

MIDTERM PAPER PROMPTS

The Midterm Paper is due Monday **October 17**. Paper **MUST** be submitted online via Blackboard (**NO EXCEPTIONS**). If there are any issues with submitting your paper, contact me by email well before the submission deadline. Papers must be at least **1000 words** (approximately 2 pages single-spaced), but **no more** than 1200 words (papers that go over the word count limit will be penalized as well as papers that do not meet the minimum word count requirement). Papers must include a reference list using MLA, APA, or Chicago/Turabian formatting. When in doubt on font and size, 12 point font and Times New Roman are safe bets.

1. In *The Akan Concept of a Person*, Kwame Gyeyke argues that mental states can affect physical states due to the fact that people are healed by traditional “medicine men”. This sort of dualism is an interactionist account where mental states can affect physical states and physical states can affect mental states. However, if mental states and physical states work together in cases of healing like Gyeyke proposes, is there a need for a dualist position? In other words, what is the purpose for claiming that the mind and body are separate entities if they interact in the way Gyeyke describes? Defend Gyeyke position OR show what is needed for Gyeyke to successfully claim that mind and body are different entities yet entities that affect one another.
2. In *The Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel outlines the struggle between lord and bondsman for mutual recognition. He proposes that both lord and bondsman are dependent on one another in order to be recognized as “self-consciousness”. Is mutual recognition possible for lord/bondsman (master/slave) relations? If so, what are the conditions necessary for mutual recognition?
3. Kant provides a proof for the law of causality in *The Critique of Pure Reason*. It turns out this proof looks more like a non sequitur (the conclusion does not follow from the premises). George Dicker suggests that we need some third aspect, an event C, for Kant’s proof to be valid. Does this addition resolve the problem? How could you reconstruct Kant’s proof to show that causality is a rule and not an assumption?
4. In *The Second Sex* Simone de Beauvoir embarks on an inquiry to determine what is woman. In class I gave four criticisms of de Beauvoir’s account. Refute one of the criticisms by defending her view, OR add your own criticism to one of her claims.
5. Social construction theorists claim that X is socially constructed if we can show that X is not inevitable. Come up with your own X and argue how it can or cannot be inevitable. If you think it is inevitable, argue how it can be viewed on an essentialist account. If you think it is not inevitable, can we have an eliminativist account of X?