

Review Questions for the Third Test

1. What is the “philosophy of swine” objection to hedonism? (Make sure you explain why this is supposed to be a problem for hedonism.) How might a hedonist respond to that objection?
2. What is the trajectory-of-life objection to hedonism? (Make sure you explain why this is supposed to be a problem for hedonism.)
3. What is the objection to hedonism based on the idea of an experience machine? (Make sure you explain why this is supposed to be a problem for hedonism. In your description of the case, build in the idea that both people have the same amount of pleasure and pain.)
4. Derek Parfit has an objection to the preference satisfaction theory of well-being that involved a case where you get someone addicted to a drug where the drug doesn't have any noticeable effect on the person yet the person will experience overwhelming pain if he doesn't receive the drug. The person is then given a lifetime supply of the drug and satisfies his preference to avoid the pain by taking the drug each morning.
How is this example used as an objection to the preference satisfaction theory?
Explain how the preference satisfaction theorist could respond to this objection by invoking a distinction between deep and superficial preferences.
5. For this question, let's consider an addict that is different from the kind of addict that we considered in the last question. The addict that we will think about now is a more typical one, addicted to recreational drugs or alcohol. And let's further imagine that, currently, this addict has no desire at all to stop his habit.
It seems to us that we would be making this addict's life better if we were to intervene and get him to stop his habit. If that's true, though, it looks as though it is a problem for the preference satisfaction theory. Explain why.
How might a preference satisfaction theorist respond to that problem?
6. How do immoral preferences or preferences to perform trivial activities (e.g., counting blades of grass) present a problem for the preference satisfaction theory?
7. Wolf says that a meaningful life is “one that is actively and at least somewhat successfully engaged in a project (or projects) of positive value”. How might one object to this account of a meaningful life? (It might be helpful to illustrate your point with an example or a description of a certain type of life.)

8. Hurka's notion of "perfectionism" provides one way that we might think about Wolf's notion of "positive value". Hurka talks about three types of valuable human activity. Describe what they are and what it takes to exhibit them to high degrees of excellence.