Philosophy

- **Accept [x]** … where [x] is option a, b, c, or d.
- **Lean toward [x]** … where [x] is option a, b, c, or d.

- **All** Accept all of the options listed.
- **Intermediate** Accept a mixture or compromise between multiple options.

- **Alternative** Accept a view different from any listed.
- **None** Reject all of the options listed.

- **No fact** Assert that there is no fact of the matter about which option is right.
- **Unclear** Assert that the question is too ambiguous to answer.

- **Unfamiliar** The user lacks sufficient familiarity to answer the question.
- **Undecided** The user is agnostic about which option is right.

- **Other** Endorse none of the options.
- **Skip** (Like 'other,' but with nothing written. May occur by accident.)

You can write your answers in the comments or text, or e-mail your answers (and questions) to:

rawgust@gmail.com

1. *A priori* knowledge?

(a) yes

(b) no

Answers:

Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy
[K]nowledge *a priori* is independent of experience. [...] Traditionally, the truths of metaphysics, mathematics, geometry and logic have been considered to be knowable, and indeed some of them known, *a priori*. Certain moral truths, for instance that parents ought to be honoured, have also been so regarded. [...] To give an example from *logic*, we know *a priori* that any argument of this form (modus ponens) is valid: $\frac{A \qquad \text{If A then B}}{B}$ That is to say, our knowledge that it is valid does not *depend on* observation and experience. [...] Against all this, it could be argued that[...] these truths could not possibly be known to us independently of prior experience: we have to learn a language, we have to be instructed in arithmetic, and so on. In reply, it may be said that the truth-claims exemplified above do not *depend on* such experience, and that the general idea of the *a priori* can be formulated more precisely: 'It can be known *a priori* that p, if anyone whose experience is enough for him to know what "p" means, requires no *further* experience in order to know that p.' So 2 + 2 = 4 is known *a priori*, because someone who has learnt to understand what the expression '2 + 2 = 4' means needs no further experience to know that 2 + 2 = 4.
Further reading

Russell, Bruce (2007). "*A Priori* Justification and Knowledge". *SEP*.

2. Abstract objects?
(a) platonism
(b) nominalism

Answers:

Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy
['Platonism'] is used in twentieth-century philosophy as an alternative to the overused term 'realism', for theories that accept the existence of abstract objects (numbers, properties, etc.), in contrast to nominalist theories, which only accept the existence of concrete individuals. Platonism takes abstract objects to exist independently of our thought (against conceptualism) and talk (against nominalism).
Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Balaguer 2009)
Platonism is the view that there exist abstract (that is, non-spatial, non-temporal) objects. Because abstract objects are wholly non-spatiotemporal, it follows that they are also entirely non-physical (they do not exist in the physical world and are not made of physical stuff) and non-mental (they are not minds or ideas in minds; the are not disembodied souls, or Gods, or anything else along these lines). In addition, they are unchanging and entirely causally inert — that is, they cannot be involved in cause-and-effect relationships with other objects.
Further reading
Balaguer, Mark (2009). "Platonism in Metaphysics". *SEP*. Balaguer, Mark (2011). "Fictionalism in the Philosophy of Mathematics". *SEP*. Rodriguez-Pereyra, Gonzalo (2011). "Nominalism in Metaphysics". *SEP*.

3. Aesthetic value?

(a) objective

(b) subjective

Answers: Intermediate, ...

Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy
[A]esthetics [... is] the study of what is immediately pleasing to our visual or auditory perception or to our imagination: the study of the nature of beauty; also, the theory of taste and criticism in the creative and performing arts.
Further reading
Sartwell, Crispin (2012). “Beauty”. *SEP*.

4. Analytic-synthetic distinction?

(a) yes

(b) no

Answers: None, ...

Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy
[Kant’s] definitions are: An analytic statement is one in which the predicate is contained in the concept of the subject. A synthetic statement is one in which the predicate is not contained in the concept of the subject. Examples: *All red roses are red* is analytic, since the predicate *red* is contained in the concept *red roses*. *All bachelors are unmarried* is analytic, once it is assumed that the predicate *unmarried* is contained in the concept *bachelor*. In a synthetic statement, the predicate adds something new. For example, *All roses are red* is synthetic, since the predicate *red* is not contained in the concept *rose*. [...] Kant’s definitions apply only to subject-predicate statements. The more recent definitions apply also to statements of other kinds, e.g.: ‘An analytic statement is one which is true in virtue of its meaning.’ [...] An analytic statement cannot be denied without self-contradiction; a synthetic statement can.

Further reading
Rey, Georges (2008). “The Analytic/Synthetic Distinction”. *SEP*.

5. Epistemic justification?

(a) internalism

(b) externalism

Answers: , ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
Internalism [...] holds that a person either does or can have a form of *access* to the basis for knowledge or justified belief. The key idea is that the person either is or can be aware of this basis. Externalists, by contrast, deny that one always can have this sort of access to the basis for one's knowledge and justified belief. [...] When one has a justified belief, one is sometimes also aware of the justifier for that belief. And perhaps, for any justified belief and accompanying justifier, one can become aware of the justifier, and do this merely by reflection. This is the core idea behind justification internalism.
Further reading
Pappas, George (2005). “Internalist vs. Externalist Conceptions of Epistemic Justification”. *SEP*.

6. External world?

(a) idealism

(b) skepticism

(c) non-skeptical realism

Answers: , ...

James Pryor lecture notes
The **idealist** says that there are no material things, there are only minds and thoughts

and experiences. There is no mind-independent, physical table here; there are only certain experiences I have *as if* there's a table. [...]

A **skeptic** is someone who doubts whether we have knowledge of a certain sort. For instance, a skeptic about the external world is someone who doubts whether we have knowledge of the external world. [...]

In a philosopher's vocabulary, a **realist** about Xs is someone who believes that Xs *really exist,* that they aren't mere fictions. Realists about Xs also think that Xs aren't radically different from the sort of thing we thought they were all along.

For example, a realist about the external world is someone who believes that there really are chairs and tables and oaken chests; that these are real things in the world and that they're not just ideas in our mind, or constructions out of our experiences.

Further reading

Pryor, James (2009). “Descartes’ First Meditation”.
Pryor, James (2000). “The Skeptic and the Dogmatist”. *Noûs*.
BonJour, Laurence (2007). “Epistemological Problems of Perception”. *SEP*.
Khlentzos, Drew (2011). “Challenges to Metaphysical Realism”. *SEP*.
Berkeley, George (1713). *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*.

