CTZN Study Guide

Test 2

* What are the two types of consequentialism that we mentioned in class?
* Utility and Egoism
* How is egoism different from Utilitarianism? How are they similar?
* They are both Hedonist, meaning they are both obsessed with pleasure. Egoism is a self-centered practice. Utilitarianism is an impartial practice.
* What is the biggest difference between Utilitarianism and Kantian moral theory?
* Utilitarianism believes in doing anything that minimizes pain, even if it could be considered wrong. Example: Utilitarian’s can lie to a murder at their door, while Kantian’s cannot.
* Utilitarianism is ALL about the consequences
* With Kant, you should never consider the consequences
* What consequences does Utilitarianism focus on?
* Producing good consequences and preventing bad ones.
* How does Mill define happiness?
* Pleasure and the absence of pain.
* To what term does utility refer?
* Utility = Happiness = Pleasure
* Wat does it mean for a theory to be hedonistic? Is utilitarianism hedonistic?
* A hedonistic theory is one that is obsessed with the pursuit of pleasure or self-indulgence. Yes, utilitarianism is hedonistic because it seeks pleasure and the absence of pain.
* What does it mean for a theory to be impartialist? Is utilitarianism impartialist?
* An impartialist theory is one that treats everyone equally. Yes, utilitarianism is impartialist because it is seeking happiness for not just yourself, but the good of everyone.
* How does a consequentialist determine the right action?
  + What will create the best consequences
* How does a utilitarian determine the right action?
  + What will produce the most pleasure
* What is the principle of utility?
* The principle of utility states: Actions or behaviors are right in so far as they promote happiness or pleasure, wrong as they tend to produce unhappiness or pain.
* What if a utilitarian is caught in a situation where she cannot help but cause some pain? What should she do?
  + Do whatever minimizes the most amount of pain.
* What is the ‘doctrine of swine’ objection? How does Mill respond to this objection?
* States that utilitarian doctrine is unfit for humans because it recognizes no higher purpose for life than the mere pursuit of pleasure. Mill’s response: there are different levels of pleasure higher and lower.
* Does Mill differentiate between sorts of pleasure? If so, name the different types of pleasure and give some likely examples.
* Higher Pleasures vs Lower Pleasures
* Higher Pleasures are pleasures that only humans can achieve

Example: Reading, having intellectual conversation 🡪 choosing a novel vs comic book

