Introduction to Ethics (PHIL 2120)
Test 1: September 22, 2006
University of West Georgia
You will have 55 minutes to complete this test. This test is worth 25% of your total course grade. Maximum on this test is 100%.

Section I. Define each of the following terms and phrases in as detailed, clear and precise a manner as time allows.
[2 pts. each; 20 pts. total]

1. moral skepticism: the idea that morality is subject only to what people think, feel, believe about it. 2 types of moral skeptics: 1) limited to one issue or full-blown in that all of morality is subject only to what people think, feel, believe.

2. genuine inquiry: scientific inquiry. Seeking truths about the world regardless of what the outcome may be.

3. prima facie moral obligation: A genuine moral obligation that may be trumped by more important moral obligations. Lying to your grandma that he hair looks good when it actually does not.

4. philosophy: An area of inquiry that seeks the truth of fundamental & pervasive questions such as the existence of God, absolute good, nature of human experience.

5. polygamy: having more than one spouse at the same time

6. supererogatory: an action that if not done wouldn't be immoral, but if done would be morally good.

[definitions are continued at the top of the next page]
8. validity: An argument is valid when the truth of the premises would guarantee the truth of the conclusion.

9. argument: A set of statements consisting of premises and a conclusion. Premises = reasoning/evidence for accepting the conclusion.

10. dilemma: A situation that has 2 outcomes, both unfavorable, 2 horns to the situation. (could be more precise: a choice between 2 options...)

Section II. First write the name of the argument form in the space provided. Then indicate whether the given argument is valid or invalid by circling the appropriate word. [3 pts. each; 6 pts. total]

11. \( p \quad q \)
   If Miami lost to Louisville, then Hurricane fans are sad. Miami did not lose to Louisville. \( \neg p \)
   Therefore, Hurricane fans are not sad. \( \neg q \)

   name of this argument form: Denying the antecedent
   circle one: valid invalid

12. \( p \quad q \)
   If Iran has nuclear weapons, then North Korea is satisfied. Iran has nuclear weapons. \( p \)
   Therefore, North Korea is satisfied. \( q \)

   name of this argument form: Modus Ponens
   circle one: valid invalid
Section III. In the space provided, answer each of the following questions in as detailed, clear and precise a manner as time allows. [24 points total]

13. Explain the concepts of objectivity and subjectivity, and illustrate those concepts with examples. 8 pts.

Objectivity means real. It is the idea that something is true regardless of what people think, feel, or say about it. Objective truths include a heliocentric solar system, 2 + 2 = 4, Pilate was a man. Certain personal thoughts can be objective as well. I can think I dreamt about tigers when I actually objectively don't dream about dinosaurs. It doesn't matter what I thought I dreamt about. Subjectivity means that things are subject to what people think, feel, or say about them. There is no objective goodness (or badness) of rancid goat's milk. What makes it good or bad is what people say about it, their opinions.

14. State one version of the Limited Cultural Differences Argument (LCDA) and explain how Rachels criticizes it. 8 pts.

LCDA goes 1. Some cultures think it is wrong to kill babies. Right. 2. Some cultures think it is wrong to kill certain animals. Right. Therefore it is neither right or wrong. It is a matter of cultural belief not subject to a universal law. Rachels counters by saying that this argument is invalid. It is such because the premises state truths about what people believe in morals. The conclusion says how morals is. The conclusion does not logically follow from premises. Even if both parties are wrong, they may still be an objective right. (Note: The text is partially unclear.)

15. State the Traditional Argument Against Abortion and explain how it is susceptible to the fallacies of equivocation and begging the question. 8 pts.

1. It is immoral to kill innocent human beings.
2. Fetuses are innocent human beings.
3. Therefore, it is immoral to kill fetuses.

This argument is susceptible to equivocation. Using different meanings of ambiguous terms in each premise because it could mean in 1 that human beings are moral persons. If this is the case, it is not valid and should be thrown out. However, if it means the same meaning in each premise, it begs the question. It assumes in its premiss something to be true, but what is assumed true is what is being argued. If it meant genetic human in both premises, 1 would beg the question. If it means moral human in both premises.
Section IV. In the space provided, answer ONE of following questions. Your answer to this question should be as detailed, clear and precise as time allows. In other words, tell me everything you know about the question asked. If you omit something that is relevant to the question, I will assume that you do not know the material you are omitting. Do not attempt to answer more than one question. [50% of your total test grade]

A. Discuss the Platonic Argument Against Divine Command Theory (DCT). As part of your discussion, you should explain in detail the consequences that are supposed to follow if DCT is true and the consequences that are supposed to follow if DCT is false. Do you think this is a sound argument? Why or why not?

B. Discuss Warren’s pro-choice view, including her distinction between different senses of “human being,” her account of personhood, and her response to criticisms based on similarity and potentiality. Do you think Warren’s defense of abortion works? Defend your answer.

To begin, DCT implies 1. God exists 2. He says certain actions are right and certain actions are wrong 3. These he approves of are right and those he forbids are wrong.

A. The Platonic Argument against Divine Command Theory says: Are things morally good/bad because God commands them or does God command things is morally good/bad. This sets up a dilemma in which either way you choose to look at the nature of morality, it is unappealing to someone who believes in an all good & powerful God. Let’s say DCT is true and actions are morally good or bad because God commands them. The problem here is that God’s commands become arbitrary or without moral reason. There is nothing bad about murder other than the fact that God forbids it and nothing good about helping your grandpa other than God approves of it. God has no moral reason to say things are good or things are bad. This being so, if God said rap was morally good then rape would in God be morally good. This 3 why his moral commands are arbitrary. He could have some non-moral reason for commanding as he does. For example, his commands could be aimed at our happiness, but this is uncertain due to God’s uncertain nature. How do we know he isn’t tricking us and actually making us unhappy. After all, he would have no moral reason not to trick us. The next unfortunate by-product of accepting DCT is that the Goodness of God seems irrelevant. Many Christians claim that God is all good and can do no wrong so we should trust his judgements, however arbitrary, and realize he has the best for us in mind. The problem here is that when Christians deems God’s “good” nature (he would never lie, cheat, steal, kill) seems to be
nothing more than God's approval of his own arbitrary judgments of good actions. His goodness seems to be nothing more than an approval of self. If God said murder was good, God would be all-good in murdering.

Now let's say O.C.T. is false and certain actions are good or bad. Another way to say this is that God understands some actions to be good to *him* because he commanded them and because they are, in and of themselves, good or bad. This implies that there is a certain objective code of morality independent of God's will. Also God can @ do is point us in the right direction of this code.

This also implies that God is not all-powerful or omnipotent. There are certain things even God is subject to. It throws out a theological conception of Good & Evil and hurts the credibility of many religions.

So the logical flow of the argument is such: Either A = O.C.T. is true or b = O.C.T. is false. If A, the C = the consequence of accepting O.C.T. If B, then D = the consequence of denying O.C.T. A religious person must concede that the consequence of accepting O.C.T. are far more severe than denying it. If you deny it you can still accept that God is good (he points us toward right moral code) and his commands are with reason (supported by the right moral code). I believe this is why St. Thomas Aquinas choose this path. I believe it is a sound argument. I understand that there might be a way to go "between the horns" I find support of O.C.T. w/o the negative consequences but I have not heard this proposition. It seems that God is more like a *patron god* living in complete accord with morality and instead of praising him we should focus on being more like him.

This question = A+ = (1602)