The Philosophical Survey A PhilPapers project

Instructions

This is a survey of professional philosophers, concerning their views on some central philosophical questions. The survey has twenty main questions and some optional background questions. It should take only a few minutes to complete. The twenty questions will be asked to you one at a time, in no particular order. If you do not complete the survey immediately, we will remember your answers, and you can return to the survey later.

The questions are phrased in a minimal way, in part because further clarification would usually be tendentious and would call for still further clarification in turn. Of course any philosopher can find ambiguity or other problems in such a question, so a number of "other" options are available. Nevertheless, we strongly encourage you to adopt the most natural interpretation of each question and to report an acceptance or a leaning toward one side or the other wherever possible.

Use of information

Your answers will be available to the small PhilPapers research team, and to a limited number of other researchers with whom we may share our data (with names stripped out) in the future. We will use the information you provide to calculate statistics concerning the body of answers to the survey as a whole. We may publicly release such statistics. At the end of the survey we will ask for your consent to use your answers in this way. We will also give you the option of allowing your answers to be publicly revealed by associating them with your PhilPapers profile, if you have one.

Important: Your answers will not count toward our statistics unless you consent to this explictly at the end of the survey on the Background & Consent page.

For further information regarding the purpose and methodology of the survey and regarding privacy issues, see our information page (opens in new window).

Identity Check

Name: David Bourget (Australian National University, University of London)

Proceed to the survey

The Philosophical Survey A PhilPapers project

Information Page

1. **Who is conducting this survey?**

   The survey is being run by the co-directors of PhilPapers, David Bourget and David Chalmers. Kelvin McQueen has served as a research assistant.

2. **Why are you conducting the survey?**

   We are conducting the survey as an information-gathering exercise concerning the distribution of philosophical views within the philosophical profession. We hope to discover interesting facts about the distribution of these views.

   We are not performing a scientific study that is intended to test certain specific antecedent hypotheses. We also do not regard the survey as a direct contribution to first-order philosophy. However, it is possible that the data we are gathering may be used as inputs for scientific or philosophical work in the future, either by us or by others.

3. **What is the target population of the survey?**

   The target population of the official survey is 1978 faculty members in 96 leading departments of philosophy worldwide. We obtained information about these faculty members using a combination of lists in the Philosophical Gourmet Report and department websites. We have sent email requests to these faculty members. Our focus is especially on issues that are central within analytic philosophy.

   There is also an unofficial survey which anyone can take. We have separated this from the main survey as the target population is much less well-controlled. In reporting results, our main focus will be on the official survey, but we will also report some results from the unofficial survey.

4. **How did you come up with the list of departments?**

   We included every department listed in the 2008 Philosophical Gourmet Report with a rating of 1.9 or above. This includes 60 US departments, 18 UK departments, 7 Canadian departments, and 5 Australasian departments. We added six leading departments in Europe outside the UK, by asking a number of leading European analytic philosophers for their judgments about the leading departments for analytic philosophy in Europe (excluding the UK but including Ireland, Israel, Russia, and Turkey) and tabulating the results. (This should not be regarded as any sort of definitive list of top European departments.)

5. **How did you come up with the questions?**

   We sought a list of simple questions that (i) could be phrased as a (usally binary) choice between views, (ii) would be widely understood within the profession, (iii) are at the center of widespread debate, and (iv) represent many different areas of analytic philosophy. The two of us came up with an initial list. Feedback from beta testing by around 50 professional philosophers led to various changes and to the final list.

   Of course many important issues and questions are not represented. We sought a relatively short list in order to maximize response for this initial survey. Many important issues were excluded because they are hard to phrase in the relevant form or because they are of relatively specialized interest. We hope to explore further questions in future surveys.

6. **How do you plan to use the results?**

   We will calculate various statistics concerning the distribution of answers in the survey population. For example, we will report the percentages who give each answer to the twenty main questions. We will also investigate correlations between answers to each question, and perform a factor analysis. We will examine the interactions between answers to the main questions and background information such as age, nationality, institutional location, philosophical tradition, and area of specialization.

7. **Where will you make the results available?**

We will publish results from the survey on the PhilPapers website and on Chalmers' weblog. We will also send email to all respondents with results of the survey, or with a link to results. At the moment we do not have concrete plans to publish the results in journals or books, but it is possible that we will do so in the future.

8. **Who has access to my information?**

The PhilPapers research team (currently Bourget, Chalmers, and McQueen) has access to a database consisting of all of answers by all subjects. Your name is not included in this database. However, in principle we have access to information that could identify you, either through a separate database that includes names and email addresses (which are necessary for contact purposes) or through your answers to the background questions.