* Lower Pleasures

Example: eating, sleeping

* How does Mill differentiate between types of pleasures?
  + By using a competent judge.
* What is a competent judge? What qualifies one to be a competent judge?
* One is a competent judge if they have experienced both high and low pleasures AND is fully able to appreciate both.
* What are some objections to Utilitarianism concerning the issues of justice?
* Utilitarianism can’t respect robust human rights, you will transgress human rights in order to produce an action
* What are some troubling cases for utilitarian’s to deal with concerning individual rights?
  + Taking the organs from one average person to save the lives of 5 ordinary people
* How might utilitarian’s respond to such concerns?
* They respond with rule utilitarianism
* What is Act Utilitarianism?
* Act Utilitarianism states: An action is right if it produces the most (expected) utility (and wrong if it doesn’t)
* What is Rule Utilitarianism?
* Rule Utilitarianism states: An action is right if it conforms to a rule that when generally followed produces the most utility (and wrong if it doesn’t)
* How does Rule Utilitarianism represent a potential solution to problems for Utilitarian theory concerning justice and individual rights?
  + It is motivated to avoid the justice objection
  + What is right is bases on a general RULE not an ACTION
* Give the argument for why the distinction between rule and act utilitarianism is not a good one and results in a dilemma for the utilitarian. Or explain why rule utilitarianism is an unstable position.
  + Rule Utilitarianism is unstable because you either:
    - Depart from rule 🡪 Back to Act Utilitarianism
    - Don’t depart from rule 🡪 Departing from Utilitarianism itself
* What does Aristotle think is the final end of human desire? What does it mean for this to be the final end of desire?
  + Happiness/Eudaimonia
* Why is “happiness” a bad translation of the Greek word “Eudaimonia” in Aristotle?
  + Happiness implies more of an emotion, whereas the word “Eudaimonia” goes more in depth to the actions of humans
* What is a good translation of Eudaimonia?
  + Human Flourishing
* What are the parts of Eudaimonia?
  + Worthwhile activities, done well, that you also enjoy doing
* How do virtues relate to Eudaimonia? How does a virtue contribute to Eudaimonia?
  + Virtues promote human flourishing.
  + Virtues are character traits that make us decide well, feel well, and execute the actions well
  + Virtues seek the mean between deficiency and excess
* How does Aristotle define humans?
  + Rational
  + Social
  + Animals
* What is the function of a human according to Aristotle?
  + Activity of a soul in accord with reason.
  + Your soul is what you use to make decisions.
* Define what it means to be vicious.
  + To have a wrong belief
  + To desire to do the wrong thing
  + To do the wrong actions
* Define what it means to be incontinent
  + To have a good belief
  + To desire to do the wrong thing
  + To do the wrong actions
* Define what it means to be continent
  + To have a good belief
  + To desire to do the wrong thing
  + To do the right action
* Define what it means to be virtuous
  + To have a good belief
  + To desire to do the right thing
  + To do the right action
* For Aristotle is it better to be continent or virtuous? Why?
  + It is better to be virtuous
  + Even though the continent person knows what is right, and does what is right, they don’t do it for the right reasons. They do not desire to do what is right.
  + A virtuous person knows what is right, does right, and desires to act because it is the right thing to do
* For Aristotle, why is desire ethically important?
  + Desires drive you to do the right or wrong thing
* What do emotions have to do with the virtues?
  + Emotions are what you have to control or balance so that you do not have an excess of that emotion or lack the emotion. The virtue is considered the mean between excess and lacking.
* What is the distinction between virtue as a character trait and a virtue in action?
  + Virtue as a character trait is being prepared to act
  + Virtue in action is putting a virtue into action
* How does Aristotle think you gain or develop a virtue?
  + You gain or develop a virtue through habituation. Doing the virtuous action repeatedly until it becomes second nature (natural)
  + No child is born with virtue, but we have the capacity to develop virtue
* Why are virtues thought of as “means of excellence”?
  + Virtues are a mean between vices of excess and vices of deficiency
* Name at least 5 virtues that Aristotle covers in his Nicomachean Ethics section and their associated vices of deficiency and excess
  + Courage
    - Excess: Reckless
    - Deficiency: Cowardice
  + Temperance
    - Excess: Insensible
    - Deficiency: Intemperance
  + Generosity
    - Excess: Stinginess
    - Deficiency: Wastefulness
  + Mildness
    - Deficiency: Inirascible
    - Excess: Irascible
  + Friendliness
    - Excess: Being ingratiating
    - Deficiency: Ill-Tempered
  + Honesty
    - Excess: Boastful
    - Deficiency: Self-Deprecation
* What does it mean for something to be a vice of excess as distinct from a vice of deficiency?
  + Having too much or too little of something
* Give an example of a vice of excess and a vice of deficiency. What is each an excess and deficiency of?
  + Excess: Recklessness
  + Deficiency: Cowardice
  + Both are vices of courage
* What is the Action-Guiding objection to Aristotleian virtue ethics?
  + When trying to figure out what the virtuous activity is, you should ask the virtuous person what the virtuous activity is. The virtuous person does virtuous activities, but because you don’t know what those activities are you don’t know who the virtuous person is.
* What is the difficulty for Aristotle’s ethics that is associated with praise and blame?
  + Virtue ethicists blame others for things you may not be able to control (how you feel)
    - You can be vicious without necessarily being blamed for it
    - You can be blamed for being vicious if you stay vicious, and don’t actively change
* What are the three types of friendship?
  + Pleasure friendship
    - Based on pleasure the other person brings you
  + Use friendship
    - Based on the advantages given
  + Perfect friendship
    - Based on mutual respect and admiration for character
* What sort of friendship does Aristotle think is the best kind? Why is it the best kind?
  + Perfect friendships are the best kind
  + They live up to mutual good will, these are friends you naturally want to see do well
  + There is a mutual goal for living a virtuous life
  + Much more stable and durable foundation
    - Based on character/virtues/personality
* What does virtue have to do with friendship?
  + Help you do joint worthwhile activities well
  + Help you make and keep friends
* Why are friends required for a good life?
  + Humans are social beings, and we can’t socially flourish without friends
    - In good times they share in your joy
    - In bad times they share in your pain
* Why do character friends become similar?
  + You have shared, virtuous goals
  + Take part in the same virtuous activities
  + As you progress virtuously, you slowly become similar
* How does a virtuous friend become a self-lover?
  + By loving a friend you are essentially loving yourself
  + If you help them flourish, they’ll help you flourish
  + As they become more virtuous, you’ll become more virtuous
  + Having a positive outcome from loving a friend is just a bonus, you love them because you love yourself