7. Free will?

(a) compatibilism
(b) libertarianism
(c) no free will

Answers: Accept c, ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (McKenna)
Compatibilism offers a solution to *the free will problem*. This philosophical problem concerns a disputed incompatibility between free will and determinism. *Compatibilism* is the thesis that free will is compatible with determinism. [...] A standard characterization of determinism states that every event is causally necessitated by antecedent events. Within this essay, we shall define determinism as the metaphysical thesis that *the facts of the past, in conjunction with the laws of nature, entail every truth about the future*. According to this characterization, if determinism is true, then, given the actual past, and holding fixed the laws of nature, only one future is possible at any moment in time. Notice that an implication of determinism as it applies to a person's conduct is that, if determinism is true, there are (causal) conditions for that person's actions located in the remote past, prior to her birth, that are sufficient for each of her actions. The compatibilists' main adversaries are *incompatibilists*, who deny the compatibility of free will and determinism. Some incompatibilists remain agnostic as to whether persons have free will. But most take a further stand regarding the reality or unreality of free will. Some of these incompatibilists, *libertarians,* hold that at least some persons have free will and that, therefore, determinism is false. Other incompatibilists, *hard determinists*, have a less optimistic view, holding that determinism is true and that no persons have free will. In recent times, hard determinism has fallen out of fashion, largely because our best sciences suggest that determinism is false. But the spirit of the hard determinist position is sustained by *hard incompatibilists*, who hold that there is no free will if determinism is true, but also, that there is no free will if determinism is false. A salient element of the hard incompatibilist view is that the manner in which indeterminism is true (for instance, due to quantum indeterminacies) poses just as much of a threat to the presumption of free will as determinism would.
Further reading
O'Connor, Timothy (2010). "Free Will". *SEP*. McKenna, Michael (2009). "Compatibilism". *SEP*. Nagel, Thomas (1986). *The View from Nowhere*. Vihvelin, Kadri (2011). "Arguments for Incompatibilism". *SEP*. Clarke, Randolph (2008). "Incompatibilist (Nondeterministic) Theories of Free Will". *SEP*.

8. God?

- **(a) theism**
- **(b) atheism**

Answers: , ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
'Atheism' means the negation of theism, the denial of the existence of God.
Further reading
McCormick, Matt (2010). "Atheism". *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Smart, J.J.C. (2011). "Atheism and Agnosticism". *SEP*.

9. Knowledge?

(a) empiricism

(b) rationalism

Answers: ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
Rationalists claim that there are significant ways in which our concepts and knowledge are gained independently of sense experience. Empiricists claim that sense experience is the ultimate source of all our concepts and knowledge. Rationalists generally develop their view in two ways. First, they argue that there are cases where the content of our concepts or knowledge outstrips the information that sense experience can provide. Second, they construct accounts of how reason in some form or other provides that additional information about the world. Empiricists present complementary lines of thought. First, they develop accounts of how experience provides the information that rationalists cite, insofar as we have it in the first place. (Empiricists will at times opt for skepticism as an alternative to rationalism: if experience cannot provide the concepts or knowledge the rationalists cite, then we don't have them.) Second, empiricists attack the rationalists' accounts of how reason is a source of concepts or knowledge.
Further reading
Markie, Peter (2008). "Rationalism vs. Empiricism". *SEP*.

10. Knowledge claims?

- **(a) contextualism**
- **(b) relativism**
- **(c) invariantism**

Answers: None, ...

A Companion to Relativism
[The semantic view] according to which the truth-values and/or truth-conditional contents of knowledge-attributing sentences don't vary in any interesting way with situational and/or evaluational shifts is, following Peter Unger (1984), usually called 'invariantism'. [...] [T]he relativist and contextualist [...] each challenge one or both of the two main strands of traditional epistemology[...]: the (so to speak) metaphysical strand, concerning the fixedness or 'absoluteness' of epistemic facts or standards – their insensitivity to variations in factors over and above those laid down as what must be added to (unGettiered) true belief for knowledge to obtain; and the invariantistic one, concerning the semantics of knowledge-attributing sentences – *their* insensitivity to such variations, including variations in the attributor's or evaluator's psychology or situation. Contextualists single out the latter, semantic component as unacceptable: instead of being invariantists, we should adopt the view that "the truth conditions of sentences of the form 'S knows that *p*' or 'S does not know that *p*' vary in interesting ways depending on the context in which they are uttered" (DeRose, 1992, p. 914), where 'context' is taken to refer to such things as the interests, expectations, and so forth of knowledge attributors (e.g., DeRose, 1999a, pp. 189-190; Cohen, 1999, p. 57). A bit more precisely, contextualism has it that the proposition expressed by a given knowledge sentence ('S knows that *p*', 'S doesn't know that *p*') — just which epistemic relation a sentence involving 'knows' expresses — depends upon the context in which it is uttered – where, once again, 'context' refers to features of the knowledge *attributor(s)*' psychology and/or conversational-practical situation. (Hence this view's sometimes being referred to as 'attributor contextualism'.) As a result of such context-dependence, we're told, utterances of a given such sentence, made in different contexts, may differ in truth-value. Not only, however, can shifting 'contexts' (variations in speakers' interests, intentions,

etc.) make for variable 'standards' that sentences used to attribute or deny knowledge – or, rather, attributions/denials involving 'knows' — encode; no such standard "is simply correct or simply incorrect. Rather, context determines which standard is correct….*And there is no context independent correct standard*" (Cohen, 1999, p. 59). [...]

[R]elativism is directed at what we've called above the 'metaphysical' strand in orthodox epistemology, concerning the fixedness or 'absoluteness' of epistemic facts or standards. [...] As Paul Boghossian puts it, relativism in its "traditional" guise is a "factual", rather than a "semantical or linguistic" thesis (Boghossian, 2008, p. 412): it concerns (for instance) the knowledge relation, rather than anything about 'knows'. [...]

Contextualists hold that the truth-conditional contents of sentences used to attribute/deny knowledge can shift with changes in such things as the interests, purposes,
and so forth, of knowledge attributors; absent the latter such factors, the relevant sentences don't express compete (truth-evaluable) propositions; but no standard furnished
by the psychology of the attributor is the 'right' one (in any extra-conversational sense).
The relativist's semantical claim is that the truth-values of knowledge sentences do indeed shift as the contextualist suggests, but that (a) contrary to the contextualist this is
not because of context-variable contents; and that (b) contrary to the contextualist, such
variations track variable standards of assessment (none of which is the 'right' one), as opposed to variable features of attributors *qua* attributors. The complementary 'metaphysical' (or 'factual') claim by the relativist is that there are no absolute facts about what knowledge is, or whether a belief is justified (and/or no fixed, objectively correct standards for evaluating whether it does), any more than there are absolute facts about (/standards for assessing) what's to the left of what, or whether gambling is legal.

Further reading

Rysiew, Patrick (2011). "Relativism and Contextualism". *A Companion to Relativism.*
Rysiew, Patrick (2011). "Epistemic Contextualism". *SEP.*

11. Laws of nature?

(a) Humean

(b) non-Humean

Answers: No fact, ...

Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy
Many philosophers, inspired by Hume's discussion of causality, take the objective content of a law of nature to involve no more than a regularity of sequence or coexistence. They ('Humeans') claim that the difference between a law and an accidental universal statement does not lie in any necessary link among physical quantities involved, but in how we humans treat the universal statement. We regard it as especially well-credentialled, reliable, or basic. The opposite 'anti-Humean' view is that the tie between the quantities related by a genuine law is closer than mere regularity of combination, involving some kind of *necessity*. A genuine law tells us not merely what does, as a matter of fact, always happen, but what *must* occur. The most important current anti-Humean view holds that a law is not a generalization about particular cases, but concerns the very

physical quantities (universal properties or relations) of which the law treats. A law asserts a necessitating relation between these universals, the precise nature of which is still being debated.
Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy
On one account, the [‘Humean’] Regularity Theory, Laws of Nature are statements of the uniformities or regularities in the world; they are mere descriptions of the way the world is. On the other account, the [‘non-Humean’] Necessitarian Theory, Laws of Nature are the “principles” which govern the natural phenomena of the world. That is, the natural world “obeys” the Laws of Nature.
Further reading
Swartz, Norman (2001). “Laws of Nature”. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

12. Logic?

(a) classical

(b) non-classical

Answers: No fact, ...