We may share the main database with a limited number of researchers at some point in the future. No information about names or email addresses will be included in this database.

At the end of the survey, we will give you the option of making your answers public, by attaching them to a PhilPapers profile. If you do not choose to make your answers public in this way, then your answers will be publicly used only to generate general statistics about the distribution of answers in the population of survey respondents.

9. **What are the risks of taking this survey?**

If you make your answers public, then your views on numerous key philosophical questions will be available to anyone. The questions include potentially sensitive issues concerning religion and political philosophy, and all the items concern issues that are controversial within the profession. It is possible that knowledge of your answers will affect others' opinions of you and their actions toward you.

To minimize this risk, we have made public disclosure of answers optional, and we have also allowed respondents to skip any question that they choose not to answer for any reason.

Even if you choose not to make your answers public, it is possible that general statistics will reveal information about individual answers. For example, a statistic might say that 100% of respondents in area X gave response Y, or that 0% of respondents at institution X gave response Y. We will not publicly release a list of survey respondents, but informed observers may be able to make inferences about individuals in some cases.

To minimize this risk, we allow you to skip any question for which this possibility raises a significant concern. We will also be cautious about reporting overly specific results.

10. **Do you have approval from an institutional review board?**

We are currently seeking approval from the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns, please feel free to contact the ANU Human Ethics Office at human.ethics.officer@anu.edu.au or at +61 2 6125 7945.

The Philosophical Survey A PhilPapers project

Question

Mind: anti-physicalism or physicalism?

◯ Accept: anti-physicalism

◯ Lean toward: anti-physicalism

◯ Accept: physicalism

◯ Lean toward: physicalism

◯ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Mental content: externalism or internalism?

◯ Accept: externalism

◯ Lean toward: externalism

◯ Accept: internalism

◯ Lean toward: internalism

◯ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Language: Russellianism or Fregeanism?

◯ Accept: Russellianism

◯ Lean toward: Russellianism

◯ Accept: Fregeanism

◯ Lean toward: Fregeanism

◯ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Analytic-synthetic distinction: yes or no?

◯ Accept: yes

◯ Lean toward: yes

◯ Accept: no

◯ Lean toward: no

◯ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Time: B-theory or A-theory?

◯ Accept: B-theory

◯ Lean toward: B-theory

◯ Accept: A-theory

◯ Lean toward: A-theory

◯ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Laws of nature: Humeanism or non-Humeanism?

◯ Accept: Humeanism

◯ Lean toward: Humeanism

◯ Accept: non-Humeanism

◯ Lean toward: non-Humeanism

◯ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Justification: externalism or internalism?

○ Accept: externalism

○ Lean toward: externalism

○ Accept: internalism

○ Lean toward: internalism

○ Other

[(Click to select an option)   ▼]

Comment (optional):

Question

Free will: incompatibilism or compatibilism?

○ Accept: incompatibilism

○ Lean toward: incompatibilism

○ Accept: compatibilism

○ Lean toward: compatibilism

○ Other

[(Click to select an option)   ▼]

Comment (optional):

Question

God: theism or atheism?

○ Accept: theism

○ Lean toward: theism

○ Accept: atheism

○ Lean toward: atheism

○ Other

[(Click to select an option)   ▼]

Comment (optional):

Question

Meta-ethics: moral realism or moral anti-realism?

○ Accept: moral realism

○ Lean toward: moral realism

○ Accept: moral anti-realism

○ Lean toward: moral anti-realism

○ Other
(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Moral judgment: externalism or internalism?

○ Accept: externalism

○ Lean toward: externalism

○ Accept: internalism

○ Lean toward: internalism

○ Other
(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Normative ethics: consequentialism, deontology or virtue ethics?

○ Accept: consequentialism

○ Lean toward: consequentialism

○ Accept: deontology

○ Lean toward: deontology

○ Accept: virtue ethics

○ Lean toward: virtue ethics

○ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Politics: libertarianism or egalitarianism?

○ Accept: libertarianism

○ Lean toward: libertarianism

○ Accept: egalitarianism

○ Lean toward: egalitarianism

○ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Science: scientific anti-realism or scientific realism?

○ Accept: scientific anti-realism

○ Lean toward: scientific anti-realism

○ Accept: scientific realism

○ Lean toward: scientific realism

○ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Abstract objects: nominalism or Platonism?

