

2nd paper

WRITE AN ESSAY on one of the following 3 topics: Note at the beginning of your paper which question you are answering!!!

DUE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6 [lateness penalty, on 4-point scale: .3 if by November 9; .5 if by November 11; .3 for every 2 days after that [must be by e-mail if on non-class day]. PLEASE TURN IT IN ON TIME!

Essay should be c. **800-1100 words [please provide a word count!]**.

Please number your pages to make it easier for my commenting system.

READ THE QUESTION VERY CAREFULLY. MAKE SURE YOU ANSWER EVERY PART OF THE QUESTION!!!

I. Statistical discrimination

A. Explain what “statistical discrimination” is. Make particularly clear how it is a form of discrimination. (So to do this you will have to have a definition of “discrimination”.)

B.1. Explain the difference between statistical discrimination and discrimination that is motivated by prejudice or stereotypes. B.2. Keeping this distinction in mind, is it possible for something that *looks like* statistical discrimination to actually be discrimination based on prejudice or stereotypes? Explain.

C. Do you think that statistical discrimination is morally wrong? Back up your view, explaining what you think is wrong with it. (Keep in mind that something that is morally wrong can be morally wrong for more than one reason.) Do you think it might be wrong in some circumstances but not in others? Does it matter morally which racial group is the target of statistical discrimination? Explain.

[Portions of the handout on “racial profiling” are relevant to this question.]

II. The resumé experiment

A. Regarding the resumé experiment described in Bertrand and Mullainathan’s article “Are Emily and Greg More Employable Than Lakisha and Jamal?” explain the basic findings of the experiment. (You don’t need to explain the whole set-up of the experiment, just what the results, or findings, of it are.)

B. Describe two or three plausible explanations of the process(es) by which those disparate results were generated by the employers/human resources personnel. How do you think it happened—or rather, what are some plausible explanations of how it happened? (You do not have to actually say definitively which one you think

is the most plausible. I am only asking you to show an appreciation of the possible explanations.) *One of these must be “implicit bias,” so you will have to give a brief explanation of what that is.*

C. Assuming that the basic findings reveal a situation that is in some way morally wrong, explain what precisely is morally wrong with that situation? Keep in mind that more than one thing can be morally wrong with the same situation or phenomenon, as Blum argues in his discussion of discrimination in chapter 4.

D. In answering the previous question, consider a hypothetical situation in which the results of the experiment were that white applicants were treated the same as black applicants in the actual experiment and vice versa. Discuss and explain your view as to whether this resulting situation is morally wrong and, if so, is this for the exact same reason(s) as the results of the experiment were wrong. (Blum’s discussion of skin color vs. racial prejudice in chapter 4, which we also discussed in class though briefly, might be helpful.)

[Portions of the handout on “racial profiling” may be relevant to this question.]

III. Racial Profiling, with special reference to Lever

Annabelle Lever, in the article “What’s Wrong with Racial Profiling?” develops an argument against Risse and Zeckhauser’s limited defense of racial profiling in an earlier article of theirs.

A. Explain what racial profiling is

B. Present an argument in favor of racial profiling that is compatible with Risse and Zeckhauser’s view, as Lever presents it.

C. Explain Lever’s criticisms of Risse and Zeckhauser’s specific defense of racial profiling. She has several criticisms. (Remember that Risse and Zeckhauser are not defending all forms of racial profiling.)

D. Evaluate Lever’s criticisms, providing arguments for your evaluations. Do you think Lever’s criticisms are sound and valid? Do you think Risse and Zeckhauser could come back with some counterarguments against her arguments? Do you think there are arguments of Risse and Zeckhauser that Lever misses, or that you would want to develop farther than she does?

Keep in mind that this topic is not about racial profiling in general but about the specific arguments of Lever, and her presentation of Risse and Zeckhauser. It also asks you to give reasoned evaluation of her and their arguments.

You are permitted to make use of Risse and Zeckhauser’s original article, and Lever’s original critique of it (a bit of which I read in class) if you wish to. You can locate those articles (in the e-journals section of the Healey Library website), the references of which are given in Lever’s article that you have, in footnotes 1 and 3.