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy
Classical (or “bivalent”) *truth-functional propositional logic* [...] assumes that there are are only two possible truth-values a statement (whether simple or complex) can have: (1) truth, and (2) falsity, and that every statement is either true or false but not both. [...]

There are also “non-classical” propositional logics in which such possibilities as (i) a proposition’s having a truth-value other than truth or falsity, (ii) a proposition’s having an indeterminate truth-value or lacking a truth-value altogether, and sometimes even (iii) a proposition’s being both true *and* false, are considered.

Further reading

Klement, Kevin C. (2005). “Propositional Logic”. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
Sorensen, Roy (2012). “Vagueness”. *SEP*.
Priest, Graham & Tanaka, Koji (2009). “Paraconsistent Logic”. *SEP*.
Priest, Graham (1997). “Sylvan’s Box”. *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic*.
Priest, Graham & Berto, Francesco (2008). “Dialetheism”. *SEP*.
Lourenço, Manuel S. (2008). “Intuitionistic logic”. *PlanetMath*.
Gómez-Torrente, Mario (2010). “Logical Truth”. *SEP*.
Rescorla, Michael (2011). “Convention”. *SEP*.
Quine, W.V.O. (1936). “Truth by Convention”. *The Ways of Paradox*.
Beall, J.C. & Restall, Greg (2000). “Logical Pluralism”. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*.
Eklund, Matti (2012). “The Multitude View on Logic”. *New Waves in Philosophical Logic*.
Sider, Ted (2011). “Logic”. *Writing the Book of the World*.

13. Mental content?

(a) internalism

(b) externalism

Answers: ...

Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy
Internalism, also called individualism, is the view that the nature of any given mental state, such as a belief, is fixed solely by considerations about the individual alone — i.e. internal considerations. Externalism, on the other hand, is the view that the nature of mental states may depend upon considerations that are external to the individual — for example, facts about the environment. When the words internalism and externalism are used in the philosophy of mind, it is most commonly in connection with debates about the *meaning* or *content* of mental states. According to externalism, what I really 'have in mind' when I believe that aluminium is a light metal is not entirely up to me; it depends also on such 'external' things as the nature of aluminium and the way my society uses its words. Thus, suppose that there is another world, as in the '**Twin Earth**' thought-experiment, identical to this world in all ways except that some of these external features were changed. What is called aluminium in that world is a different substance, although its appearance, its use, etc. is the same as in our world. My counterpart in that world would have something else in mind when believing that aluminium is a light metal. The two beliefs, although expressible in the same words, would differ in content because of external circumstances. An extreme version of internalism, by contrast, is Descartes's picture of the mind, according to which it makes sense to suppose that I might have exactly the same mental states as I now have even if there is no external world at all corresponding to my beliefs, perceptions, etc.
Further reading
Lau, Joe & Deutsch, Max (2010). "Externalism About Mental Content". *SEP*.

14. Meta-ethics?

(a) moral realism

(b) moral anti-realism

Answers: , ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Sayre-McCord)
Taken at face value, the claim that Nigel has a moral obligation to keep his promise, like the claim that Nyx is a black cat, purports to report a fact and is true if things are as the claim purports. Moral realists are those who think that, in these respects, things should be taken at face value—moral claims do purport to report facts and are true if they get the facts right. Moreover, they hold, at least some moral claims actually are true. That much is the common (and more or less defining) ground of moral realism. As a result, those who reject moral realism are usefully divided into (i) those who think moral claims do not purport to report facts in light of which they are true or false (noncognitivists) and (ii) those who think that moral claims do carry this purport but deny that any moral claims are actually true (error theorists). It is worth noting that, while moral realists are united in their cognitivism and in their rejection of error theories, they disagree among themselves not only about which moral claims are actually true but about what it is about the world that makes those claims true. Moral realism is not a particular substantive moral view nor does it carry a distinctive metaphysical commitment over and above the commitment that comes with thinking moral claims can be true or false and some are true. [...] Alternatively, one might argue that to be a realist about some area is to hold that the truths expressed by the relevant claims are not mind-dependent. And, the suggestion would be, to be an anti-realist is to think that if there are such truths, they are mind-dependent. This way of drawing the contrast risks ruling out as impossible realism about psychology, which seems draconian. And it would immediately count as anti-realist those metaethical views that treat moral facts as response dependent or in other ways dependent upon human thought and practice. So [...] it is unclear whether this contrast lines up properly with the main issues that have divided realists from anti-realists.
Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Joyce)
Traditionally, to hold a realist position with respect to *X* is to hold that *X* exists in a mind-independent manner. On this view, moral anti-realism is the denial of the thesis that moral properties—or facts, objects, relations, events, etc. (whatever categories one is willing to countenance)—exist mind-independently. This could involve either (1) the denial that moral properties exist at all, or (2) the acceptance that they do exist but that existence is (in the relevant sense) mind-dependent. Barring various

complications to be discussed below, there are broadly two ways of endorsing (1): moral noncognitivism and moral error theory. Proponents of (2) may be variously thought of as moral subjectivists, or idealists, or constructivists. [...]

To deny both noncognitivism and the moral error theory suffices to make one a minimal moral realist. Traditionally, however, moral realism has required the denial of a further thesis: the mind-dependence of morality. [...] Yet this third condition, even more than the first two, introduces a great deal of messiness into the dialectic, and the line between the realist and the anti-realist becomes obscure (and, one might think, less interesting). The basic problem is that there are many non-equivalent ways of understanding the relation of *mind-(in)dependence*, and thus one philosopher's realism becomes another philosopher's anti-realism.

Further reading

Sayre-McCord, Geoff (2009). “Moral Realism”. *SEP*.
Joyce, Richard (2007). “Moral Anti-Realism”. *SEP*.
Lenman, James (2006). “Moral Naturalism”. *SEP*.
Campbell, Richmond (2011). “Moral Epistemology”. *SEP*.
Loeb, Don & Railton, Peter (2008). Video discussion. *Bloggingheads*.

