

Metaphysics: Problem set 7

November 6th

due date: November 11th

Use your own words. No quotation, no paraphrase.

Please type and staple your answers.

Answer question 1 and any TWO of questions 2, 3 and 4.

1. State the conditions under which an eternalist indexicalist (a.k.a. “B-theorist”) would take an utterance of each of the following sentences at a time t to be true (the first two sentences are in English, the second two are in a hybrid of English and the notation of tense logic).

(i) There will always be living beings.

(ii) There have been exactly two world wars.

(iii) WAS(For some x , x is a frog and WILL (x is a prince))

(iv) It is not the case that WAS (it is not the case that WILL (George W. Bush is president))

2. ‘According to eternalism, the future is already there, and the past is still just as real as it ever was. Nothing ever genuinely comes into existence, goes out of existence, or changes in any way: the universe is a static, unchanging, four-dimensional block.’ Explain why (most) eternalists would reject this characterisation of their view. Are they right, or is there some sense in which the characterisation remains appropriate?

3. Assess the following argument against presentism (c.f. Prior, ‘Changes in Events and Changes in Things’, pp. 11–14):

Queen Anne does not exist now.

Therefore, at least one thing does not exist now.

4. Choose any one of the five “Hybrid” views considered by Sider, pp. 45–52. Explain and evaluate the view in question, making reference when appropriate to Sider’s arguments.