BA EXAMINATION 2002

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

PHILOSOPHY

Epistemology and Methodology

Tuesday, 30 April 2002: 10.00 – 1.00

Answer <u>THREE</u> questions. Candidates taking optional paper (f) Philosophy of Science may <u>NOT</u> attempt question 14, or either part of question 17, marked with asterisks. Avoid overlap in your answers.

1.   'Knowing that P is tracking the truth of P.' Discuss.

2.   Evaluate the following argument: Only incorrigible empirical beliefs can constitute the foundation of empirical knowledge. There are no such beliefs. Hence, foundationalism with respect to empirical knowledge is false.

3.   Can I be justified in believing that it is raining outside if I am not aware that I am justified in believing that it is raining outside?

4.   EITHER   (a)   Is the analysis of the concept of knowledge a project
                                  worth pursuing?

        OR   (b)   What difference does it make if we do epistemology not
                                  from the perspective of the examiner but rather from that of
                                  the inquirer?

5.   'If I were a brain in a vat, I could not think that I was a brain in a vat. I can think that I am a brain in a vat, so I am not a brain in a vat.' Explain this argument and assess its effectiveness against the sceptic.

6.   EITHER   (a)   Can a contextualist about knowledge refute a sceptic?

        OR   (b)   'S knows that P iff S's evidence eliminates every possibility
                                  in which not-P—Psst!—except for those possibilities that
                                  conflict with our proper presuppositions' (David Lewis).
                                  Explain this statement and assess its merits as a definition of
                                  knowledge.

7. 'To remember that Napoleon was victorious at Austerlitz is to have known that Napoleon was victorious at Austerlitz and to have retained that knowledge.' Discuss.

8. What does it mean to claim that we see physical objects directly? Is there a good reason to deny this?

9. Is seeing believing?

10. EITHER   (a)   'We recognize basic a priori truth by rational intuition. All other a priori truths are derived from the basic ones.' Discuss this picture of a priori truth.

    OR   (b)   Can a priori knowledge be explained in terms of knowledge of meaning?

11. What problems, if any, do we face in explaining our knowledge of our own mental states?

12. 'If someone tells me that P, I am entitled to believe that P.' Discuss.

13. 'Believing a conditional is conditionally believing.' Discuss.

*14. Must rational degrees of belief be measured by a probability function?

15. EITHER   (a)   Is it always reasonable to expect regularities to continue?

    OR   (b)   Can there be an inductive justification of induction that cannot be mimicked by the counter-inductivist?

    OR   (c)   Can there be a logic of induction?

16. 'A white shoe does confirm the hypothesis that all ravens are black, just not by very much.' Does this help solve the paradox of the ravens?

*17. EITHER   (a)   'To explain something is to deduce it from true statements including a law of nature.' Discuss.

    OR   (b)   Does the direction of causation matter to explanation?

18. 'The hypothesis that P offers the best explanation of the fact that Q.' Is this a good reason for believing that P?

19. Can science be satisfactorily demarcated from non-science?

END OF PAPER