15. Metaphilosophy?

(a) naturalism

(b) non-naturalism

Answers: ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
The term ‘naturalism’ has no very precise meaning in contemporary philosophy. Its current usage derives from debates in America in the first half of the last century. The self-proclaimed ‘naturalists’ from that period included John Dewey, Ernest Nagel, Sidney Hook and Roy Wood Sellars. These philosophers aimed to ally philosophy more closely with science. They urged that reality is exhausted by nature, containing nothing ‘supernatural’, and that the scientific method should be used to investigate all areas of reality, including the ‘human spirit’ (Krikorian 1944, Kim 2003). So understood, ‘naturalism’ is not a particularly informative term as applied to contemporary philosophers. The great majority of contemporary philosophers would happily accept naturalism as just characterized—that is, they would both reject ‘supernatural’ entities, and allow that science is a possible route (if not necessarily the only one) to important truths about the ‘human spirit’. [...] [N]aturalism can intuitively be separated into an ontological and a methodological component. The ontological component is concerned with the contents of reality, asserting that reality has no place for ‘supernatural’ or other ‘spooky’ kinds of entity. By contrast, the methodological component is concerned with the ways of investigating reality, and claims some kind of general authority for the scientific method.
Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy
Naturalism is an approach to philosophical problems that interprets them as tractable through the methods of the empirical sciences or at least, without a distinctively a priori project of theorizing. For much of the history of philosophy it has been widely held that philosophy involved a distinctive method, and could achieve knowledge distinct from that attained by the special sciences. Thus, metaphysics and epistemology have often jointly occupied a position of “first philosophy,” laying the necessary grounds for the understanding of reality and the justification of knowledge claims. Naturalism rejects philosophy’s claim to that special status. Whether in epistemology, ethics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, or other areas,

naturalism seeks to show that philosophical problems as traditionally conceived are ill-formulated and can be solved or displaced by appropriately naturalistic methods. Naturalism often assigns a key role to the methods and results of the empirical sciences, and sometimes aspires to reductionism and physicalism. However, there are many versions of naturalism and some are explicitly non-scientistic.
Further reading
Papineau, David (2007). "Naturalism". *SEP*. Jacobs, Jon (2009). "Naturalism". *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

16. Mind?

(a) physicalism

(b) non-physicalism

Answers: ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Stoljar)
Physicalism is the thesis that everything is physical, or as contemporary philosophers sometimes put it, that everything supervenes on, or is necessitated by, the physical.
James Pryor lecture notes
The **materialist** [i.e., physicalist] denies that there are any souls *and* he also denies that mental properties are independent of physical properties in the way the property dualist says. According to the materialist, what mental properties you have is wholly determined by what physical properties you have. Once God distributed all the physical properties, there was nothing further for him to do. It was already settled who had what mental properties.
Further reading
Jackson, Frank (1986). "What Mary Didn't Know". *The Journal of Philosophy*. Nida-Rümelin, Martine (2009). "Qualia: The Knowledge Argument". *SEP*. Levin, Janet (2009). "Functionalism". *SEP*. Chalmers, David (1995). "Facing Up to the Problem of Consciousness". *Journal of Consciousness Studies*. Chalmers, David (2002). "Consciousness and its Place in Nature". *Philosophy of Mind:*

Classical and Contemporary Readings.
Jacob, Pierre (2010). “Intentionality”. *SEP*.

17. Moral judgment?
(a) cognitivism
(b) non-cognitivism

Answers: , ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
Non-cognitivists agree with error theorists that there are no moral properties or moral facts. But rather than thinking that this makes moral statements false, noncognitivists claim that moral statements are not in the business of predicating properties or making statements which could be true or false in any substantial sense. Roughly put, noncognitivists think that moral statements have no truth conditions. Furthermore, according to non-cognitivists, when people utter moral sentences they are not typically expressing states of mind which are beliefs or which are cognitive in the way that beliefs are. Rather they are expressing non-cognitive attitudes more similar to desires, approval or disapproval. Cognitivism is the denial of non-cognitivism. Thus it holds that moral statements do express beliefs and that they are apt for truth and falsity. But cognitivism need not be a species of realism since a cognitivist can be an error theorist and think all moral statements false. [...]

Some non-cognitivists have accepted these theses in their strongest form — moral sentences in no way predicate properties, are apt for truth or falsity, or express beliefs. But most current non-cognitivists accept these negative claims only in a somewhat weakened form. For example many non-cognitivists hold that moral judgments' *primary* function is not to express beliefs, though they may express them in a *secondary* way. Others deny that their contents are true or false in any *robust* sense but not that they can be true or false in a *deflationary* sense according to which there is no substantial property separating true and false sentences.

Non-cognitivists deny neither that moral sentences are meaningful nor that they are generally used by speakers in meaningful ways. Thus different sorts of non-cognitivist couple their negative theses with various positive claims about the meanings of moral sentences and about the states of mind that they express. It is the diversity of positive proposals that generates the different varieties of non-cognitivism. Emotivists suggest that moral sentences express or evoke non-cognitive attitudes towards various objects without asserting that the speaker has those attitudes. Norm-expressivists suggest (roughly) that the states of mind expressed by moral sentences are attitudes of acceptance of various norms or rules governing conduct and emotion, perhaps coupled with a judgment that the objects or action under discussion comports with those norms. Prescriptivists suggest that these sentences are a species of prescription or command, and may or may not offer an account of the state of mind such judgments express.

Further reading

Van Roojen, Mark (2009). “Moral Cognitivism vs. Non-Cognitivism”. *SEP*.

18. Moral motivation?

(a) internalism

(b) externalism

Answers: Lean toward b, ...

Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy

Internalism is the view that there is an internal connection between one’s *opinion* about moral right and wrong and one’s *motivation*. Richard Price’s view (*Review of the principal questions . . . 1787*, p. 194) is internalist: ‘When we are conscious that an action . . . *ought* to be done, it is not conceivable that we can remain *uninfluenced*, or

want [= lack] a *motive* to action.' (In a related sense, internalism is the view that when we are conscious that an action ought to be done it is conceivable that we remain uninfluenced — but only if we are irrational.)

Externalism, in contrast, denies that moral beliefs have in themselves a motivating dimension, and allows that, without being irrational, one can think that an action is wrong without being in any way moved not to do it.

Further reading

Rosatti, Connie S. (2006). "Moral Motivation". *SEP*.

19. Newcomb's problem?

(a) one box

(b) two boxes

/Answers: None, ...

LessWrong

A superintelligence from another galaxy, whom we shall call Omega, comes to Earth and sets about playing a strange little game. In this game, Omega selects a human being, sets down two boxes in front of them, and flies away.

Box A is transparent and contains a thousand dollars.

Box B is opaque, and contains either a million dollars, or nothing.

You can take both boxes, or take only box B.

And the twist is that Omega has put a million dollars in box B iff [if and only if] Omega has predicted that you will take only box B.

Omega has been correct on each of 100 observed occasions so far — everyone who took both boxes has found box B empty and received only a thousand dollars; everyone who took only box B has found B containing a million dollars. (We assume that box A vanishes in a puff of smoke if you take only box B; no one else can take box A afterward.)

Before you make your choice, Omega has flown off and moved on to its next game. Box B is already empty or already full.

Omega drops two boxes on the ground in front of you and flies off.

Do you take both boxes, or only box B?

Further reading

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Galef, Julia (2010). "Newcomb's Paradox: An Argument for Irrationality". *Rationally Speaking*.
Lewis, David (1981). "Why Ain'cha Rich?" *Noûs*.
Yudkowsky, Eliezer (2008). "Newcomb's Problem and Regret of Rationality". *LessWrong*.
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20. Normative ethics?