○ Accept: nominalism

○ Lean toward: nominalism

○ Accept: Platonism

○ Lean toward: Platonism

○ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Knowledge: empiricism or rationalism?

○ Accept: empiricism

○ Lean toward: empiricism

○ Accept: rationalism

○ Lean toward: rationalism

○ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Metaphilosophy: naturalism or non-naturalism?

○ Accept: naturalism

○ Lean toward: naturalism

○ Accept: non-naturalism

○ Lean toward: non-naturalism

○ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Newcomb's problem: two boxes or one box?

○ Accept: two boxes

○ Lean toward: two boxes

○ Accept: one box

○ Lean toward: one box

○ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Trolley problem (five straight ahead, one on side track, turn requires switching): straight or turn?

○ Accept: straight

○ Lean toward: straight

○ Accept: turn

○ Lean toward: turn

○ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

Question

Personal identity: physical view or psychological view?

○ Accept: physical view

○ Lean toward: physical view

○ Accept: psychological view

○ Lean toward: psychological view

○ Other

(Click to select an option) ▼

Comment (optional):

JISC Sponsored by the Joint Information Systems Committee as part of the
Information Environment Programme

The **Philosophical Survey** **A PhilPapers** project

Background & Consent

For your answers to the survey to count at all, you must give your consent in section D below.

This page contains a few background questions we would like you to answer to enable a deeper analysis of survey results. You don't have to answer the questions in section A, B and C, but we would appreciate it if you did. If you would prefer to skip a question, just leave the answer blank. None of the information you provide here will be publicly associated with your name without your permission.

A. Research profile

Areas of specialization (in order):

| Philosophy of Mind ▼ | ▬ |

[Add another area]

With which philosophical tradition do you identify (primarily)?

| Select a tradition ▼ |

With which nonliving philosophers X would you describe yourself or your work as X-ian, or the equivalent? List in order, and choose "other" to specify a new option.

| Select a philosopher ▼ |
| Select a philosopher ▼ |

[Add another philosopher]

B. Affiliations

☐ I hold a doctorate in philosophy.

Primary affiliation:

Academic institution:
You may enter either a university or college name. No abbreviations.

| Australian National University |

Can't find your institution?

Discipline: | Philosophy |

Your primary role: | Graduate student ▼ |

Secondary affiliation (if applicable):

Academic institution: | University of London |

You may enter
either a university   Can't find your institution?
or college name.
No abbreviations.

Discipline: Philosophy

Your primary   Postdoc   ▼
role:

C. Personal background

Year of birth: 19 [   ]

Nationality: Country…   ▼

Gender: …   ▼

D. Confidentiality

Your answers will be available to our small research team, and to a limited number of other researchers with whom we may share our data (with names stripped out) in the future. We will use the information you provide to calculate statistics concerning the body of answers to the survey as a whole. We may publicly release such statistics. Note that it is possible that in some cases, general statistics may be used to infer information about individual answers (e.g., in cases where 100% of respondents at institution X hold position Y). For more information on confidentiality, please see our information page (opens in new window).

⦿ **I consent** to the use of the information I have provided in the ways specified above.

○ **I do not consent** to the use of the information I have provided in the ways specified above. (**Note: in this case we will discard all your answers**)

You also have the option of allowing your name, your twenty main answers, your research profile, and your affiliations (but not your personal background) to be publicly revealed by associating them with your PhilPapers profile, if you have one, or if you come to have one in the future. We encourage you to allow this, but the decision is up to you. You will be able to remove this information from PhilPapers at any time if you choose to. (Note that your main answers will not appear before the survey's close, and probably even later.)

(PhilPapers is a directory of online research in philosophy, including an organized index which currently comprises 204,042 articles and books. There are currently 8,694 registered users with profiles, including 2,424 professional philosophers and 2,067 graduate students in philosophy.)

⦿ **I consent** to this information being publicly available through PhilPapers (**optional**).

○ **I do not consent** to this information being publicly available through PhilPapers.

[**Submit**]   Note: After you press "submit", your answers to the survey will be final.

The Philosophical Survey **A PhilPapers project**

You have completed the survey. Thanks!

We will let you know the survey results as soon as possible once it is over. The survey ends on November 18th.

If you have any suggestions regarding the survey, please enter them below.

Do you have any ideas for hypotheses to test with the survey's data?

Do you have any questions to suggest for future surveys?

Any other comments or suggestions?

Submit

Home | Blog | New items | Categories | Journals | Forums | The Categorization Project | About PhilPapers | Contact us

JISC Sponsored by the Joint Information Systems Committee as part of the Information Environment Programme