

Major fields of philosophy



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Epistemology – is the branch of philosophy that addresses knowledge, especially in regards to its method, validity, and scope. It is what helps distinguish between a justified belief or claim and an opinion. Logic – is the science of correct thinking. A classic definition is new and necessary reasoning. It's new because you didn't know the item before, and necessary because a correctly formulated syllogism has to be true if the bases are true. We took two axioms and made a new and necessary conclusion.

Metaphysics – Metaphysics is the philosophical study of the nature of our existence. Modern scientists consider this area as opposite to the scientific method. It is the collective processes that are beyond basic physics principles. It is also used as a word to describe using unseen forces to effect a seemingly unrelated event, person, area, etc. Moral philosophy – Moral philosophy is the area of philosophy concerned with theories of ethics, with how we ought to live our lives. It is divided into three areas: metaethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics.

Metaethics – is the most abstract area of moral philosophy. It deals with questions about the nature of morality, about what morality is and what moral language means. This section of the site contains material on cognitivism and noncognitivism, and on moral relativism. Normative Ethics – while metaethics treats the most abstract questions of moral philosophy, normative ethics is more concerned with providing a moral framework that can be used in order to work out what kinds of action are good and bad, right and wrong.

There are three main traditions in normative ethics: virtue ethics, deontology, and consequentialism. Applied Ethics – the most down to earth area of moral philosophy is applied ethics. This seeks to apply normative ethical theories to specific cases to tell us what is right and what is wrong. In this section, various thorny ethical issues are discussed: e. g. abortion, animal rights, and punishment.

Political philosophy – is the study of such topics as politics, liberty, justice, property, rights, law, and the enforcement of a legal code by authority: what they are, why (or even if) they are needed, what, if anything, makes a government legitimate, what rights and freedoms it should protect and why, what form it should take and why, what the law is, and what duties citizens owe to a legitimate government, if any, and when it may be legitimately overthrown, if ever. In a vernacular sense, the term “ political philosophy” often refers to a general view, or specific ethic, political belief or attitude, about politics that does not necessarily belong to the technical discipline of philosophy. In short, political philosophy is the activity, as with all philosophy, whereby the conceptual apparatus behind such concepts as aforementioned are analyzed, in their history, intent, evolution and the like. Aesthetics – deals with beauty, art, enjoyment, sensory-emotional values, perception, and matters of taste and sentiment.

]Philosophical method (or philosophical methodology) is the study of how to do philosophy. A common view among philosophers is that philosophy is distinguished by the ways that philosophers follow in addressing philosophical questions. Methodology process Systematic philosophy is a generic term that applies to philosophical methods and approaches that <https://assignbuster.com/major-fields-of-philosophy/>

attempt to provide a framework in reason that can explain all questions and problems related to human life.

Examples of systematic philosophers include Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza, Hegel, and Ayn Rand. In a meaningful sense, all of western philosophy from Plato to the modern schools of theoretical metaphysics. In many ways, any attempts to formulate a philosophical method that provides the ultimate constituents of reality, a metaphysics, can be considered systematic philosophy. In modern philosophy the reaction to systematic philosophy began with Kierkegaard and continued in various forms through analytic philosophy, existentialism, hermeneutics, and deconstructionism. 1] Some common features of the methods that philosophers follow (and discuss when discussing philosophical method) include: * Methodic Doubt – a systematic process of being skeptical about (or doubting) the truth of one's beliefs.

* Argument – provide an argument or several arguments supporting the solution. * Dialectic – present the solution and arguments for criticism by other philosophers, and help them judge their own. Doubt and the sense of wonder Plato said that “ philosophy begins in wonder” Theaetetus 155 d (tr. Benjamin Jowett), a view which is echoed by Aristotle in his Metaphysics 982b12: “ It as their wonder, astonishment, that first led men to philosophize and still leads them. ” Philosophizing may begin with some simple doubts about accepted beliefs. The initial impulse to philosophize may arise from suspicion, for example that we do not fully understand, and have not fully justified, even our most basic beliefs about the world. Formulate questions and problems Another element of philosophical method is to formulate

questions to be answered or problems to be solved. The working assumption is that the more clearly the question or problem is stated, the easier it is to identify critical issues.

A relatively small number of major philosophers prefer not to be quick, but to spend more time trying to get extremely clear on what the problem is all about. Enunciate a solution Another approach is to enunciate a theory, or to offer a definition or analysis, which constitutes an attempt to solve a philosophical problem. Sometimes a philosophical theory by itself can be stated quite briefly. All the supporting philosophical text is offered by way of hedging, explanation, and argument. Not all proposed solutions to philosophical problems consist of definitions or generalizations.