(a) deontology
(b) consequentialism
(c) virtue ethics

Answers: Accept c, ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
Consequentialists hold that choices—acts and/or intentions—are to be morally assessed solely by the states of affairs they bring about. Consequentialists thus must specify initially the states of affairs that are intrinsically valuable—often called, collectively, “the Good.” They then are in a position to assert that whatever choices increase the Good, that is, bring about more of it, are the choices that it is morally right to make and to execute. (The Good in that sense is said to be prior to “the Right.”) Consequentialists can and do differ widely in terms of specifying the Good. Some consequentialists are monists about the Good. Utilitarians, for example, identify the Good with pleasure, happiness, desire satisfaction, or “welfare” in some other sense. Other consequentialists are pluralists regarding the Good. Some of such pluralists believe that how the Good is distributed among persons (or all sentient beings) is itself partly constitutive of the Good, whereas conventional utilitarians merely add or average each person's share of the Good to achieve the Good's maximization. Moreover, there are some consequentialists who hold that the doing or refraining from doing, of certain kinds of acts are themselves intrinsically valuable states of affairs constitutive of the Good. An example of this is the positing of rights not being violated, or duties being kept, as part of the Good to be maximized—the so-called “utilitarianism of rights” (Nozick 1974). [...] However much consequentialists differ about what the Good consists in, they all agree that the morally right choices are those that increase (either directly or indirectly) the Good. Moreover, consequentialists generally agree that the Good is “agent-neutral” (Parfit 1984; Nagel 1986). That is, valuable states of affairs are states of affairs that all agents have reason to achieve without regard to whether such states of affairs are achieved through the exercise of one's own agency or not. [...] The most familiar forms o a moral norm. Such norms are to be simply obeyed by each moral agent; such norm-keepings are not to be maximized by each agent. In this sense, for such deontologists, the Right is said to have priority over the Good. If an act is not in accord with the Right, it may not be undertaken, no matter the Good that it might produce (including even a Good consisting of acts in accordance with the Right).
Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Athanassoulis)

Virtue ethics is a broad term for theories that emphasize the role of character and virtue in moral philosophy rather than either doing one's duty or acting in order to bring about good consequences. A virtue ethicist is likely to give you this kind of moral advice: "Act as a virtuous person would act in your situation."

Most virtue ethics theories take their inspiration from Aristotle who declared that a virtuous person is someone who has ideal character traits. These traits derive from natural internal tendencies, but need to be nurtured; however, once established, they will become stable. For example, a virtuous person is someone who is kind across many situations over a lifetime because that is her character and not because she wants to maximize utility or gain favors or simply do her duty. Unlike deontological and consequentialist theories, theories of virtue ethics do not aim primarily to identify universal principles that can be applied in any moral situation.

Further reading

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21. Perceptual experience?

(a) disjunctivism

(b) qualia theory
(c) representationalism
(d) sense-datum theory

Answers: None, ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Crane)
Sense-perception—the awareness or apprehension of things by sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste—has long been a preoccupation of philosophers. One pervasive and traditional problem, sometimes called “the problem of perception”, is created by the phenomena of perceptual illusion and hallucination: if these kinds of error are possible, how can perception be what it intuitively seems to be, a direct and immediate access to reality? [...] The sense-datum theory holds that when a person has a sensory experience, there is something of which they are aware (see Broad 1923, Moore 1903, 1910). What the subject is aware of is the object of experience. The object of experience is that which is *given* to the senses, or the *sense-datum*: this is how the term “sense-datum” was introduced by many writers (e.g., Price 1932: 13). The standard version of the theory takes the argument from illusion to show that a sense-datum, whatever else it may be, cannot be an ordinary physical object. The early sense-datum theorists (like Moore 1914) considered sense-data to be mind-independent, but non-physical objects. Later theories treat sense-data as mind-*dependent* entities (see Robinson 1994), and this is how the theory is normally understood in the second half of the twentieth century. [...] The sense-datum theory need not deny that we are presented with objects *as if they were* ordinary, public, mind-independent objects. But it will insist that this is an error. The things we take ourselves to be aware of are actually sense-data, although this may only be apparent on philosophical reflection. [...] Some philosophers agree with the Phenomenal Principle that whenever a sensory quality appears to be instantiated then it is instantiated, but deny that this entails the existence of sense-data. Rather, they hold that we should think of these qualities as modifications of the experience itself. Hence when someone has an experience of something brown, something like brownness *is* instantiated, but in the experience itself, rather in its object. This is not to say that the *experience* is brown, but rather that the experience is modified in a certain way, the way we can call “perceiving brownly”. The canonical descriptions of perceptual experiences, then, employ adverbial modifications of the perceptual verbs: instead of describing an experience

as someone's “visually sensing a brown square”, the theory says that they are “visually sensing brownly and squarely”. This is why this theory is called the “adverbial theory”; but it is important to emphasise that it is more a theory about the phenomenal character of experience itself than it is a semantic analysis of sentences describing experience, or the semantics of perceptual verbs. [...]

The main advantage of the adverbial theory is that it can acknowledge [...] that when someone has an experience of something brown, something *is* modified in a certain way—but it can do this without postulating mysterious sense-data. The only entities which the adverbialist needs to acknowledge are subjects of experience, experiences themselves, and ways these experiences are modified. This makes the theory appear less controversial than the sense-data theory: for most participants in this debate will agree that there are experiences; the controversial entities are sense-data. [...]

The adverbial theory explains the phenomenal character of experience in terms of its intrinsic qualities. The intrinsic phenomenal qualities of experience are sometimes called “qualia”; hence the adverbial theory is sometimes seen as a version of the view that experience involves the awareness of qualia. [...]

The adverbial theory is committed to the view that experiencing something red, for example, involves one's experience being modified in a certain way: experiencing redly. The most natural way to understand this is that the experience is an event, and the modification of it is a property of that event. Since this property is both intrinsic (as opposed to relational or representational) and phenomenal (that is, consciously available) then this way of understanding the adverbial theory is committed to the existence of qualia. [...]

The intentional theory of perception treats perceptual experience as a form of intentionality or mental representation (hence it is also sometimes called the representationalist theory of perception). [...]

Intentionalism accepts that when perception is veridical or illusory, the things which are perceived are the ordinary mind-independent objects around us. There are no intermediary objects of perception; veridical perception is “direct” perception. But the intentionalist theory of perception denies that the essential phenomenal character of a perceptual experience is essentially determined (wholly or partly) by the real objects which are perceived. This is because it holds that perception and hallucination are states with the same phenomenal character and therefore of the same mental kind; but in the case of hallucination there is no real object being perceived. So the relation to a real object cannot be essential to the perceptual experience. This is in keeping with a standard tradition in the theory of intentionality which treats it as non-relational (the tradition derives from Husserl 1900/1901; for discussion see Zahavi 2003: 13–27). The upshot is that the intentional theory of perception must deny that there is a relation to a real object is of the essence of a perceptual experience (see Crane

2006). [...]

