

Quizbowl Philosophy

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Disclaimers:

Personal experience: philosophy outside of quizbowl

As in any subject, philosophy in QB is different from actual philosophy (i.e. making strong arguments vs. knowing who made those arguments)

Quizbowl treats “philosophy” as focusing on the Western canon...people like Confucius are not always treated as philosophers, although RMP

Works and terms: I have tried to order these by importance

Terms: also sometimes thought experiments (TEs)

Pre-Socratics:

Name is self-explanatory

Tend to be more elementalists

Heraclitus: Everything changes

Giveaway: “No man ever steps in the same river twice” (and variations on this)

Greek form of this: *panta rhei* (πάντα ῥεῖ) (≈ “everything flows”)

Introduced/coined the term *logos*: roughly “logic;” the logical basis of the argument (along with *pathos*, the emotional appeal, and *ethos*, the appeal to authority/expertise)

Thales of Miletus: Water!

Everything is ultimately water

Thales' theorem: a special case of the inscribed angle theorem

Socrates

Most things we know about him are through Plato's writings (sorta possible that he didn't actually exist)

And his thoughts are hard to discern from Plato's thoughts

Terms: "I know that I know nothing" (realization that he knows very little),
Socratic method

Socratic irony: pretending/acting dumb in order to expose the flaws in other people's arguments

Supposedly used Socratic irony/method to defeat arguments made by various Sophists (public intellectuals of Athens)

Plato

Student of Socrates who expressed his ideas largely through dialogues featuring Socrates

Allegory of the Cave

Terms: ideal forms, philosopher kings, tripartite theory of the soul, chora

Works: primarily the Socratic dialogues: (in rough order)

Hippias minor, Alcibiades, Socrates' Apology, Euthyphro, Crito, Hippias major, Charmides, Laches, Lysis, Protagoras, Gorgias, Meno, Phædo, Symposium, Phædrus, Ion, Menexenus, Euthydemus, Cratylus, Republic, Parmenides, Theætetus, Sophist, Statesman, Philebus, Timæus, Critias, Laws, Epinomis

Republic: philosopher kings, Allegory of the Cave, Ring of Gyges

Aristotle

Basis of scholasticism

Tutored Alexander the Great

Terms: golden mean (the middle is the best), syllogism (structure for a philosophical argument), hylomorphism, telos (end/purpose; used in the word teleology)

Works (order is good to know, and the most common order is by Bekker number, another good clue): Organon (about logic), Physics, On the Heavens, On the Soul, Problems, Metaphysics, Nichomachean Ethics, Eudemian Ethics, Politics, Economics, Rhetoric, Poetics

Medieval Christian philosophers

Attempting to combine/reconcile Aristotle's theories with their deeply held Christian beliefs

Various proofs for the existence of God

St. Augustine

Lived in Hippo (modern-day Tunisia)

Stealing a pear story

Terms: Visible and invisible churches, Incurvatus in se, namesake hypothesis (solution to the synoptic problem), namesake theodicy

Works: The City of God (discusses the Sack of Rome), Confessions (Rousseau also wrote a work of this title so like be wary)

Mentored by St. Ambrose of Milan

Converted from Manichaeism to Christianity

Namesake theodicy: solution to the problem of evil by saying God created the

Thomas Aquinas

Realist and believed in accepting truth, no matter the source

Epithets/Nicknames: Doctor Angelicus, Doctor Communis

Names for other people (know these both ways): Aristotle = “The Philosopher,” Averroes/Ibn Rushd = “The Commentator,” Ulpian = “The Jurist”

Terms: Quinque viæ (Five Ways/Five Proofs), analogia entis (knowing God through analogy with his creation)

Works: Summa Theologica, Summa Contra Gentiles, Contra errores Graecum

Summa Theologica: VERY important; introduces the Quinque viæ, just price theory (sell something for what's worth), no charging interest on loans

St. Anselm

Archbishop of Canterbury, 1093 to 1109 (don't need to know the dates but a lot of important people have held the position)

Terms: ontological argument (one of the first), Scholasticism (arguably the founder), Satisfaction theory (crucifixion was a substitute for human sin/ "Jesus died for our sins")

Works: Proslogion (where the ontological argument is), Cur Deus Homo (Why God Became a Man)

Biographer: Eadmer

Saw God on the Becca di Nona (mountain near his home) as a child

Anselm's Logical Masterpiece

1. By definition, God is a being than which none greater can be imagined.
2. A being that necessarily exists in reality is greater than a being that does not necessarily exist.
3. Thus, by definition, if God exists as an idea in the mind but does not necessarily exist in reality, then we can imagine something that is greater than God.
4. But we cannot imagine something that is greater than God.
5. Thus, if God exists in the mind as an idea, then God necessarily exists in reality.
6. God exists in the mind as an idea.
7. Therefore, God necessarily exists in reality.

