FINAL EXAMINATION

Due by 5:00 PM on Friday, June 14

ANSWER ALL 5 QUESTIONS. ALL QUESTIONS HAVE EQUAL VALUE.

1. Consider the possible worlds theories of (i) Lewis and (ii) either Adams or Stalnaker (choose one). Articulate the basic characteristics of Lewis' conception; the criticism of Adams (Stalnaker) and how his conception is meant to be free of the alleged flaws. Now step back: could you see a possible defense of Lewis? Do you see the Adams (Stalnaker) critique as definitive? Argue your position.

2. Consider the following three statements: (i) Whatever has the surface features of a tiger is a tiger. (ii) Whatever gives us the sensation of water is water. (iii) Whatever gives us the sensation of pain is pain. Explain Kripke’s view about the modal status of (i)-(iii). Next, Kripke attends to the question of imaginability of (i)-(iii). What is his stand? How does he motivate the non-uniform view he takes? Finally, what is your own position—do you think Kripke’s views on the modal status and imaginability status of (i)-(iii) are justified or would you classify the cases differently?

3. Go back to what we called Quine’s criticism of de re modality (e.g. as presented by Kripke in pp. 39-49). Kripke believes de re modalities are coherent and many such claims are true. We have discussed, in Lecture I, pp. 39-49, in Lecture III, pp. 140-44, and in pp. 16-20 (the dice), the many ways Kripke defends de re modalities. Explain what Kripke takes his dice example to show. Do you think it would remove Quine’s doubts? Of all the items we discussed in *N&N*, what do you find as Kripke’s most convincing defense of de re modality? Lay it out. Does it answer Quine’s worries?

4. Consider this trio of notions: De Re Possibility (for Nixon); Possible worlds (involving Nixon); Imagination (of Nixon). Explain how you see Kripke connecting them. Next, express your own opinion: what is the role of possible worlds and the imagination in the understanding of de re possibility.
5. Consider pp. 112-14 in lecture III. Explain in general terms what is meant by the “the necessity of origin thesis.” What two items does the necessity connect? Next, discuss a couple of examples. Finally, recall question 4 above and its separation of possible worlds, the imagination and de re modal possibility claims. Which vocabulary (framework) offers the best set up in which to defend (on behalf of Kripke) the necessity of origin? Try to give such a defense.