The disjunctivist theory of perception holds that the objects of genuine perception are mind-independent; and that the phenomenal character of a genuinely perceptual experience depends upon these objects. It also accepts that illusion and hallucination are possible. But the conjunction of all these views is not inconsistent, according to disjunctivism, because it also denies that genuine perception and a subjectively indistinguishable hallucination are mental states of the same fundamental psychological kind. The disjunctivist therefore rejects what Martin (2004) calls the "common kind assumption" about perception:

> whatever fundamental kind of mental event occurs when one is veridically perceiving some scene can occur whether or not one is perceiving.

The disjunctive theory does not deny that there is some true description under which both the perception of a snow-covered churchyard and a subjectively indistinguishable hallucination of a churchyard can fall. It is easy to provide such a true description: both experiences are *experiences which are subjectively indistinguishable from a perception of a snow-covered churchyard*. Disjunctivists do not deny that such a true description is available. What they deny is that what *makes* it true that these two experiences are describable in this way is the presence of the same fundamental kind of mental state in the case of perception and hallucination. In the case of the perception, what makes it true that the description applies is that the experience is a perception of the churchyard; in the hallucinatory case, what makes it true that the description applies is that the experience is a hallucination of the churchyard. What the disjunctivist rejects is what J.M. Hinton calls "the doctrine of the 'experience' as the common element in a given perception" and an indistinguishable hallucination (Hinton 1973: 71). The most fundamental common description of both states, then, is a merely *disjunctive* one: the experience is *either* a genuine perception of a churchyard *or* a mere hallucination of one.

Further reading

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Soteriou, Matthew (2009). "The Disjunctive Theory of Perception". *SEP*.
Huemer, Michael (2011). "Sense-Data". *SEP*.
Pitt, David (2012). "Mental Representation". *SEP*.
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22. Personal identity?

(a) biological view
(b) psychological view
(c) further-fact view

Answers: None, …

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Olson)
What am I? What sort of things, metaphysically speaking, are you and I and other human people? [...] [A]ccording to [... the Psychological Approach,] some psychological relation is necessary or sufficient (or both) for one to persist. You are that future being that in some sense inherits its mental features—beliefs, memories, preferences, the capacity for rational thought, that sort of thing—from you; and you are that past being whose mental features you have inherited in this way. There is dispute over what sort of inheritance this has to be—whether it must be underpinned by some kind of physical continuity, for instance, or whether a “non-branching” requirement is needed. There is also disagreement about what mental features need to be inherited. [...] A second idea is that our identity through time consists in some brute physical relation. You are that past or future being that has your body, or that is the same biological organism as you are, or the like. Whether you survive or perish has nothing to do with psychological facts. [...] There appears to be a thinking animal located where you are. It also appears that you

are the thinking thing—the only one—located there. If things are as they appear, then you are that animal. [...]

If we are animals, we have the persistence conditions of animals. And as we saw, animals appear to persist by virtue of some sort of brute physical continuity. [...]

A few philosophers endorse the Somatic Approach without saying that we are animals. They say that we are our bodies (Thomson 1997), or that our identity through time consists in the identity of our bodies (Ayer 1936: 194).

Derek Parfit [...] is a "reductionist," according to which the facts about persons and personal identity consist in more particular facts about brains, bodies, and series of interrelated mental and physical events (Parfit 1984, 210–211). The denial of reductionism is called "nonreductionism," according to which the facts about persons and personal identity consist in some further fact, beyond the facts about physical and psychological continuity, typically a fact about Cartesian egos or souls.

Further readingStanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Shoemaker)

Perry, John (1978). *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality.*
Shoemaker, David (2012). "Personal Identity and Ethics". *SEP.*
Olson, Eric T. (2010). "Personal Identity". *SEP.*

23. Politics?

(a) communitarianism
(b) egalitarianism
(c) libertarianism

Answers: ...

Encyclopædia Britannica

According to the American philosopher Thomas Nagel, liberalism is the conjunction of two ideals: (1) individuals should have liberty of thought and speech and wide freedom to live their lives as they choose (so long as they do not harm others in certain ways), and (2) individuals in any society should be able to determine through majority rule the laws by which they are governed and should not be so unequal in status or wealth that they have unequal opportunities to participate in democratic decision making. Various traditional and modern versions of liberalism differ from each

other in their interpretation of these ideals and in the relative importance they assign to them.

In *A Theory of Justice*, Rawls observed that a necessary condition of justice in any society is that each individual should be the equal bearer of certain rights that cannot be disregarded under any circumstances, even if doing so would advance the general welfare or satisfy the demands of a majority. This condition cannot be met by utilitarianism, because that ethical theory would countenance forms of government in which the greater happiness of a majority is achieved by neglecting the rights and interests of a minority. Hence, utilitarianism is unsatisfactory as a theory of justice, and another theory must be sought.

According to Rawls, a just society is one whose major political, social, and economic institutions, taken together, satisfy the following two principles:

> 1. Each person has an equal claim to a scheme of basic rights and liberties that is the maximum consistent with the same scheme for all.
>
> 2. Social and economic inequalities are permissible only if: (a) they confer the greatest benefit to the least-advantaged members of society, and (b) they are attached to positions and offices open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity.

The basic rights and liberties in principle 1 include the rights and liberties of democratic citizenship, such as the right to vote; the right to run for office in free elections; freedom of speech, assembly, and religion; the right to a fair trial; and, more generally, the right to the rule of law. Principle 1 is accorded strict priority over principle 2, which regulates social and economic inequalities.

Principle 2 combines two ideals. The first, known as the “difference principle,” requires that any unequal distribution of social or economic goods (e.g., wealth) must be such that the least-advantaged members of society would be better off under that distribution than they would be under any other distribution consistent with principle 1, including an equal distribution. (A slightly unequal distribution might benefit the least advantaged by encouraging greater overall productivity.) The second ideal is meritocracy, understood in a very demanding way. According to Rawls, fair equality of opportunity obtains in a society when all persons with the same native talent (genetic inheritance) and the same degree of ambition have the same prospects for success in all competitions for positions that confer special economic and social advantages.

Why suppose with Rawls that justice requires an approximately egalitarian redistribution of social and economic goods? After all, a person who prospers in a market economy might plausibly say, “I earned my wealth. Therefore, I am entitled to keep it.” But how one fares in a market economy depends on luck as well as effort.

There is the luck of being in the right place at the right time and of benefiting from unpredictable shifts in supply and demand, but there is also the luck of being born with greater or lesser intelligence and other desirable traits, along with the luck of growing up in a nurturing environment. No one can take credit for this kind of luck, but it decisively influences how one fares in the many competitions by which social and economic goods are distributed. Indeed, sheer brute luck is so thoroughly intermixed with the contributions one makes to one's own success (or failure) that it is ultimately impossible to distinguish what a person is responsible for from what he is not. Given this fact, Rawls urges, the only plausible justification of inequality is that it serves to render everyone better off, especially those who have the least. [...]

Despite its wide appeal, Rawls's liberal egalitarianism soon faced challengers. An early conservative rival was libertarianism. According to this view, because each person is literally the sole rightful owner of himself, no one has property rights in anyone else (no person can own another person), and no one owes anything to anyone else. By "appropriating" unowned things, an individual may acquire over them full private ownership rights, which he may give away or exchange. One has the right to do whatever one chooses with whatever one legitimately owns, as long as one does not harm others in specified ways—i.e., by coercion, force, violence, fraud, theft, extortion, or physical damage to another's property. According to libertarians, Rawlsian liberal egalitarianism is unjust because it would allow (indeed, require) the state to redistribute social and economic goods without their owners' consent, in violation of their private ownership rights.

