

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

BA EXAMINATIONS 2006

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

PHILOSOPHY

Optional Subject (u): Philosophy of Psychology

Answer THREE questions. Avoid overlap in your answers.

1. Answer ONE of the following:
 - (a) How, if at all, does psychoanalytic explanation differ from that in commonsense psychology?
 - (b) Assess the claim that Freud's concept of the unconscious is incoherent.
 - (c) Does Freud provide a general explanation for a general tendency on our part to believe what we like, as opposed to what the evidence supports? If so, what is the tendency, and how well does he explain it?

2. EITHER (a) Is psychoanalytic theory unfalsifiable, inductively insupportable, or otherwise methodologically flawed?

OR (b) Critically assess the claim that Freud's views are supported by empirical research in ONE of the following areas:
 - (i) Attachment.
 - (ii) The neurophysiology of dreaming.
 - (iii) The psychology of ingroup/outgroup phenomena.

3. Explain how, if at all, ONE of the following concepts can be explanatorily related to empirical and/or clinical observation:
 - (a) The superego.
 - (b) The depressive position.
 - (c) Unconscious phantasy.
 - (d) Unconscious emotional conflict.

TURN OVER

4. Does seeing require conscious awareness?
5. Assess the grounds for claiming that there are two visual systems in the human brain, and explain the significance of this hypothesis for philosophical views of the nature of vision.
6. Does the claim that anger, fear, lust, attachment, and separation distress are realized by closely similar neurochemical circuitry in all mammals support the idea that these emotions are 'natural kinds in the mammalian brain'?
7. EITHER (a) Is autism the kind of phenomenon that can be explained in terms of a cognitive deficit in the ability to attribute mental states?

OR (b) What consequences, if any, does impairment in the understanding of others have for self-understanding?
8. Could developmental disorders like autism tell us anything about the communicative abilities of normal subjects?
9. EITHER (a) How, if at all, does the hypothesis that we have unconscious knowledge of grammar explain our ability to use language?

OR (b) Assess the 'poverty of the stimulus' argument for the claim that language learning requires the postulation of innate knowledge of universal grammar.
10. Are human cognitive capacities best understood as computational capacities?
11. 'In order to explain the systematicity of thought a connectionist must implement a language of thought.' Discuss.
12. EITHER (a) Can any naturalistic account provide an adequate explanation of psychological content?

OR (b) Is Millikan's account of psychological content flawed by her reliance on natural selection?
13. 'Concepts from evolutionary biology can have no useful explanatory role in psychology? Discuss this with reference to just ONE of the following:
 - (a) Adaptation
 - (b) Parental investment.
 - (c) Sexual selection.
 - (d) Group selection.

END OF PAPER