

Philosophy of Psychology  
Philosophy 149  
Fall, 2008

### **Directions and Questions for Final Exam**

Bring *two* bluebooks available in the university bookstore with *nothing* written in or on them (not even your name). These may be redistributed at the time of the exam.

The exam will consist of the three parts, for which the instructions are below. Two of the questions require essays. There are different ways of addressing the essay questions that can result in an excellent grade. You will be judged on the overall quality of your answer, not whether your answer corresponds to a pre-set model. In general, a more thorough answer that explicates the key ideas will score higher than a skeletal answer. Don't pad your answer, but strive to write as complete an answer as possible given the time constraints. You should aim your answer at a generally knowledgeable student who has not taken this class. Explain all that you would need to explain for them to understand your answer.

The exam will consist of the two parts, for which the instructions are as follows:

Part A. Answer each of the following six questions in two to three sentences each. Each question is worth up to 5 points (30 points total).

Part B. Address the following two questions in an essay (35 points each). Be as thorough and complete as possible in answering the question within the time allowed. Keep your essay focused on the question—extraneous material can detract from the quality of the essay.

**The following are the question from which the six that will appear in Part A will be drawn:**

1. Describe the type of experimental outcome from which Tolman inferred that rats develop cognitive maps.
2. When Tolman claims “animals and humans engage in latent learning,” what did he mean by latent learning?
3. How does operant conditioning differ from classical conditioning?
4. How did Skinner characterize the process through which we come to be able to talk about our mental events?
5. What feature of perception was Bruner demonstrating in the experiment in which children tried to match the size of coins and cardboard pieces?
6. What is the capacity limitation that Miller discovered for human short term memory?
7. What is Chomsky's poverty of the stimulus argument and what is it supposed to show?
8. What test did Turing propose for determining whether a system is intelligent?

9. What use did Newell and Simon make of the problem:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{DONALD} \\ + \text{GERALD} \quad D=5 \\ \hline \text{ROBERT} \end{array}$$

10. Describe Searle's Chinese Room thought experiment (not the conclusions he draws from it).

11. In what way does the claim that a mental state is (type) identical with a brain state go beyond the claim that the mental state is correlated with a type of brain state?

12. What, for (philosophical) functionalists, is the critical feature of a mental state that determines what type of mental state it is (e.g. a belief)?

13. What is meant by the multiple realizability of a mental state?

14. What role does that claim that folk or common-sense psychology is a theory play in the argument for eliminative materialism? What alternative to it being a theory are eliminative materialists rejecting?

15. What is the difference between token and type identity claims?

16. What does Fodor take the special sciences to be in the business of providing?

17. What would it be for a "syntactic engine" to emulate a "semantic engine"?

18. What consequence does Fodor draw from his assumption that learning is a process of hypothesis testing?

19. What does Fodor mean by saying that thought is productive?

20. How were the main effects Bartlett found in people's recall of the War of the Ghosts?

21. What is meant by episodic memory? Give an example.

22. What is meant by procedural memory? Give an example.

23. What is meant by a *flash bulb memory*? Give an example.

24. What technique did Neisser develop for studying the accuracy of flash bulb memories?

25. What technique did Loftus develop for investigating the accuracy of eye-witness testimony?

26. What sorts of memory deficits does H.M. experience and what memory abilities does he retain?

27. Is the vividness of memory a reliable indicator of its accuracy?

**For Part B, I will choose two of the following questions:**

1. Cognitive psychology both rejected behaviorism and preserved important elements of behaviorism. Be as specific and concrete as possible about which features of behaviorism were rejected and which were retained. What defense would cognitive psychologists offer for rejecting those parts of behaviorism they rejected? How might a behaviorist argue for behaviorism as against cognitive theories?
2. Describe in detail the situation of Searle's Chinese room and explain how Searle uses it in his argument against the claim that a properly programmed computer could have a mind. In presenting his argument, does Searle accept the Turing Test as a measure of intelligence? If not, how is intelligence judged? Describe what you take to be the most compelling of the objections to the Chinese room argument and discuss why you think the objection either succeeds or fails to undercut the argument.
3. Construct a dialog between Fodor and Skinner concerning Fodor's language of thought hypothesis (LOTH). At a minimum, discuss the following: Both talk a lot about learning. What are the differences between their conceptions of learning and how does this relate to LOTH? Skinner professes to be skeptical of theories. How would he apply his skepticism to LOTH? How might Fodor try to answer his skepticism?
4. One of your friends claims she thinks in English. Another friend claims he thinks with mental imagery. What would Fodor claim in response to these claims? What kinds of arguments would he present for his response? How might you argue on behalf of your friends against Fodor? What do you need to show to answer Fodor's claims?
5. Present a debate between a defender and opponent of functionalism. What is the key tenet of functionalism? How, according to functionalism, does the mind work? What are some of the major objections to functionalism? Consider both problems in explaining intentional states and qualitative states. What possible moves can the functionalist make in response to these objections?
6. Fodor comment "if commonsense psychology were to collapse, that would be, beyond comparison, the greatest intellectual catastrophe in the history of our species." Present a debate between Fodor and Paul Churchland concerning eliminative materialism. How would Fodor defend his statement about commonsense psychology? How might Churchland try to convince Fodor he was wrong? How would Fodor respond?
7. Assess computer memory as a model for human memory, discussing both ways in which it is suggestive about the operation of human memory and respects in which it is misleading. In evaluating the computer model, discuss a specific example of memory research that we discussed (e.g., Magnani's paintings, Bartlett's transformed drawings or *War of the Ghosts*).
8. How reliable (accurate) is human episodic memory? Focus on both respects in which it does seem to be reliable and respects in which it misleads. Selectively discuss evidence we have considered in class about the accuracy of memory. What do you think are the implications of this research for the ways memory figures in our society? Give your reasons for these implications.
9. What is the relation between episodic memory and personal identity? What consequences does losing memory (as in the case of H.M.) have for one's self identity? Elaborate on what you think it would be like to be H.M. What effects does ordinary forgetting over time about specific events in a person's life have on one's identity? Does the evidence about false memory have implications for our personal identity?