

Final Exam One

Socratic Questions

1. Ethics deals with how people should live. Epistemology is the study of knowledge. To pursue both, one must live a life of virtue. This provides the discipline necessary to consider both subjects rationally and methodically through rigorous discussion. Applying this method will achieve new levels of understanding and bring us closer to learning the truth.

Skeptical Methods

2. Doubt your senses, doubt your mind, doubt everything except the fact of your existence. Knowledge is based on certainty; without certainty there is no knowledge. Yet certainty is elusive since our own senses cannot be trusted. Hence the genesis of skepticism. The skeptic takes nothing for granted, questions everything, and demands justifications in the quest for Truth, for truth is knowledge.

Amoralist Opposition

1. In relativism, only members of the ingroup may judge the morality of their conduct. In subjectivism, the individual person has final responsibility for deciding what is moral conduct. Yet, despite their differences, relativism and subjectivism are not mutually exclusive. Both propound standards of what constitutes right and wrong conduct, based not a broader universally accepted set of principles but on principles established by society or by the individual.

Confronting Relativism

3. Vulgar relativism is relativism that justifies the most outrageous and offensive acts. William's attacks its legitimacy as an ethical system on the grounds that such a system is not rational. Subtle relativism is a toned-down form of vulgar relativism. It is part of our culture which puts the 'me' before the 'we' and gives license to all kinds of conduct that others may find threatening or offensive but do not have a right to stop for to do would constitute imposing one set of values upon another. Other terms for subtle relativism are 'pluralism,' 'diversity,' 'consensus,' and 'tolerance.'

Disputing Subjectivism

2. Relative truth versus absolute truth is like what is the best method for selecting which horse will place first in a horse race. What for one person may be the true way to pick a winner may not work for another person. Yet, maybe there could be the One True Way to pick a winner, yet no one can learn that truth because subjective emotions get in the way that clouds rational thought. So, The One True Way remains undiscovered until such time that humans can think rationally.