

Beginning-of-Term Questionnaire

The purpose of this assignment is to have you reflect on your current views on our topics for this term, and to enable me to learn about your views. Please answer the following questions totally honestly. You don't have to put your name on it. You don't need to be certain of any of your answers; just go with what you are inclined to think after some reflection.

To start your quiz scores off on the right foot, simply filling out and turning in this questionnaire will earn you a perfect score (5 points) as your first quiz grade.

QUESTION 1: *What is your view about the relationship between God and morality?* (circle the one that most accurately describes your view)

- (a) I believe in God, and I believe that morality must be based in God; so if God didn't exist, nothing would really be right or wrong.
- (b) I believe in God, but I don't believe that morality must be based in God; if God didn't exist, there would still be right and wrong ways to treat each other.
- (c) I don't believe in God, but I believe that morality must be based in God; thus, I don't believe in morality (that is, I don't believe that anything we do is really ever right or wrong; it's just what we do).
- (d) I don't believe in God, but I don't believe that morality must be based in God; I am an atheist or an agnostic who believes in morality.

If you like, briefly explain why you think this view is right:

QUESTION 2: *In your view, when some act is morally wrong, will the explanation for why the act is wrong always ultimately appeal to the beliefs of the society in which the act was performed, or to its social conventions, or its cultural norms, or the like?*

- (a) Yes. Right and wrong is, at bottom, a cultural artifact or a social construction. For an act to be wrong is just for it to violate the customs of the society in which it was performed.
- (b) No. When some act is wrong, the explanation for why it is wrong does not always appeal to anything about the beliefs or customs of the society in which it was performed (though sometimes it might). When some act is wrong, this often has nothing to do with the beliefs or conventions of the society in which it was performed; it has to do with other features of the act.

If you like, briefly explain why you believe this:

QUESTION 3: *Do you think it could ever be right to torture and kill an innocent person for the greater good – say if the consequences of not doing so were horrible enough?*

- (a) Yes, in very extreme circumstances this could be the right thing to do.
- (b) No, it could *never* be right to deliberately do this.

QUESTION 4: *Does the United States government have an obligation to provide some kind of benefit to currently living African-Americans as a form of compensation or reparations for the wrongful harms inflicted by slavery and its aftermath?*

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

My main reason for thinking this is

QUESTION 5: *I am inclined to think that buying and eating meat (meat that was bought in the normal way, from a restaurant or a regular grocery store) is probably*

- (a) morally wrong
- (b) morally acceptable.

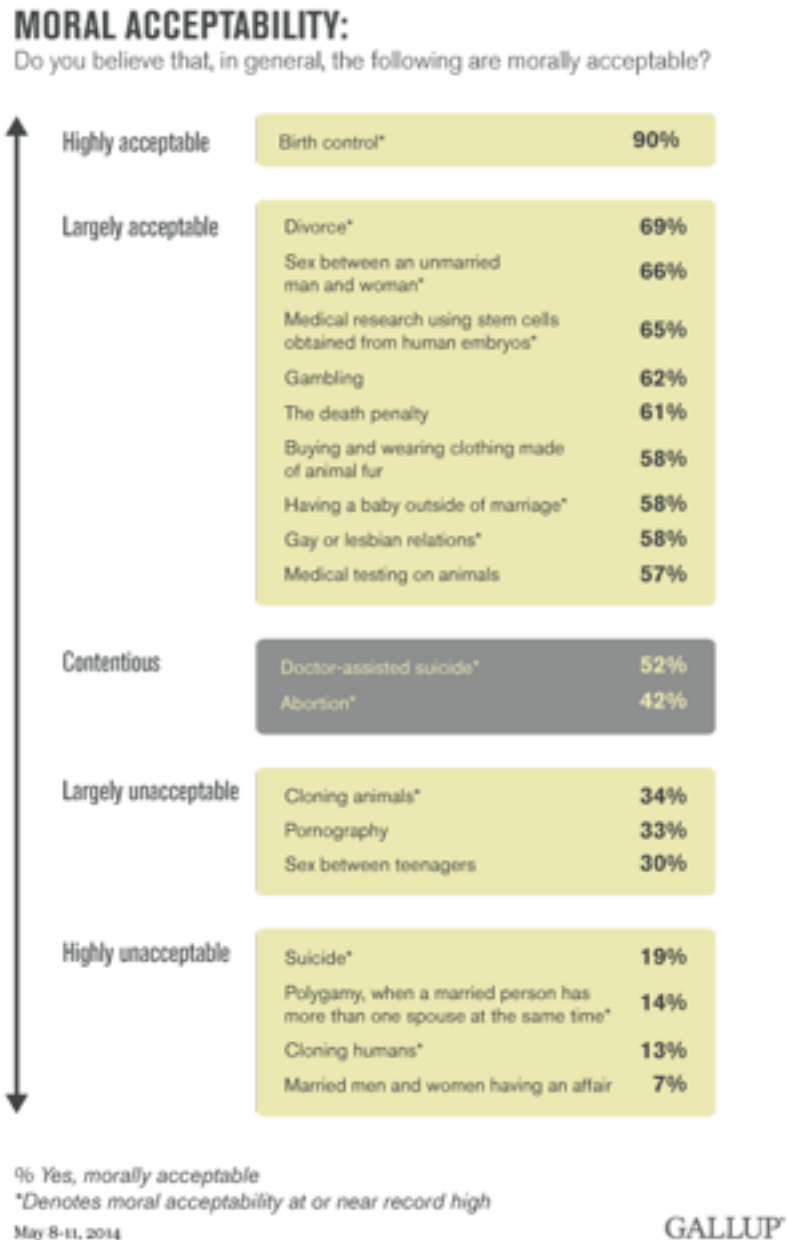
My main reason for thinking this is

QUESTION 6: *I'm inclined to think that typical abortions (i.e., ones not done in cases of rape or to save the life of the woman) are*

- (a) seriously wrong, similar to the murder of an innocent adult.
- (b) wrong, though not as wrong as the murder of an innocent adult.
- (c) generally morally acceptable, but still a morally serious decision, and requiring a good justification.
- (d) morally innocuous, requiring no justification, sort of like getting a haircut.

My main reason for thinking this is

QUESTION 7: Here are the results of a recent Gallup Poll of Americans:



Name an issue from the above that you think most Americans are mistaken about (you can say 'none' if that is your view):

Name one that you think most Americans are right about:

Name one that you're not sure whether most Americans are right about:

QUESTION 8: *Is it at least conceivable that one culture and its practices could be morally better than another culture and its practices?*

(a) Yes

(b) No

*If 'Yes', describe two possible cultures, one of which is morally better than the other.
If 'No', explain why this is not possible.*