Sometimes what is called for is a certain sort of explanation — not a causal explanation, but an explanation for example of how two different views, which seem to be contrary to one another, can be held at the same time, consistently. One can call this a philosophical explanation. Justify the solution An argument is a set of statements, one of which (the conclusion), it is said or implied, follows from the others (the premises). One might think of arguments as bundles of reasons — often not just a list, but logically interconnected statements — followed by the claim they are reasons for.

The reasons are the premises, the claim they support is the conclusion; together they make an argument. Philosophical arguments and justifications are another important part of philosophical method. It is rare to find a philosopher, particularly in the Western philosophical tradition, who lacks many arguments. Philosophers are, or at least are expected to be, very good

at giving arguments. They constantly demand and offer arguments for different claims they make. This therefore indicates that philosophy is a quest for arguments.

A good argument — a clear, organized, and sound statement of reasons — may ultimately cure the original doubts that motivated us to take up philosophy. If one is willing to be satisfied without any good supporting reasons, then a Western philosophical approach may not be what one actually requires. Philosophical criticism In philosophy, which concerns the most fundamental aspects of the universe, the experts all disagree. It follows that another element of philosophical method, common in the work of nearly all philosophers, is philosophical criticism. It is this that makes much philosophizing a social endeavor.

Philosophers offer definitions and explanations in solution to problems; they argue for those solutions; and then other philosophers provide counter arguments, expecting to eventually come up with better solutions. This exchange and resulting revision of views is called dialectic. Dialectic (in one sense of this history-laden word) is simply philosophical conversation amongst people who do not always agree with each other about everything. One can do this sort of harsh criticism on one's own, but others can help greatly, if important assumptions are shared with the person offering the criticisms.

Others are able to think of criticisms from another perspective. Some philosophers and ordinary people dive right in and start trying to solve the problem. They immediately start giving arguments, pro and con, on different

sides of the issue. Doing philosophy is different from this. It is about questioning assumptions, digging for deeper understanding. Doing philosophy is about the journey, the process, as much as it is about the destination, the conclusion. Its method differs from other disciplines, in which the experts can agree about most of the fundamentals. Motivation

Method in philosophy is in some sense rooted in motivation, only by understanding why people take up philosophy can one properly understand what philosophy is. People often find themselves believing things that they do not understand. For example, about God, themselves, the natural world, human society, morality and human productions. Often, people fail to understand what it is they believe, and fail to understand the reasons they believe in what they do. Some people have questions about the meaning of their beliefs and questions about the justification (or rationality) of their beliefs.

A lack of these things shows a lack of understanding, and some dislike not having this understanding. Philosophy is often related to science because they are both trying to find answers about life and the universe and used logical reasoning as a tool in their quest for answers. Science is often based on fact, while philosophy is often based off of people's beliefs or ways of thinking. My understanding is that philosophers try to answer questions solely by logic and reasoning from first principles.

There is no attempt to establish the truth of first principles other than they seem self-evident to the particular philosopher that adopts them and do not lead to any logical contradictions. Scientists attempt to verify the truth of

their first principles by experimentation and empirical evidence. ART

Aesthetics looks at any art work and determines the success of the artist not only to do well at his/her craft; but more to the point, in doing so what are the metaphysics of the art; the epistemology behind it; does it include ethics and if so, what are they; does it include politics, and if so, what are they?

Every artist will tell you that art is a recreation of reality, or some part of it, and those parts are manipulated purposefully to depict in concrete details what begins as an abstraction in the artist's mind. Aesthetics is about whether the artist successfully made us "see or hear" what he/she was thinking; as well as "what was it" he/she was thinking? Is this a depiction of love, or of Marxism? There are times when it's very hard to tell what the artist was expressing. Aesthetics is a judgment on the piece of art, if not a moral judgment, then at least one of craftsmanship: If this is about love, how? It is not the special sciences that teach man to think; it is philosophy that lays down the epistemological criteria of all special sciences. "Science was born as a result and consequence of philosophy; it cannot survive without a philosophical (particularly epistemological) base. If philosophy perishes, science will be next to go." Aristotle invented the sciences of observational biology while on the Isle of Lesbos, and at the same time invented the science of taxonomy so that he could classify each of the flora and fauna he found. He also invented psychology and metaphysics.

All of those, and more, require philosophy: metaphysics is the "First Science", the "Queen of Science", the "Science of Sciences" and it has been called many more things. But all sciences require epistemology. Math itself is a form of epistemology. Philosophers often debate whether or not

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God exists in their works. According to the Aristotle quotation in the Pre-Socratics section, philosophy begins with wonder. Even though philosophy began because people started to doubt the existence of God, it has now evolved. Many philosophers started trying to find ways to prove or to disprove the existence of God based on their ideas.

