MIDTERM (250 points)

Since this is a take-home exam, you are free to use whatever resources you may need (except me) to help you with your answers. This includes the readings, online notes, other online resources, conversations with other students, etc. While it is permissible to utilize these resources in preparing your answers, *the phrasing and writing of your answers must, ultimately, be done on your own (e.g., in “your own words”).* Question 1 is worth 50 points, and the others are worth 40 points each.

I prefer that you type your answers according to normal formatting standards (double-spaced, sane margins, etc.). Your exam is due *by the beginning of class* on Tuesday, October 11th.

1. Max Black’s character A claims:
   “The only way we can discover that two different things exist is by finding out that one has a quality not possessed by the other or else that one has a relational characteristic that the other hasn’t. If *both* are blue and hard and sweet and so on, and have the same shape and dimensions and are in the same relations to everything in the universe, it is logically impossible to tell them apart. The supposition that in such a case there might really be two things would be unverifiable *in principle.* Hence it would be meaningless.”
   (67)

   a) Can someone who *denies* the Identity of Indiscernibles agree with A that the only way to *discover* that there are two distinct things is to discover a property or relational difference between them? Explain.

   b) A goes on to say that if you disagree with him on this point, then you should be skeptical that you have only two hands. But is one who denies the Identity of Indiscernibles by allowing for Black’s 2-sphere world rationally committed to this skepticism? Explain.

   c) Explain how theorists with the following metaphysical commitments would differ over their analysis of Black’s 2-sphere world: i) a bundle theorist who
holds that objects are bundles of Aristotelian universals, ii) a bundle theorist who holds that objects are bundles of tropes, iii) a substance-attribute theorist who holds that objects consist of substrata instantiating Aristotelian universals.

2. Provide one of Kripke’s arguments for the conclusion that identity statements between names are necessarily true, if true at all. Which premise or inference in this argument would Gibbard reject, if any? Which premise or inference in this argument would Russell reject, if any?

Kripke claims that Hesperus is necessarily identical to Phosphorus. But, it took empirical investigation to discover this fact. It then seems that, in some sense, they could have turned out to be distinct (i.e., non-identical). How, if at all, is this compatible with their necessary identity? Explain.

3. According to Quine, what determines our ontological commitments—i.e., what really exists, by our lights? In answering this question don’t just use a slogan, but explain it.

What argument(s) does Carnap offer for the conclusion that external questions are meaningless? If there is no fact of the matter about what really exists, for Carnap, does this mean that the world is then somehow indeterminate (e.g., it is indeterminate whether or not there are numbers, etc.)? Explain why or why not.

4. For Russell, what is the meaning of a logically proper name? Is ‘Santa Claus’ a logically proper name? Why, or why not?

How does Russell analyze sentences like: Santa Claus is fat and jolly. Is that sentence true? False? Neither?

Connect your answers to the above questions to the following passage from Russell:
“So the individuals that there are in the world do not exist, or rather it is nonsense to say that they exist and nonsense to say that they do not exist. It is not a thing you can say when you have named them, but only when you have described them.” (35)
5. Here are two (different) Nominalistic property theories: i) properties are sets of actual things (Quine), and ii) properties are sets of actual and merely possible things (Lewis). Provide objections to each of these Nominalistic property theories. Make these objections general enough so that they can be endorsed by both the trope theorist and the believer in Aristotelian universals.

Now assume that Nominalism has been defeated and one must choose between accepting tropes or universals. What are the primary reasons or arguments in favor of each?

6. What are some of the specific reasons Quine and Lewis offer for privileging natural kinds (or properties)? How does their Nominalism allow them to privilege some kinds as natural (or does it)?

Quine and Putnam emphasize the role that contingent psychological facts about us play in our ability to pick out natural kinds. Explain why Quine asserts the following:

“To trust induction as a way of access to the truths of nature, on the other hand, is to suppose, more nearly, that our quality space matches that of the cosmos.” (237)