

## Third 5-7 page paper

PHIL 13195

Due: Thursday, December 8

Below are four topics for your third paper. You are welcome to come up with your own topic, though you must get my approval by email first. If you do this, the question that your I approve should be on the first page of your essay. The papers should be at most 5-7 pages in length, double-spaced and with reasonable margins and font. You should turn in the paper to me as an email attachment. A late penalty of 3 points per day, including weekends, will be assessed for any papers which are handed in late. I am happy to read rough drafts, but these must be submitted 7 days or more before the due date by email.

Please use page numbers, and write the number of the topic you are addressing at the top of the first page of the paper.

Plagiarism is a serious and growing problem at Notre Dame and other universities. It is your responsibility to acquaint yourselves with the University's honor code, as well as with the philosophy department's guidelines regarding plagiarism. Both are linked from the course page.

1. Explain the moral theory you think to be most plausible. It can be one of the theories discussed in the readings, a combination of several of those theories, or a theory of your own devising. Say why you think that this theory is plausible, and explain how it would handle some of the moral problems discussed in class.
2. Explain Singer's argument for the conclusion that we are morally obliged to give most of our possessions to the poor. Is the argument convincing? Why or why not? Exactly how much, if any, of one's possessions is one morally obliged to give to the poor?
3. Explain what consequentialism is, and say how a consequentialist should respond to the objections made by Thomson.
4. What, if anything, does Nozick's example of the experience machine show about what is good? Does this example show that consequentialism is false? Does it place any constraints on how a consequentialist should develop his theory? Explain, in the course of answering these questions, how Mill might respond to the example.
5. Explain Kant's moral theory. Is it, in the end, preferable to consequentialist theories? Explain what you take to be the strongest objections to Kant's theory, and say how you think Kant should respond to them.