Anselm, Guanilo, Maimonides, Aquinas, and Descartes all attempt to prove the existence of God using logic and rationalism. There are many arguments that philosophers use to justify the existence of God. It is very possible that these philosophers aren't religious. They believe in God because they don't believe or don't feel like they can prove that the earth came into existence in any other way. Belief in God is in essence a religious idea and it will always be. The existence of God cannot be proven because it is based on faith and many philosophers have none.

People seek to prove the existence of God more many reasons. The main reason is because people fear death. They want to be assured that they will live forever. According to the Bible, God promises His believers everlasting life. People also need something that lives forever to assure their survival, and God is that something that lives forever. Many people do not have faith, so they use philosophy to prove the existence of God. Faith is the essence of God. God's existence is faith. God's existence cannot be proven or disproved. Faith is defined as: " Belief that does not rest on logical proof or material evidence.

There is no logical evidence that God exists, and there is no logical evidence that He does not. Believing in God takes faith. It takes trust, understanding,

and love. God's existence is a topic that has been debated since the beginning of time. There are no definite answers and there never will be. When I think about faith in God, I am reminded of two Bible stories. I am first reminded of Jesus' crucifixion, death, and resurrection. There is nothing logical about that. No ordinary person would have the power to resurrect themselves. This Bible story shows that Jesus is an extraordinary being.

He is God and He was human. There will never be another being like Jesus ever again. I am also reminded of the Bible story where Jesus feeds a hungry crowd of people with a small amount of fish and bread. He created enough food for those people. This is yet another story that illustrates what an extraordinary being that God is. Faith is also extraordinary. Faith can also be defined as belief in something that cannot be seen or felt by the senses. Philosophy uses the senses and faith does not. Philosophy is not extraordinary and cannot prove the existence of an extraordinary being.

Anselm believed that not believing in the existence of God is irrational. He had many arguments to support this claim. He said that everyone has an idea of God even people that do not believe in Him because not believing in God is an idea. Someone that believes in God could say why they believe in God and list His attributes and that those thoughts are ideas as well.

Anselm also makes the statement that it is possible to say that there is no God but that is just a verbal trick. Anselm likely means that if a person says that they do not believe in the existence of God they are likely saying that just to cast doubt on the existence of God.

Anselm then says that God is a being which nothing greater can be conceived. God, if He exists, is all knowing and all powerful meaning that nothing is greater than He is and He is therefore the Supreme Being.

Anselm then says that if God is conceived as non existing then God is not a being in which nothing greater can be conceived. Anselm goes on to say that if God does not exist then He is not a being in which nothing greater can be conceived and that fact contradicts the fact that everyone has an idea of God so therefore God exists.

Anselm attempted to prove the existence of God using these points, but I don't believe that this argument is at all convincing, because a non believer could just say that he has an idea that God does not exist and because of that idea he can say that there is no being in which nothing greater can be conceived. Someone who does not believe in God may have a different theory of how the earth came about that does not include a Supreme Being. Believing in God is also irrational. There is nothing logical about God. The theory of evolution is much more rational and logical.

Anselm attempts to prove the existence of God using logic and rationality, but it cannot be done because God is not logical or rational. God is faith. Faith is not a sense. Philosophy uses the senses so it cannot be used to prove the existence of God. Gaunilo, although he believed in God, had an opposition to Anselm's argument. He said that conceiving does not necessarily indicate that God exists because people can have an idea that there is no supreme being. Gaunilo believes that people that believe in God must have faith in Him and that God's existence can not be proven or disproved by Anselm.

Guanilo perhaps was religious and he obviously had faith. He is the only philosopher that we have studied that actually acknowledges that Faith is the essence of belief in God. Guanilo was not an average philosopher because he used faith to prove the existence of God. Maimonides also believes that God exists, but he attempts to prove it by negation or stating what God is not. In his writing “ Guide for the Perplexed,” he gives his readers an example of why the existence of God must be proven by negation. He says that if a person was looking at an object from a great distance they would not be able to see it clearly.

If they asked someone about it, they could be told that the object is a living being. From that a person could gather that the thing was an object and not a human, plant, or animal. The only thing that people know about God if He exists is that God is a living being. So therefore, all we know is that He is a being because He is not an object. According to Maimonides, only God’s existence and not His essence or attributes can be proven. All of His attributes such that He is, for example kind, loving, and good are attributes and are left up to chance and cannot be proven.

Therefore, according to Maimonides, the only things humanity knows about God are known by negation. God cannot really be defined in human language because He is not a human being. Therefore, God cannot be proven because His existence cannot be proven by what He is. People must first be able to say what something is before they can say what it is not. The attributes that humans give God cannot be validated because they are spoken in human language, and God is not human. Philosophy is spoken

about in human language. God cannot be defined in human language much less can His existence be proven by humanity.