

***Take Home Exam 4:***  
***Kripke's Naming and Necessity***

Due by 5pm on Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008. You may either drop the exam in my department mailbox in room 352 Bartlett during business hours, or you may e-mail it to me (klement@philos.umass.edu) at any time prior to 5pm on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

From the five options listed below, you are to choose **ONE**, and write a 4-5 page essay explaining Kripke's philosophical position, along with your assessment and reaction to it. Although you can always discuss the issues from class with your classmates, you are expected to work *on your own* on the exam.

1) Explain the efforts Kripke makes to distinguish *necessary truths* from those known *a priori*, and give some examples he uses to illustrate the difference. Explain Kripke's understanding of necessity in terms of possible worlds. Why does Kripke think that whether or not a certain characteristic of a person or thing is necessary is not an epistemological question? Explain how he thinks other philosophers have been misled by taking the problem of "trans-world identification" too seriously. Do you agree with Kripke on these points? Why or why not?

2) Explain what Kripke means when he claims that proper names are "rigid designators". How does he come to this conclusion? Compare his view with that of Mill, and briefly contrast it with the views of Frege and Russell. Explain his theory of how proper names work in terms of "initial baptisms" and "chains of communication". Do you agree with Kripke? Why or why not?

3) Describe the "cluster theory of names" and list and explain its basic principles (as Kripke interprets it). What problems with earlier "description theories" was it designed to solve? How does Kripke attack the cluster theory? Do you think that Kripke's arguments against it are successful? Why or why not?

4) Does Kripke think that any properties or characteristics that a person has are *necessary*? If so, which ones, and why? Explain the similar conclusions he reaches about *natural kinds*: e.g., does Kripke think that it is necessary that water and/or gold have the chemical structures they have? What does Kripke mean by "essence", and does he believe we can know the essence of something *a priori* (and why or why not)? Do you agree with Kripke on these points? Explain your answer.

5) What is an identity statement, and why does Kripke believe that if identity statements formed using proper names and/or natural kind terms are true, then they are always *necessarily* true? Why have other philosophers thought differently, and, according to Kripke, what mislead them? What conclusions does Kripke draw from this for the "mind-body identity thesis" in the philosophy of mind? Do you agree? Why or why not?