Rawls's theory of justice was challenged from other theoretical perspectives as well. Adherents of communitarianism, such as Michael Sandel and Michael Walzer, urged that the shared understanding of a community concerning how it is appropriate to live should outweigh the abstract and putatively impartial requirements of universal justice. Even liberal egalitarians criticized some aspects of Rawls's theory. Ronald Dworkin, for example, argued that understanding egalitarian justice requires striking the correct balance between an individual's responsibility for his own life and society's collective responsibility to provide genuine equal opportunity for all citizens.

Further reading

Lamont, Julian & Favor, Christi (2013). "Distributive Justice". *SEP*.
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Carter, Ian (2012). "Positive and Negative Liberty". *SEP*.
Wenar, Leif (2011). "Rights". *SEP*.
Bell, Daniel (2012). "Communitarianism". *SEP*.
Arneson, Richard (2002). "Egalitarianism". *SEP*.

24. Proper names?

(a) Fregean

(b) Millian

Answers: , ...

Simon Cushing lecture notes

Mill: Proper names *denote* but do not *connote* - i.e., they are *not* disguised descriptions:

> "A proper name is but an unmeaning mark which we connect in our minds with the idea of the object."

Frege disagrees. He argues that proper names have both a reference (denotation) and a sense (connotation) - Hesperus [the morning star] denotes the same object [i.e., Venus] as Phosphorus [the evening star] but does not *connote* the same. [...]

Russell also disagrees, claiming that proper names are just disguised definite descriptions. Thus "Hesperus" just becomes some complicated definite description[....]

First Argument (250.1):

1. We teach use of proper names by (a) identifying an object, and (b) explaining that this name applies to that object
2. We can only do (a) by (i) ostension, or (ii) description, "and in both cases, we identify the object in virtue of certain of its characteristics"
3. Therefore, "the rules for a proper name must somehow be logically tied to particular characteristics of the object in such a way that the name has a sense as well as a reference... how, unless the names has a sense, is it to be correlated with the object?"

Millian rebuttal:

1. The characteristics mentioned above are not rules for using the name, just pedagogical tools for teaching the use. This is demonstrated because:
2. We teach the use of “Aristotle” by saying "Greek philosopher born in Stagira".
3. Student learns more about Aristotle, continuing to use it in the same way, finds out that Aristotle was not born in Stagira.
4. According to the Fregean view, either the *meaning* of Aristotle has changed, or we have discovered that “Aristotle” did not really exist. But neither is true, so, by [*reductio*] *ad absurdum*, the Fregean view is mistaken.

Searle's response:

> The Millian view implies that saying of "Aristotle" that "he never existed" must mean simply "Aristotle never had a referent." But this is not what "Aristotle never existed" means, because if it were, then finding an Aristotle living in Hoboken in 1903 would disprove that claim, and it doesn't. Furthermore, if we found out that if all the things we say of Aristotle were true of nobody or of many different people in different times, then we would count that as evidence that Aristotle *did* never exist. Therefore, names have a sense *necessarily* but a *referent* only contingently.

Further reading

Reimer, Marga (2009). "Reference". *SEP*.
Cumming, Sam (2009). "Names". *SEP*.

25. Science?

(a) scientific realism

(b) scientific anti-realism

Answers: ...

Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy
[*S*]*cientific realism* [is] the view that most of the theoretical entities, such as electrons and quarks, which are postulated in a true scientific theory to explain observable phenomena are real, independently existing things. This is in opposition to operationalism and instrumentalism. [...] [**I**]**nstrumentalism** [is] the view that theories, especially in the sciences, are not strictly speaking true or false but are to be regarded as tools. Their main use is to assist in predictions, in making the transition from one set of data to another. Some theories prove more useful for this purpose than other ones and this, rather than their supposed truth, is why they can justifiably be accepted. [...] [**O**]**perationalism** [is] the idea [...] that a word or concept must be defined by the operation we carry out to find out whether the word or concept applies. For example, to say that something has a length of 3 feet is to say that if we successively place a one-foot ruler against it we will be able to do so three times.
Further reading
Chakravartty, Anjan (2011). "Scientific Realism". *SEP*. Ladyman, James (2009). "Structural Realism". *SEP*. Oddie, Graham (2007). "Truthlikeness". *SEP*. Bogen, Jim (2013). "Theory and Observation in Science". *SEP*.

26. Teletransporter (new matter)?

(a) survival

(b) death

Answers: None, ...

Anna Morley article
As most people will confirm, there are countless times in which we long for a device that could transport us to any desired location within seconds via the pressing of a button. However, the *teletransporter* remains within the realms of science fiction and wishful thinking, as scientists are no closer to realising this ambitious dream. How would such a machine work? Either the traveller, after stepping into a kind of cubicle at the departure location, is split into all her body's individual atoms, which are then 'sent' to the destination location and there put back together in the counterpart cubicle[... or] the state of the traveller's body (i.e. the state of every individual cell) at the point of departure is scanned and recorded in the first cubicle. This information is sent to the destination location, where an exact replica of the person is created in the counterpart cubicle. The traveller's body in the first cubicle is destroyed. The first option seems fantastical[....] This leaves us with the second, possibly more controversial method of teletransportation. [... T]his version of the teletransporter involves the destruction, one might say murder, of a human being. The question is, are we actually killing a *person* and does the fact that a replica of that same person is simultaneously being created make a difference? Is the teletransporter a killing machine?
Further reading

Williams, Gary (2011). “Some thoughts on why I would kill myself in order to teleport.” *Mind and Brains*.
Dennett, Daniel (1978). “Where Am I?” *Brainstorms*.
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Luper, Steven (2009). “Death”. *SEP*.

27. Time?

(a) A-theory

(b) B-theory

Answers: None, ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

McTaggart [... distinguished] two ways in which positions in time can be ordered. First, he says, positions in time can be ordered according to their possession of properties like *being two days future*, *being one day future*, *being present*, *being one day past*, etc. (These properties are often referred to now as “A properties.”) McTaggart calls the series of times ordered by these properties “the A series.” But he says that positions in time can also be ordered by two-place relations like *two days earlier than*, *one day earlier than*, *simultaneous with*, etc. (These relations are now often called “B relations.”) McTaggart calls the series of times ordered by these relations “the B series.” [...]

McTaggart argues that the B series alone does not constitute a proper time series. I.e., McTaggart says that the A series is essential to time. His reason for this is that change (he says) is essential to time, and the B series without the A series does not involve genuine change (since B series positions are forever “fixed,” whereas A series positions are constantly changing).

McTaggart also argues that the A series is inherently contradictory. For (he says) the different A properties are incompatible with one another. (No time can be both future and past, for example.) [...]

