



**STUDYDADDY**

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**Philosophy 160**  
**Essay Exam 4**

**Answer all the following questions** in 1000 words. Be sure to answer all parts of each question. Use 11-point Times New Roman font with double-spacing and 1-inch margins. Do not include the questions, an introduction, or any other irrelevant information. Just include your answers. These must be completed by 10:00 pm on Saturday night. Points will be deducted for late exams, and if they are *too* late, they will not be accepted.

1. First, you must **read the article** by Martin Luther King, Jr. called “Letter from Birmingham Jail” [online under readings]. You must also watch the relevant video (videos 31 and 32). Then consider the following argument from Martin Luther King, Jr. (*note*: this extraction is slightly different from the version in the video).

1. If a law has all four of *these features\**, then it is unjust.
2. Segregation ordinances have all four of these features.
3. Therefore, segregation ordinances are unjust.
4. If a law is unjust, then it is morally permissible to break it, so long as one does so openly and accepts the legal penalty for doing so.
5. Therefore, it is morally permissible to break segregation ordinances, so long as one does so openly and accepts the legal penalty.

- **Explain** each of the **premises one at a time**, unpacking his views (lines 1, 2, and 4).
  - When explaining line 1, tell *which* four features King has in mind.
  - When explaining line 2, give an example of one of the segregation ordinances that King is talking about (you must **read the article** “Letter from Birmingham Jail” to find one).
  - When explaining line 4, tell why he thinks this reaction to unjust laws shows “the highest respect for the law.”
- Then, **evaluate the premises, one at a time** (again: lines 1, 2, and 4). Clearly state whether *you* believe each of these premises is true or false and why.
- Finally, **evaluate the argument** as a whole. Is it valid, factually correct, and sound? Explain.

2. Next, the following interpretation of the “unnaturalness” objection to homosexual sex acts.

1. Homosexual sex acts involve using body parts contrary to their proper functions.
2. If homosexual sex acts involve using body parts contrary to their proper functions, then such sex acts are morally wrong.
3. Therefore, homosexual sex acts are morally wrong.

- **Explain both premises, one at a time** (lines 1 and 2).
  - When explaining line 1, describe how to determine the “proper function” of body parts, according to the person who makes this sort of argument.
  - When explaining line 2, tell why the author thinks this sort of “unnaturalness” would make such sex acts wrong.
- Then, **evaluate both premises, one at a time** (again: lines 1 and 2). Clearly state whether *you* believe each of these premises is true or false and why.
  - **When evaluating line 2, consider Burton Leiser’s objection to it** (say why *he* thinks line 2 is false, and evaluate his thinking; tell whether or not you agree with him).
- Finally, **evaluate the argument** as a whole. Is it valid, factually correct, and sound? Explain.

*Bonus (3 points)*: Extract a valid argument from the following passage of text. Your argument should be as “minimalist” as possible while preserving the author’s true meaning.

A lot of people think that “soft” drugs like marijuana, hashish, and psilocybin should be kept illegal. They point to the fact that, if you abuse these drugs, you will likely neglect your responsibilities at work and damage your relationships with your friends and family. You may even neglect your children. But here’s the thing: that’s also true when it comes to abusing alcohol, which is totally legal. But there is no reason to treat these substances differently. So here is our choice: either we should legalize “soft” drugs, or else we should criminalize alcohol. But obviously, it’s not the case that we should criminalize alcohol. Look what happened with the prohibition back in the early 20th century! Criminalization did not have any good effects, and it made America a worse place. Therefore, we should go ahead and legalize “soft” drugs.



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