

# PHIL 43904: Midterm exam

Jeff Speaks

In class, Thursday, November 1

On the midterm, you will be given four quotes from the readings for this course. With respect to three of these, you will have to (1) name the author of the quote; (2) explain, clearly and in your own words, the argument of which the quote is a part; and (3) state and briefly evaluate at least one objection to that argument. The objection may be one discussed in class or one that you've come up with on your own.

The quotes which appear on the exam will be taken from the following list:

1. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*: "Let us abstain from making the relation an attribute of the related, and let us make it more or less independent. 'There is a relation  $C$ , in which  $A$  and  $B$  stand; and it appears with both of them.' But here again we have made no progress. The relation  $C$  has been admitted different from  $A$  and  $B$ , and no longer is predicated of them. . . . If so, [there] would appear to be another relation,  $D$ , in which  $C$ , on the one side, and, on the other side,  $A$  and  $B$ , stand. But such a makeshift leads at once to the infinite process."
2. Moore, 'External and internal relations': "What I am maintaining is the commonsense view, which seems obviously true, that it may be true that  $A$  has in fact got  $\phi$ , and yet also true that  $A$  might have existed without having  $\phi$ . And I say that this is equivalent to saying that it might be true that  $A$  has  $\phi$ , and yet *not* true that from the proposition that a thing has *not* got  $\phi$  it *follows* that that thing is *other* than  $\phi$  – numerically different from it. And one reason why this is disputed is, I think, simply because it is in fact true that if  $A$  has  $\phi$ , and  $x$  has *not*, it *does* follow that  $x$  is other than  $A$ ."
3. Moore, 'The nature of judgement': "Mr. Bradley's theory presupposes that I may have two ideas, that have a part of their content in common; but he would at the same time compel us to describe this common part of content as part of the content of some third idea. But what is gained by such a description? If the part of content of this third idea is a part only in the same sense, as the common part of the other two is a part of each, then I am offering an explanation which presupposes that which was to be explained. Whereas if the part, which is used in explanation, is a part in the only sense which will make my explanation significant . . . then it is difficult to see how that which belongs to one idea can also come to belong to other ideas and yet remain one and the same."
4. Russell, *The Principles of Mathematics*: "The twofold nature of the verb, as actual verb and as verbal noun, may be expressed, if all verbs are held to be relations, as the difference between a relation in itself and a relation actually relating. Consider, for example, the proposition ' $A$  differs from  $B$ '. The constituents of this proposition, if we analyze it, appear to be only  $A$ , difference,  $B$ . Yet these constituents, thus placed side by side, do not reconstitute the proposition. The difference which occurs in the proposition actually relates  $A$  and  $B$  . . ."
5. Moore, 'Truth': ". . . It is the impossibility of finding any such difference between a truth and the reality to which it is supposed to correspond which refutes the theory . . . once it is definitely recognized that the proposition . . . is not a belief or form of words, but an *object* of belief, it seems plain that a truth differs in no respect from the reality to which it was supposed merely to correspond: e.g. the truth that I exist differs in no respect from the corresponding reality — my existence."
6. Moore, *Principia Ethica*: "To take, for instance, one of the more plausible, because one of the more complicated, of such proposed definitions, it may easily be thought, at first sight, that to be

good may mean to be that which we desire to desire. . . . But if we carry the investigation further, and ask ourselves ‘is it good to desire to desire A?’ it is apparent, on a little reflection, that this question is itself as intelligible, as the original question ‘Is A good?’ . . . But it is also apparent that the meaning of this second question cannot be correctly analyzed into ‘Is the desire to desire A one of the things which we desire to desire?’: we have not before our minds anything as complicated as the question ‘Do we desire to desire to desire to desire A?’ Moreover any one can easily convince himself by inspection that the predicate of this proposition — ‘good’ — is positively different from the notion of ‘desiring to desire’ which enters into its subject: ‘That we should desire to desire A is good’ is *not* merely equivalent to ‘That A should be good is good.’ ”

7. Russell, ‘On denoting’: “If *a* is identical with *b*, whatever is true of the one is true of the other, and either may be substituted for the other without altering the truth or falsehood of that proposition. Now George IV wished to know whether Scott was the author of *Waverley*; and in fact Scott *was* the author of *Waverley*. Hence we may substitute *Scott* for *the author of “Waverley,”* and thereby prove that George IV wished to know whether Scott was Scott. Yet an interest in the law of identity can hardly be attributed to the first gentleman of Europe.”
8. Russell, ‘On denoting’: “By the law of the excluded middle, either ‘*A* is *B*’ or ‘*A* is not *B*’ must be true. Hence either ‘The present King of France is bald’ or ‘The present King of France is not bald’ must be true. Yet if we enumerated the things that are bald, and then the things that are not bald, we should not find the present King of France in either list. Hegelians, who love a synthesis, will probably conclude that he wears a wig.”
9. Russell, ‘The definition of number’: “In actual fact, it is simpler logically to find out whether two collections have the same number of terms than it is to define what that number is. An illustration will make this clear. If there were no polygamy or polyandry anywhere in the world, it is clear that the number of husbands living at any moment would be exactly the same as the number of wives. We do not need a census to assure us of this, nor do we need to know what is the actual numbers of husbands and wives. We know that the number must be the same in both collections, because each husband has one wife and each wife has one husband. The relation of husband and wife is what is called “one-one.””
10. Russell, ‘On the nature of truth and falsehood’: “If we allow that all judgements have objectives, we shall have to allow that there are objectives which are false. Thus there will be in the world objective entities, not dependent on the existence of judgments, which can be described as objective falsehoods. This is in itself almost incredible . . . it has the further drawback that it leaves the difference between truth and falsehood quite inexplicable. . . . it is difficult to abandon the view that, in some way, the truth or falsehood of a judgment depends upon the presence or absence of a ‘corresponding’ entity of some sort. And if we do abandon this view, and adhere to the opinion that there are both true and false objectives, we shall be compelled to regard it as an ultimate and not further explicable fact that objectives are of two sorts, the true and the false. This view, though not logically impossible, is unsatisfactory . . .”
11. Russell, ‘The relation of sense-data and physics’: “What can we learn by observation and experiment?  
Nothing, so far as physics is concerned, except immediate data of sense: certain patches of colour, sounds, . . .  
The supposed contents of the physical world are *prima facie* different from these: molecules have no colour, atoms make no noise, electrons have no taste . . .  
If such objects are to be verified, it must be solely through their relation to sense-data: they must have some kind of correlation with sense-data, and must be verifiable through their correlation *alone*.  
But how is this correlation itself ascertained? A correlation can only be ascertained empirically by the correlated objects being constantly *found* together. But in our case, only one term of the correlation, namely, the sensible term, is ever *found* . . . Therefore [physics] is itself utterly and for ever unverifiable.  
There are two ways of avoiding this result.  
(1) We may say that we know some principle *a priori* . . . that our sense data have *causes* other than themselves, and that something may be known about these causes by inference from their effects. . . .  
(2) We may succeed in actually defining the objects of physics as functions of sense data. . . .”