Needless to say, despite arguments such as McTaggart's, many philosophers have remained convinced of the reality of time (for it certainly seems like there is a temporal order to the world). But a number of philosophers have been convinced by at least one part of McTaggart's argument, namely, the part about the contradiction inherent in the A series. That is, some philosophers have been persuaded by McTaggart that the A series is not real, even though they have not gone so far as to deny the reality of time itself. These philosophers accept the view (sometimes called “The B Theory”) that the B series is all there is to time. According to The B Theory, there are no genuine, unanalyzable A properties, and all talk that appears to be about A properties is really reducible to talk about B relations. For example, when we say that the year 1900 has the property of being past, all we really mean is that 1900 is earlier than the time at which we are speaking. On this view, there is no sense in which it is true to say that time really passes, and any appearance to the contrary is merely a result of the way we humans happen to perceive the world.

The opponents of The B Theory accept the view (often referred to as “The A Theory”) that there are genuine properties such as *being two days past*, *being present*, etc.; that facts about these A properties are not in any way reducible to facts about B relations; and that times and events are constantly changing with respect to their A properties (first becoming less and less future, then becoming present, and subsequently becoming more and more past). According to The A Theory, the passage of time is a very real and inexorable feature of the world, and not merely some mind-dependent phenomenon.

Further reading

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Dowden, Bradley (2011). “Time”. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
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28. Trolley problem: What ought one do, with five people straight ahead, one on side track, and turning requiring switching?

(a) switch

(b) don't switch

Answers: ...

Chad Vance lecture notes
There is a runaway trolley barreling down the railway tracks. Ahead, on the tracks, there are five people. The trolley is headed straight for them. You are standing some distance off in the train yard, next to a lever. If you pull this lever, the trolley will switch to a different set of tracks. Unfortunately, you notice that there is one person on the side track. You have two options: (1) Do nothing, and the trolley kills the five people on the main track. (2) Pull the lever, diverting the trolley onto the side track where it will kill one person.
Further reading
Howard-Snyder, Frances (2011). "Doing vs. Allowing Harm". *SEP*. McIntyre, Alison (2011). "Doctrine of Double Effect". *SEP*.

29. Truth?

(a) correspondence

(b) deflationary

(c) epistemic

Answers: Lean a, ...

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (David)
Narrowly speaking, the correspondence theory of truth is the view that truth is correspondence to a fact—a view that was advocated by Russell and Moore early in

the 20th century. But the label is usually applied much more broadly to any view explicitly embracing the idea that truth consists in a relation to reality, i.e., that truth is a relational property involving a characteristic relation (to be specified) to some portion of reality (to be specified). This basic idea has been expressed in many ways, giving rise to an extended family of theories and, more often, theory sketches. Members of the family employ various concepts for the relevant relation (correspondence, conformity, congruence, agreement, accordance, copying, picturing, signification, representation, reference, satisfaction) and/or various concepts for the relevant portion of reality (facts, states of affairs, conditions, situations, events, objects, sequences of objects, sets, properties, tropes). [...]

Against the *traditional* competitors—coherentist, pragmatist, and verificationist and other epistemic theories of truth—correspondence theorists raise two main sorts of objections.*First*, such accounts tend to lead into relativism. Take, e.g., a coherentist account of truth. Since it is possible that '*p*' coheres with the belief system of *S* while 'not-*p*' coheres with the belief system of *S**, the coherentist account seems to imply, absurdly, that contradictories, '*p*' and 'not-*p*', could both be true. To avoid embracing contradictions, coherentists often commit themselves (if only covertly) to the objectionable relativistic view that '*p*' is true-for-*S* and 'not-*p*' is true-for-*S**. *Second*, the accounts tend to lead into some form of idealism or anti-realism. e.g., it is possible for the belief that *p* to cohere with someone's belief system, even though it is not a fact that *p*[.]

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Stoljar & Damnjanovic)

According to the deflationary theory of truth, to assert that a statement is true is just to assert the statement itself. For example, to say that 'snow is white' is true, or that it is true that snow is white, is equivalent to saying simply that snow is white, and this, according to the deflationary theory, is all that can be said significantly about the truth of 'snow is white'.

There are many implications of a theory of this sort for philosophical debate about the nature of truth. Philosophers often make suggestions like the following: truth consists in correspondence to the facts; truth consists in coherence with a set of beliefs or propositions; truth is the ideal outcome of rational inquiry. According to the deflationist, however, such suggestions are mistaken, and, moreover, they all share a common mistake. The common mistake is to assume that truth *has* a nature of the kind that philosophers might find out about and develop theories of. For the deflationist, truth has no nature beyond what is captured in ordinary claims such as that 'snow is white' is true just in case snow is white. Philosophers looking for the nature of truth are bound to be frustrated, the deflationist says, because they are looking for something that isn't there.

Further reading

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Yudkowsky, Eliezer (2012). “The Useful Idea of Truth”. *LessWrong*.
Yudkowsky, Eliezer (2012). “Logical Pinpointing”. *LessWrong*.
Pedersen, Nikolaj & Wright, Cory (2012). “Pluralist Theories of Truth”. *SEP*.

30. Zombies?

(a) inconceivable
(b) conceivable but not metaphysically possible
(c) metaphysically possible

Answers: ...

Wikipedia
A **philosophical zombie** or **p-zombie** in the philosophy of mind and perception is a hypothetical being that is indistinguishable from a normal human being except in that it lacks conscious experience, qualia, or sentience. When a zombie is poked with a sharp object, for example, it does not feel any pain though it behaves exactly as if it does feel pain (it may say "ouch" and recoil from the stimulus, or tell us that it is in intense pain). The notion of a philosophical zombie is used mainly in thought experiments intended to support arguments [...] against forms of physicalism[. ...] Physicalism is the idea that all aspects of human nature can be explained by physical means[. ...] Some philosophers, like David Chalmers, argue that since a zombie is defined as physiologically indistinguishable from human beings, even its logical possibility would be a sound refutation of physicalism. [...] Proponents of zombie arguments generally accept that p-zombies are not physically possible [i.e., they can't exist in our universe], while opponents [...] deny that they are even logically [or metaphysically] possible.
Further reading
Kirk, Robert (2011). "Zombies". *SEP*. Dennett, Daniel (1999). "The Zombic Hunch: Extinction of an Intuition?" *Royal Institute of Philosophy Millennial Lecture*. Chalmers, David (2002). "Does Conceivability Entail Possibility?" *Conceivability and Possibility*. Beisecker, Dave (2010). "Zombies, Phenomenal Concepts, and the Paradox of Phenomenal Judgment". *Journal of Consciousness Studies*.

Bonus: List which philosophers you most identify with. Examples:

Anscombe	**Aquinas**	**Aristotle**	**Augustine**
Berkeley	**Carnap**	**Davidson**	**Descartes**
Frege	**Hegel**	**Heidegger**	**Hobbes**
Hume	**Husserl**	**Kant**	**Kierkegaard**
Leibniz	**Lewis**	**Locke**	**Marx**
Mill	**Moore**	**Nietzsche**	**Plato**
Quine	**Rawls**	**Rousseau**	**Russell**
Socrates	**Spinoza**	**Wittgenstein**	

Robby: Hume, Schopenhauer, Sartre
Anonymous 1: Rawls, Nietzsche, Marx, Zizek