John Calvin

All about predestination

Geneva the theocratic utopia: music prohibited (as were all festivals and celebrations)

Calvinism spread and under John Knox became Presbyterianism, the dominant religion in Scotland

Ordered his rival Michael Servetus burned at the stake for heresy

Scripture as necessary for God-knowledge, which is distinct from human knowledge and cannot be found in nature

Terms: Five Points, soul sleep,

Islamic Golden Age

Roughly the same time as the European Middle Ages

Largely centered on the House of Wisdom in Baghdad, although Córdoba rose as an important center later

Most important guys: Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) and Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Moses Maimonides

Other philosophers: Ibn Tufail (wrote the *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān* based on Avicenna's ideas)

Preservation of Greek and Roman texts by translation

Encompassed many fields (obv focusing on philosophy here but other important people are al Khwārizmī (developed algebra), al Sufi (astronomer), Rumi

Ibn Sīnā/Avicenna

Born and grew up near present-day Bukhara, Uzbekistan

Neoplatonist

Terms: kalām (KCA is an argument derived from it, based on absolute infinities),
Proof of the Truthful (mahiyat (essence) vs. wujud (existence),

Works: The Book of Healing and The Canon of Medicine

Al-Ghazālī

Member of the Ash'arite school of theology

Terms: occasionalism

Most important work: The Incoherence of the Philosophers

A criticism of Ibn Sīnā and Al-Fārābī

Proposes and defends occasionalism (God causes events; things don't cause events)

Other works: The Alchemy of Happiness, The Revival of Religious Sciences (contains a chapter on samā' (Sufi music practices)), The Jerusalem Tract, A Niche for Lights

Ibn Rushd/Averroes

Born in Córdoba and did most of his work in al-Andalus (Córdoba was an important center for learning)

Referred to as “The Commentator” by Aquinas and others

Aquinas also wrote *De unitate intellectus contra Averroistas* in response to him

Maliki school of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence)

Most important work: *The Incoherence of the Incoherence*

Direct response/attack to Al-Ghazālī’s *The Incoherence*

Other works: *On the Harmony of Religions and Philosophy*, *Middle and Long Commentaries on Plato’s Republic*, *Kulliyat/Generalities* (about medicine)

Moses Maimonides

Sephardic (Iberian) Jewish philosopher (born in Córdoba), although lived most of his life in Morocco and Egypt

Also referred to by the acronym RAMBAM

Terms:

Works: The Guide for the Perplexed (attempts to reconcile Aristotelianism with the Torah), Mishneh Torah

Renaissance and Humanism

Beginning of the trend away from religion as main way of explaining the world

Scholasticism no longer the primary/exclusive system of thought

You have probably heard about all of this in AP Euro/other quizbowl subjects

Niccolo Machiavelli

Italian political philosopher in the Renaissance, based in Florence

Terms: Machiavellian (a typically derogatory adjective)

Most important work: The Prince

Essentially a guidebook for Cesare Borgia

Who was Cesare Borgia?: Italian Prince, illegitimate son of Pope Alexander VI, Borgia family is Valenciana but from the town of Borja in Aragón, commander of Papal forces before getting his own territory

“cunning like a fox and powerful like a lion”

“Better to be feared than loved”

Emphasis on realism rather than idealism

2nd-most important work: Discourses on Livy

Petrarch

Italian philologist, philosopher, author, humanist

Terms: namesake sonnet (8-6, ABBA ABBA, CDECDE) (actually not developed by him but like eh), humanism (founder?), private humanism (De vita solitaria)

Works: Canzoniere (songbook), Secretum (Socratic dialogue with Augustine)

Climbed Mont Ventoux in Provence and his copy of Augustine's *Confessions* fell out to a specific quote; this made him think inwardly apparently (and is argued as one starting point for the Renaissance)

Desiderius Erasmus

Dutch humanist (sort of part of the “Northern Renaissance”)

Good friends with More (In Praise of Folly is alternatively titled In Praise of More)

Terms: namesake pronunciation (new system for pronouncing Ancient Greek), *via media*/middle road (humans have free will so that God can judge them for their actions; this was a major source of disagreement with Luther)

