

**Philosophy 1 Exam 3**  
**Santa Monica College**  
**Fall 2010**

**Directions:**

For a maximum grade of A, do numbers 1, 2, and either 3, or 4. (Total of three)

For a maximum grade of B, do 1 or 2 and 3 or 4. (Total of two)

1. Briefly compare the rationalist and empiricist philosophies in 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century western philosophy and show how they culminated in Hume and Kant. What was so radical about Hume's empiricism and how did Hume's work "awaken" Kant "from his dogmatic slumbers"? How did Kant's "Second Copernican Revolution" build on yet undermine rationalism and empiricism (concepts without percepts are empty and percepts without concepts are blind) and show the limits of reason in order to make room for faith and morality? What was Kant's new "active" model of consciousness and new conception of knowledge (synthesis, transcendental conditions of knowledge, etc.) What is genuine metaphysics for Kant? What problems are there with the Noumena/Phenomena distinction?

Reading: Melchert: Chapters 13-16

2. What are the basic questions and problems of epistemology and metaphysics? What has happened in the last two centuries since Hume, Kant, and Nietzsche that has radically changed the way philosophers think about knowledge and reality in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries? Why are the following views that most people still unconsciously assume untenable? A) the representational model of knowledge, B) the correspondence view of truth and C) mind/body dualism? Why are absolutism and relativism not viable approaches to the question of truth? How are we to understand objectivity, truth, and understanding now? What has all this got to do with human finitude, vulnerability, and the fundamental condition of interpretation and understanding?

Readings:

- a. Eros of Wisdom (on website)
- b. Issues of Truth (on website)
- c. Russon
- d. Melchert (whole book)
- e. Taylor (article on Merleau Ponty on website to help with critiquing representational and correspondence models)

3. Discuss the central features of Nietzsche's thinking. How was his thinking a challenge to western philosophy and religion? How was it both a culmination of yet a departure from the critique of reason begun by Kant and then romanticism? How did Nietzsche set much of the agenda for 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophy? Why do you think he is so controversial and misunderstood? Discuss his ideas of human emancipation and the possibility of transformation (amor fati, nihilism, übermensch, etc.) and his notion of "genuine ethics" versus morality (end of NE&T).

Readings:

- a. Melchert: Ch 20
- b. ["Nietzsche, Emancipation, & Truth" in New Nietzsche Studies, \(SUNY\), Winter, 1997, pp. 85-109.](#) (NE&T) (On website)

4. Choose two Chapters from Melchert on 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophers. Show the importance of these philosophers' contributions to philosophy and how they continued or altered the "great conversation." Since all these views include the problem of truth, knowledge, and meaning be sure to include these issues.

Reading: Melchert: Chapters 21-26