrath (2008)

2.5. Further Reading

- Graham et al. (2011)
- Graham et al. (2013)
- Doris & Plakias (2008)

2.6. Where to Find the Reading?

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3. What do dual-process theories of moral cognition claim? Is there sufficient evidence to accept, or reject, such a theory?

3.1. Am I Ready for This Question?

Take a quiz to check whether you are ready to answer this question.

3.2. Hints

You may want to argue EITHER for there being sufficient evidence to accept OR for there being sufficient evidence to reject.

Do not write a 'further evidence is needed' essay. The interesting thing is to understand why there is a conflict and what that might tell us. See *Lecture 08*.

You may focus on a single dual-process theory of moral cognition. In selecting a theory to support or oppose, avoid making it too easy.

Follow the general instructions for *Long Essay Questions*.

3.3. Lecture Notes

This is not an exhaustive list but may help you if you missed something. The list may grow over the weeks as lectures are added. Consider also using the search function.

The following lecture contain material relevant to answering this question.

- *Lecture 08*

The following section contain material relevant to answering this question.

- *A Dual Process Theory of Ethical Judgement* in *Lecture 07*

3.4. Reading

If you are following the lecture notes and seminars, you should already know what to read. You do not need to consult this list. This is only for people coming to the assignment without using the lecture notes (not recommended).

- Cushman (2013)
- Greene (2014)
- Greene et al. (2008)

3.5. Further Reading

- Gawronski et al. (2017)
- Kumar (2016)

3.6. Where to Find the Reading?

In some cases the references section already includes a link to help you find the reading. (These links will not appear in this pdf.)

If there is no link in the references section, start by searching for the title (and, if that fails, by title and authors) on google scholar. If this fails, the library has resources. If those fail, please check first with others on the course. If you still have problems, you may email your seminar tutor.

4. What are framing effects? If philosophers' ethical claims are sometimes influenced by framing effects, what follows?

4.1. Am I Ready for This Question?

Take a quiz to check whether you are ready to answer this question.

4.2. Hints

Answers to the second question are provided by Rini (2013) and Sinnott-Armstrong (2008). Your essay may focus on providing a critical evaluation of either of their arguments.

Follow the general instructions for *Long Essay Questions*.

4.3. Lecture Notes

This is not an exhaustive list but may help you if you missed something. The list may grow over the weeks as lectures are added. Consider also using the search function.

The following section contain material relevant to answering this question.

- *Framing Effects: Emotion and Order of Presentation* in Lecture 06

4.4. Reading

If you are following the lecture notes and seminars, you should already know what to read. You do not need to consult this list. This is only for people coming to the assignment without using the lecture notes (not recommended).

- Rini (2013)
- Schwitzgebel & Cushman (2015)

4.5. Further Reading

- Sinnott-Armstrong (2008)
- Rini (2017)
- Wiegmann & Horvath (2021)

4.6. Where to Find the Reading?

In some cases the references section already includes a link to help you find the reading. (These links will not appear in this pdf.)

If there is no link in the references section, start by searching for the title (and, if that fails, by title and authors) on google scholar. If this fails, the library has resources. If those fail, please check first with others on the course. If you still have problems, you may email your seminar tutor.

5. What is Rawls' method of reflective equilibrium? Do discoveries in moral psychology show that the use of this method is unjustified?

5.1. Am I Ready for This Question?

Take a quiz to check whether you are ready to answer this question.

5.2. Hints

Answer with respect to any one discovery. Your essay should probably focus on *wide* reflective equilibrium only (but you may focus on *narrow* reflective equilibrium only if you give reason for doing so).

Follow the general instructions for *Long Essay Questions*.

5.3. Lecture Notes

This is not an exhaustive list but may help you if you missed something. The list may grow over the weeks as lectures are added. Consider also using the search function.

The following lectures contain material relevant to answering this question.

- *Lecture 07*
- *Lecture 08*

The following section contain material relevant to answering this question.

- *Against Reflective Equilibrium?* in Lecture 09

5.4. Reading

If you are following the lecture notes and seminars, you should already know what to read. You do not need to consult this list. This is only for people coming to the assignment without using the lecture notes (not recommended).

- Rawls (1999)
- McMahan (2013)
- Greene (2014)

5.5. Further Reading

- Scanlon (2002)

- Knight (2023)
- Singer (2005)

5.6. Where to Find the Reading?

In some cases the references section already includes a link to help you find the reading. (These links will not appear in this pdf.)

If there is no link in the references section, start by searching for the title (and, if that fails, by title and authors) on google scholar. If this fails, the library has resources. If those fail, please check first with others on the course. If you still have problems, you may email your seminar tutor.

6. Could discoveries in moral psychology undermine, or support, ethical principles or theories?

6.1. Hints

6.2. Am I Ready for This Question?

Take a quiz to check whether you are ready to answer this question.

This is the overall question for Part III of the course (Lecture 06 onwards).

There is a wide range of ways to answer this question. You should probably discuss your plan with your seminar tutor.

Follow the general instructions for *Long Essay Questions*.

6.3. Lecture Notes

This is not an exhaustive list but may help you if you missed something. The list may grow over the weeks as lectures are added. Consider also using the search function.

The following sections contain material relevant to answering this question.

- *Debunking Arguments* in Lecture 07
- *Foot and Trolley Cases: Kant Was Wrong* in Lecture 06
- *Singer vs Kamm on Distance* in Lecture 06

6.4. Reading

If you are following the lecture notes and seminars, you should already know what to read. You do not need to consult this list. This is only for people coming to the assignment without using the lecture notes (not recommended).

- Greene (2014)
- Kumar & Campbell (2012)

6.5. Further Reading

- Singer (2005)

6.6. Where to Find the Reading?

In some cases the references section already includes a link to help you find the reading. (These links will not appear in this pdf.)

If there is no link in the references section, start by searching for the title (and, if that fails, by title and authors) on google scholar. If this fails, the library has resources. If those fail, please check first with others on the course. If you still have problems, you may email your seminar tutor.

7. Do discoveries in moral psychology reveal that ethical arguments should not rely on premises which are not justified inferentially if the aim of the argument is to establish knowledge of its conclusion?

7.1. Am I Ready for This Question?

Take a quiz to check whether you are ready to answer this question.

7.2. Hints

Follow the general instructions for *Long Essay Questions*.

7.3. Lecture Notes

This is not an exhaustive list but may help you if you missed something. The list may grow over the weeks as lectures are added. Consider also using the search function.

The following lectures contain material relevant to answering this question.

- *Lecture 07*
- *Lecture 08*

The following sections contain material relevant to answering this question.

- *Debunking Arguments* in Lecture 07
- *Greene contra Ethics* in Lecture 07
- *How to Ethics?* in Lecture 09

7.4. Reading

If you are following the lecture notes and seminars, you should already know what to read. You do not need to consult this list. This is only for people coming to the assignment without using the lecture notes (not recommended).

- Greene (2014)
- Singer (2005)

7.5. Further Reading

- Rini (2017)

7.6. Where to Find the Reading?

In some cases the references section already includes a link to help you find the reading. (These links will not appear in this pdf.)

If there is no link in the references section, start by searching for the title (and, if that fails, by title and authors) on google scholar. If this fails, the library has resources. If those fail, please check first with others on the course. If you still have problems, you may email your seminar tutor.

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