Major work: In Praise of Folly

Satire to attack superstition and European culture

Folly is the main character and is born in Eden

St. Thomas More

British theologian and humanist

Terms: utopia

Major work: Utopia

written as a sarcastic work, but was taken literally

Divided into 2 books: Dialogue of Counsel and Discourse on Utopia

Historical stuff: opposition to the Protestant Reformation

Refused to accept Henry VIII's declaration that he was the Supreme Head of the Church of England

So he was beheaded

René Descartes

Namesake coordinate system

Terms: cogito ergo sum, namesake dualism, namesake circular logic (version of the ontological argument) evil demon, namesake folium

Works: Meditations on First Philosophy, Discourse on Method, Passions of the Soul

Discourse on Method

“cogito ergo sum” (I think therefore I am)

Meditations on First Philosophy

Wax argument

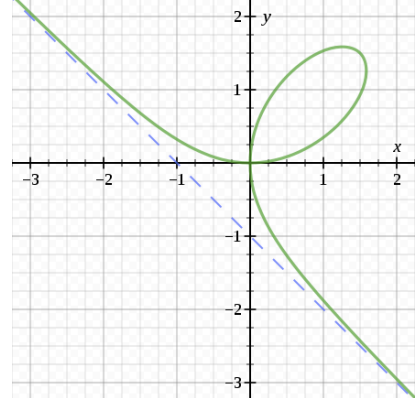
Evil demon

Passions of the Soul

Mind-body dualism

Pineal gland (conversation with

Taught Queen Christine of Switzerland



John Locke

British empiricist

Terms: tabula rasa!, Molyneux's problem (blind man recognizing objects he touched), "government with the consent of the governed"

Works: see below

Fundamental Constitution of Carolina

Written for Anthony Ashley Cooper (GEOGRAPHY FACT TIME: Charleston's rivers)

Essay Concerning Human Understanding

tabula rasa

Two Treatises on Government

Thomas Hobbes

• Leviathan

- “Of the Commonwealth”
- “Kingdom of Darkness”
- Confederacy of deceivers
- Bellum omnium contra omnes
- “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short”

• De Cive, De Homine, De Corpore

David Hume

Scottish empiricist and skeptic

Terms: missing shade of blue, is-ought problem (difference between the two),
problem of causation, “science of man”

Works: A Treatise of Human Nature, An Enquiry Concerning Human
Understanding, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, The History of
England (6 volumes)

Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding

“missing shade of blue”

“Of Miracles”

Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion

Demea, Philo, Cleanthes

Immanuel Kant

German philosopher from Königsberg/Kaliningrad (Teutonic Knights to Prussia to Germany to Russia to USSR to weird Russian exclave)

Story about walking around the town (neighbors set their clocks based on him)

Hume “woke [him] from [his] dogmatic slumber”

Categorical imperative!!

Kantianism contrasted with utilitarianism

Terms: synthetic a priori things, transcendental idealism, Kingdom of Ends (if everyone followed the categorical imperative), noumenon, nebular hypothesis (he did astro too!)

Critique of Pure Reason

a priori and a posteriori

Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals (Categorical imperative)

Friedrich Nietzsche

German idealist? Proto-existentialist? (he's really hard to categorize)

Also Sprach Zarathustra

Übermensch

Eternal recurrence

Beyond Good and Evil

Birth of Tragedy

Apollonian and Dionysian

Gay Science

“God is dead”

Ecce Homo

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

Master-slave DIALECTIC/RELATION (not MORALITY, which is something Nietzsche wrote about)

Dialectic: thesis-antithesis-synthesis

Terms: aufheben, geist, sittlichkeit

Works: Phenomenology of Spirit, Science of Logic, Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences, Elements of the Philosophy of Right

Young Hegelians: Hegel's ideas were tremendously influential, but his followers disagreed about whether they implied society at the time was perfect or had more dialectics to go through; those who thought there were more were the Young Hegelians/Left Hegelians (opposite were Right/Old Hegelians)

Karl Marx

With Engels

Das Kapital

Commodity fetishism

Communist Manifesto

“spectre is haunting Europe”

Proletariat and bourgeoisie

“Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon

“Theses on Feuerbach

Point of philosophy is to change the world

“Poverty of Philosophy

George Berkeley

Idealist

Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge

Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous

“esse est percipi”

The Analyst

Newton as “infidel mathematician”

Alciphron

De Motu

Tar water as medicine

Baruch Spinoza

Ethics

Geometric order

“Of Human Bondage”

Tractatus Theologico-Politicus

Pantheism

On the Improvement of the Understanding

Ezra, not Moses, wrote the Torah

Utilitarianism:

