

Quiz 14

- Clifford, "The Ethics of Belief"
 - James, "The Will to Believe"
 - Williams, "Deciding to Believe"
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1. For Williams, one cannot:

- a. place oneself in a position where one comes to believe that p .
- b. want to believe that p , while believing that p .
- c. falsely believe that p .
- d. come to believe that p because one wants to.

2. The fundamental point of disagreement between Clifford and James is whether it is ever right or proper:

- a. to believe with insufficient evidence.
- b. to have faith where evidence is insufficient.
- c. to doubt in the face of overwhelmingly positive evidence.
- d. to believe in science with insufficient evidence.

3. James holds that it is proper to "will to believe" when the issue (or option) is:

- a. living, avoidable, momentous and the aim of avoiding error is primary.
- b. living, forced, momentous, and the aim of avoiding error is primary.
- c. dead, forced, momentous, and the aim of gaining truth is primary.
- d. living, forced, momentous, and the aim of gaining truth is primary.

4. If belief aims at truth, then Williams argues you cannot believe anything:

- a. false.
- b. while believing it is improbable.
- c. without that belief being based on evidence.
- d. while believing that you chose to believe it.

5. James takes agnosticism to be:

- a. indefensible.
- b. practically equivalent to atheism.
- c. a poor option.
- d. preferable to outright disbelief in god.

6. Which of the following is NOT, for James, a condition on its being rational to will to believe? The putative belief is:

- a. momentous.
- b. living.
- c. a force option.
- d. a source of hope.

7. James argues that in those cases where it is proper to will to believe, then practically:

- a. not believing is no different from disbelieving.
- b. not believing implies disbelieving.
- c. disbelieving implies not believing.
- d. not believing is very different from disbelieving.

8. Moore's Paradox, as discussed by Williams, claims that sentences of the form "but I do not believe that p ":

- a. cannot be true.
- b. are self-contradictions.
- c. are contradictory to assert.
- d. are improbable.

9. James attempts to assimilate the relation of belief and negation ("not") to the logical law that for every statement p :

- a. either p is true or not p is true.
- b. it is not the case that p is true and p is not true.
- c. if p is necessarily false, then p is false.
- d. p is not both true and false.

[Answers 1.D 2. A 3. D 4. D 5. B 6. D 7. A 8. C 9. A]