

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For The Following Qualifications:-

B.A. B.Sc. B.Sc.(Econ)

Philosophy B11: Political Philosophy

COURSE CODE : PHILB011

UNIT VALUE : 1.00

DATE : 10-MAY-06

TIME : 10.00

TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours

B11 POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Answer Three Questions: (Avoid overlap in answers)

1. What is the difference between 'rights as side constraints' and a 'utilitarianism of rights'? What is the justification for each view, and which justification is more compelling?
2. Does Nozick's Wilt Chamberlain example demonstrate that egalitarian patterned principles of distribution are unjust?
3. 'One may acquire previously unowned land (and its fruits) if one thereby makes others no worse off than they would have been if the land had instead remained in common use in a state of nature.' Discuss.
4. On what grounds, if any, are people owed compensation by others (who are alive today) for injustices committed against their distant ancestors?
5. Why does Rawls place his choosers of principles of justice behind a veil of ignorance that deprives them of knowledge of their socioeconomic class, abilities, conception of the good, and particular psychological dispositions? Does he provide good reason for doing so? In the absence of such information, how is it possible for people to choose principles of justice that are in their rational self-interest?
6. How, and how convincingly, does Rawls argue that parties in the original position would find it in their rational self-interest to choose his two principles of justice?
7. '[T]o regard persons as means is to be prepared to impose on those already less favoured still lower prospects of life for the sake of the higher expectations of others.' Discuss.
8. Can Socrates's refusal to defy the verdict of the court be justified by appealing to the principle that an act is impermissible if the consequences would be disastrous if everyone with one's reason for action acted for this reason?
9. Can one justify voting in a general election because of the expected positive difference one's vote will make? Are these the only good grounds for voting in a general election?
10. Are we obliged to obey the laws of the state because we have offered our tacit consent by residing within the borders of this state?
11. Can an obligation to obey the laws of the state be justified on grounds of an obligation of gratitude towards one's benefactor?
12. Is the principle of fairness a sound moral principle, and how might it be deployed in an argument to show that we have an obligation to obey the law?
13. 'The laws of the dead have no more authority over the living than the laws of a foreign country.' Discuss.
14. Is it possible to justify the more severe punishment of criminal attempts that succeed than those that fail?

END OF PAPER