

## Homework Assignment #3

Please put your name on the back of the last page of your assignment (so I can grade blindly). Put all arguments in your own words, trying to avoid or at least explain any technical terms as much as possible. All work is to be typed (or computer printed) with double-spacing, 1" margins, and 12 point font (if possible). Try to answer the questions without exceeding the specified length; answers that are much longer will be penalized!

1. Churchland argues for eliminative materialism in “Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes”. Set out as clearly as possible what eliminative materialism *is*. That is, don’t lay out the reasons he presents in favor of the view, but just clarify what the view is. As always, try to put this in words a non-philosopher would understand. (1/3 page)

2. Fodor and Pylyshyn defend the claim that we think using a ‘language of thought’. That is, they think that there are things inside our heads (patterns of neuron firings? arrangements of neurons?) that are atomic symbols that represent things in the world and these different atomic symbols can be combined in different ways to build complex symbols. Moreover, what a complex symbol represents is a function of what the atomic symbols it’s made out of represent and the way in which they’re combined to build up the complex symbol (just like what the English sentence “Tim likes Sally” means is a function of what the English words ‘Tim’, ‘likes’, and ‘Sally’ mean and the fact that ‘Tim’ occurs before ‘likes’ which occurs before ‘Sally’). They give a few arguments for this conclusion, the first being an argument from productivity and the second being an argument from ‘systematicity’. Summarize their argument from the systematicity of thought (not the systematicity of English or the systematicity of our understanding of English, but the systematicity of *thought*). (1/2 page)

3. Clark and Chalmers say that because we use certain tools to aid our cognition, then if the circumstances are right, our cognitive processes, and even our minds, extend beyond our heads. But we also use tools for vision (viz., glasses). Does this mean that our visual processes (rather than our cognitive processes) and even our eyes are extended? And we use tools for walking and running

(prosthetics, shoes). Does this mean our ambulatory processes and even our legs are extended? That is, if we should say that the mind is extended in virtue of our cognitive processes involving external objects, should we also say that our eyes or legs are extended in virtue of our seeing or walking involving external objects? If so, does this mean we should change our concept of what a person is? If not, are these cases somehow different than cases in which our minds are extended? (There's no right answer here, so feel free to take the argument in whichever direction you wish. Extend C&C's argument, deny it, show why my extension won't work — whatever you want. You don't need to summarize their argument, but do engage in the reasons C&C give! I'm looking to see if you understand their position well and to see what original ideas you have about it. *Above all, I'm looking for arguments, i.e. for reasons that you can give to support some claim.*) (1 page)

4. Summarize Nagel's argument. (1/2 page)