Chiefly British

Jeremy Bentham

Panopticon

Founded Utilitarianism

Fragment on Government

Defense of Usury

Critiqued William Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England

Not Paul, But Jesus

John Stuart Mill

Student of Bentham

On Liberty

“harm principle”

“tyranny of the majority”

Utilitarianism

Married to Harriet Taylor

The Subjection of Women

A System of Logic

Mary Wollstonecraft

British feminist and philosopher

A Vindication of the Rights of Women

Daughter: Mary Shelley (Frankenstein)

Husband: William Godwin (political philosopher in his own right)

Harry Frankfurt

American philosopher at Princeton; known as a COMPATIBILIST

Frankfurt cases/counterexamples

Demolishing principle of alternate possibilities

Undecided voter

Hierarchical compatibilism

First and second order volitions

3 addicts: unwilling, willing, and wanton

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Austrian-British philosopher, primarily of language

Officer in WWI (Austro-Hungarian Army), hospital assistant in WWII (for British)

Terms: Meaning is use (words only matter for how we use them), picture theory of language, language-games, private language argument (1 person speaking a language is incoherent), family resemblance, form of life, ordinary language philosophy

Works: **Tractatus Logico Philosophicus**, Philosophical Investigations, On Certainty, Culture and Value, Blue and Brown Books, Remarks on Color

Other notable things: beetle in a box TE, argued with G.E. Moore

Søren Kierkegaard

DANISH philosopher

Fear and Trembling

Knight of Faith and infinite resignation

Abraham and Isaac (leap of faith)

Johannes de Silentio

Teleological suspension of the ethical

Either/Or

Crop rotation

“diary of a Seducer”

Victor Eremita

The Sickness Unto Death

Bertrand Russell

British philosopher

Terms: Namesake teapot (any Pastafarians out there?), namesake paradox, berry paradox, axiom of reducibility, definitive description, descriptivist theory of names (descriptions are the content), emotive conjugation

Works: Principia Mathematica (not Newton's one), Why I am not a Christian, Marriage and Morals, A History of Western Philosophy, What I Believe, In Praise of Idleness

William James

American philosopher (not that many that are important, surprisingly) in the late 1800s

Brother is Henry James, who is also very quizbowl relevant (know the difference: William is a philosopher, Henry is a novelist); sister Alice wrote a diary and she comes up as a clue

Terms: PRAGMATISM, will to believe (believe, and then find evidence/try the belief out), radical empiricism (physicalism is WRONG), stream of consciousness (coined the term), James-Lange theory of emotion, psychologist's fallacy, 10% of the brain myth

Works: PRAGMATISM, Varieties of Religious Experience, Essays in Radical Empiricism, The Principles of Psychology, Gifted Child

John Dewey

American pragmatist philosopher of education

Terms: progressive education,

Works: New School, Democracy and Education, Art as Experience, Dewey Commission (proving Trotsky innocent; not unique, though because Boaz and others), American Association of University Professors, The Public and its Problems, Knowing and the Known

Dewey decimals

University of Chicago Lab School (beat them to Dewey questions plz)

Visited China, Japan, and South Africa and spread his ideas

John Rawls

American philosopher and professor at Harvard

Rivalry/feud with Robert Nozick

Major work: A Theory of Justice

Original position

Justice as Fairness

2013 musical (because why the hell not?!)

Terms: original position, veil of ignorance, reflective equilibrium, overlapping consensus, telishment (problem of utilitarianism: punishing an innocent to deter others)

Robert Nozick

American political philosopher (and libertarian) at Harvard

Spirited rivalry with Rawls

Major work: *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*

Response to *A Theory of Justice*

Experience machine (defeat hedonism; would you plug in?)

Terms: utility monster (a being that gets more pleasure from anything than anyone else), entitlement theory, deductive closure

Other works: *Philosophical Explanations*, *The Examined Life*, *the Nature of Rationality*

Ayn Rand

Russian-American political philosopher

Terms: objectivism ("the concept of man as a heroic being, with his own happiness as the moral purpose of his life, with productive achievement as his noblest activity, and reason as his only absolute")

Opposition to "collectivism"

Major work: *Atlas Shrugged*

Protagonist: Dagny Taggart

"Who is John Galt?"

Rio Norte Line (research on New York Central)

Hannah Arendt

German-American political philosopher; a lot smarter and better than Ayn,
IMHO

Terms: banality of evil, praxis (active life instead of contemplative life)
auctoritas, natality

Works: The Origins of Totalitarianism, Eichmann in Jerusalem, On Revolution
(read this in Spanish for extra points!)

