

Phil 112: Second Midterm Assignment

Spring, 2023

Instructions

Due, as an attachment, via the “Assignments” tool on Canvas, by 11:55pm Tuesday, May 30, in MSWord format or in a format easily convertible to MSWord.

Answer any *one* of the questions listed below in 2–3 pages (double spaced).

These essay questions are not exactly questions to which there is one correct answer, or at least not questions to which I think I know the one correct answer. Please do your best to back up whatever response you want to make, based on the texts and, if they seem helpful, based on things I said in lecture. As usual, your answer should be your own work. (If you use any outside source — which I don’t really recommend — you must cite it.)

If you have any questions about what plagiarism is or how to avoid it, you can ask me, or consult the resources listed on the Library website.¹ For possible consequences of plagiarism, see the Academic Misconduct Policy.²

You can cite any of the assigned readings using just the title and page number. If you cite anything else, use any format you want, just please include enough information that I can find the source if necessary.

You can find answers to some commonly asked questions about my assignments and grading in my FAQ (<https://people.ucsc.edu/~abestone/courses/faq.html>).

Questions

1. Royce says that William Lenthall (the Speaker of the House of Commons) was asserting ancient parliamentary privileges, albeit in an original

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¹<https://guides.library.ucsc.edu/citesources/plagiarism>.

²https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_misconduct.

and precedent-setting way, when he made his famous reply to Charles I: “I have neither eye to see nor tongue to speak, etc.” As I mentioned in lecture, Hume (among others) would disagree with this as a historical matter: Hume claims that these “ancient privileges” were basically invented in the 17th century. If Hume is right, what difference might that make to Royce’s assessment of Lenthall? What about Addams — how might she think of what Lenthall is doing, and would Hume’s criticism have the same implications for her that it has for Royce? Or, if you prefer, you could discuss Royce and Dewey instead of Royce and Addams.

2. In “Of the Sorrow Songs,” Du Bois writes: “Actively we have woven ourselves with the very warp and woof of this nation, — we fought their battles, shared their sorrow, mingled our blood with theirs, and generation after generation have pleaded with a headstrong, careless people to despise not Justice, Mercy, and Truth, lest the nation be smitten with a curse” (p. 263). Why, according to Du Bois (see especially “Our Spiritual Strivings”), does this loyalty to America result in a *doubling* of the self, rather than in the kind of *unification* of the self that Royce expects from loyalty? How does Du Bois think that unification of the self might nevertheless be achieved? Is Du Bois’s project something Royce could understand and agree with?

3. Both de Cleyre and Dewey deplore the dominance of what Dewey calls “money culture,” and in particular blame it for suppressing or overcoming the traditional American ideals of equality and individual freedom. Are they criticizing exactly the same thing? Why do they propose such different solutions to the problem? Compare, for example, de Cleyre’s reservations about socialism — even *anarchist* socialism (“Anarchism,” p. 112) — to what Dewey says about the inevitability of socialism in ch. 6 of *Individualism Old and New*. Or, if you prefer, you could discuss de Cleyre and Du Bois instead of de Cleyre and Dewey (in which case you would want to look especially at what Du Bois says in “The Wings of Atalanta” and “The Ruling of Men”).

4. Du Bois famously says that “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line” (he says this in *The Souls of Black Folk*, but I think we can assume he still held something like that in 1920, at the time he published *Darkwater*, and that he would still have maintained something like that in 1930, at the time Dewey published *Individualism Old and New*). What does Dewey think is “the problem of the twentieth century”? What would Du Bois say that Dewey is missing, both about America and about

the world as a whole? You might want to think in particular about some of the things Du Bois says in “The Souls of White Folk.”

5. Both de Cleyre (in “The Dominant Idea”) and Du Bois (especially in “Of Beauty and Death”) seem to agree with Emerson that *nature* is an important part of the education of the American scholar. Do the three of them agree or disagree on why we need to learn something from nature, and/or on what kind of thing we should expect to learn?