Philosophy 453A   November 29, 2008
Prof. S. M. Cohen

Take-Home Final Exam

Answer **five** (5) of the following seven questions. Write a 300-500 word **essay** (equal to about one or two typewritten pages) on each of the five you have chosen. Typewritten or computer-generated answers are required. Exams are due in my mailbox (Condon 511) by 5 pm on Monday, December 8. Please use the numbers of the questions as the numbers of your answers.

1. Kripke advances the counterintuitive claims that there are necessary truths that we know *a posteriori*, and that there are contingent truths that we know *a priori*. Give examples of each and explain Kripke's reasons for his characterization of them. In a related move, Kaplan claims that there are necessary truths that are not logically true, and logical truths that are contingent, not necessary. Give examples and explain, as above. What connection, if any, do you see between these moves by Kripke and Kaplan?

2. What is Putnam's theory of the meaning of natural kind terms, and in what sense are the meanings of those terms not "in the head"? How does Putnam's theory differ from Frege's? Discuss with reference to Putnam's Twin Earth example.

3. What is the descriptivist theory of the semantics of proper names? What are Kripke's objections to descriptivism? How does Searle try to rebut Kripke's objections? How effective is Searle's response?

4. Kaplan's theory of indexical expressions is based on the notions of *character*, *context*, *circumstance*, and *content*. He tells us that a character is a function from a context to a content, and a content is a function from a circumstance to an extension. What does Kaplan mean by this? (Be sure to make clear the distinction between context and circumstance.) Explain how the theory works, using as an example the sentence 'I was not here yesterday'.

5. Perry claims that indexicals are essential to the expression of the belief states in terms of which much of our behavior is explained. How does Perry argue that indexicals are ineliminable? In your answer, be sure to explain Perry's distinction between belief states and objects of belief.

6. Suppose that the following two sentences express two of Tom's beliefs:

    a. Venus is a planet

    b. The Morning Star is not a planet.

    Since Venus = the Morning Star, we might be tempted to say there is something, namely Venus, that Tom both believes to be a planet and believes not to be a planet:

    c. $\exists x$ (Tom believes that x is a planet $\wedge$ Tom believes that x is a not a planet).

    (c) seems to attribute contradictory beliefs to Tom. Does it? Discuss the positions of both Quine and Kaplan with respect to such "quantifying into" belief contexts. Explain how Quine's distinction between notional and relational belief applies to this example. How does Kaplan attempt to show that we can "quantify in," in the manner of (c), without convicting Tom of contradicting himself? That is, explain how Kaplan's version of (c), which makes use of the *representation* predicate **R** and the *belief* predicate **B**, enables us to say both that there is something (namely, Venus) about which Tom has these two beliefs and that the beliefs themselves do not logically contradict one another.

7. What does Grice mean by a "conversational implicature"? How does this differ from a conventional implicature? Be sure to distinguish among (a) saying that p without implicating anything, (b) conventionally implicating that q by saying that p, and (c) conversationally implicating that q by saying that p. Give some **original** examples and explain how, according to Grice, implicatures account for a speaker's ability to convey information that goes beyond what the speaker literally *says* (i.e., beyond the proposition expressed by the sentence that the speaker utters).