Other works: The Human Condition, Men in Dark Times, On Violence, The Life
of the Mind

Fled the Nazis

Existentialism:

“Existence precedes essence”

What you do is more important than antecedent conditions

Associated with modernism (different from modernismo in Latin American lit, despite sharing a name)

Modernism in this context: the shock of the Great War (all that Lost Generation stuff)

Jean-Paul Sartre

Close relationship with Simone de Beauvoir...worked together frequently and were romantic as well (although never married...open relationship)

Terms: bad faith, being-in-itself vs. being-for-itself (and being-for-others)

Works (more philosophical): Being and Nothingness, Critique of Dialectical Reason, Search for a Method, Anti-Semite and Jew (also translated as Reflections on the Jewish Question)

Works (literary): No Exit, Nausea, The Wall, The Respectful Prostitute, Dirty Hands

No Exit: "hell is other people," main characters are Estelle, Inez, and Garcin

Simone de Beauvoir

Feminist and Existentialist

Terms: ethics of ambiguity

Most important work: *The Second Sex*

"One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman"

Immanence and transcendence

Applies Hegel's master-slave dialectic (NOT MORALITY)

"Subject" and "other"

Sections: Myths, Biology, Psychology, History

Feminism Waves: BRIEF Summary

First wave:

Timeframe: 1830-1920 (ish)

Who: cisgendered, heterosexual (usually), frequently affluent white women

Goals: suffrage, property rights, temperance (although associated, not universal)

Second wave:

Timeframe: after suffrage to the 1980s (ish)

Who: women of color now as well (connections with black liberation); still mostly cishets

Goals: women-only spaces, sex and gender differentiation

Third wave:

Audre Lorde (slight feminism detour)

Black lesbian writer and theorist (also considered in literature)

Born in NYC to parents from Barbados and Carriacou (in the Grenadines)

Terms: intersectionality, The Erotic

Major works: Poetry is Not a Luxury, Sister Outsider, Zami: A New Spelling of My Name (name was originally Audrey but she dropped the “y” for artistic reasons), A Letter to Mary Daly

A Letter to Mary Daly: attack on Mary Daly, a self-described radical feminist who Lorde thought excluded black women

Susan Sontag

Feminist and queer philosopher, theorist and writer from NYC

Terms: “camp”

Works: Notes on “Camp,” On Photography, Against Interpretation, Styles of Radical Will

Notes on “Camp”: about the aesthetic and its connections to queer identity

Against Interpretation: "in place of a hermeneutics we need an erotics of art"

Judith Butler

3rd-wave feminist philosopher; Professor at UC Berkeley

Terms: gender as social construct; gender performativity, heterosexual matrix

Works: Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity; Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex

Martin Heidegger

Being and Time

Dasein

Origin of the Work of Art

Analyzed Von Gogh's "A Pair of Shoes"

Kant and the Problems of Metaphysics

The Question Concerning Technology

Taught Hannah Arendt

Destruktion: process of destroying ontological concepts (ie time, space, death, body, mind, etc)

Deconstructionism

Strong association with postmodernism (rejection of modernism's wallowing in the darkness, so to speak)

Association with consumerism (critique but also embracing it)

If you want to read a really good postmodern novel read *White Noise* by Don DeLillo (comes up in quizbowl)

Basis: assumption that language only has meaning in the contrast between words

Summarized: we can break down a lot into binaries (like Hegelian dialectics) but also need to move beyond this perhaps

Term origin: destruktio(n) (last slide)

Jacques Derrida

French postmodern and poststructural philosopher

Terms: deconstruction, différance, archi-writing, free play, trace, hauntology, invagination, phallogocentrism (what you think it is), metaphysics of presence (we want to find meaning, lol)

Major work: Of Grammatology

Other works: Speech and Phenomena, Writing and Difference, Margins of Philosophy

Resources for studying philosophy (ranked, ish)

1. Read the actual works

- a. Some are easier to get through than others
- b. Easier reads to start with: *Meditations on First Philosophy*

2. Read legitimate summaries/explanations

- a. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (plato.stanford.edu) is great
- b. Not overly-theoretical textbooks (this applies to a lot of other subjects as well); the one I have used extensively (from my HS philosophy class) is *Doing Philosophy* by Schick Jr. and Vaughn
- c. More pop-ish books: my favorite (and which got me personally into philosophy) is *Sophie's World* by Jostein Gaarder