24.221: Problem set #3

Short answer (1 paragraph)

1. Consider the following argument:

   (1) Every man who is unmarried is necessarily a bachelor.
   (2) Smith is unmarried.
   (3) So, Smith is necessarily a bachelor; Smith can never marry.

   Diagnose what, if anything, is wrong with the argument. If you don't think
   anything is wrong with it, say why.

Long answer (multiple paragraphs, please answer thoroughly)

2. Lewis believes there are trans-world individuals, but that ordinary things (like you
   me, this table, etc.) are not transworld-individuals. Interestingly, Lewis also
   believes in trans-*temporal* individuals (four-dimensional things, existing at
   different times by having parts that entirely exist at those times), and that ordinary
   things *are* trans-temporal individuals.

   Explain Lewis's reasons for rejecting the claim that ordinary things are trans-
   world individuals. Then challenge him on this point. You may either try to
   undercut his reasons for rejecting this claim or provide your own argument in
   favor of thinking that ordinary things are trans-world individuals. Then assess the
   dialectic – do you think Lewis is right about ordinary things? (You may want to
   think about what Lewis says about persons in 'Survival and Identity' and see if
   any of that applies in the modal case.)

3. Van Inwagen defends incompatibilism. According to incompatibilism, only
   actions that have no prior causal determinants are free (therefore, if determinism
   is true and thus every event has some prior causal determinant, then no action is
   free). Consider the following compatibilist counter:

   *Only actions which are causally determined by the will of the agent performing
   them in the right sort of way (i.e., not coerced, etc) are free. Therefore, only
   actions with some prior causal determinants are free.*

   Evaluate the dialectic between the incompatibilist and the compatibilist on this
   point. Who, if either, do you think is right? Why?

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