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Quiz Samuel Scheffler: Death and the Afterlife

○ one correct answer · ▢ one or more correct answers

1. According to Scheffler's understanding of the term „afterlife", a person's P afterlife refers to

- ○ a. both P and other persons continuing to live after P's death
- ○ b. other persons continuing to live after P's death
- ○ c. P continuing to live after his/her death

2. Scheffler attempts to investigate "our" attitudes about the afterlife. Who does he refer to by "our"?

- ▢ a. the attitudes of other people who share his own attitudes
- ▢ b. the attitudes of all people who deny God
- ▢ c. his own attitudes
- ▢ d. the attitudes of all people

3. What is the main purpose of Scheffler's doomsday thought experiment?

- ○ a. to provide an example (illustration) of his theory of the afterlife
- ○ b. to cast doubt on the existence of God
- ○ c. to reveal our attitudes towards the afterlife
- ○ d. to entertain his readers
- ○ e. to clarify the meaning of the term "afterlife"

4. According to Scheffler, if we reacted to the doomsday thought experiment with indifference this would suggest that only our own experiences matter to us.

- ○ True
- ○ False

5. Scheffler thinks that the looming doomsday would, among others, negatively affect our motivation to engage in certain kinds of projects – most importantly, projects that

- ☐ a. will only bear their full fruits in the (distant) future (e.g., because they require the efforts of many people over longer periods of time)
- ☐ b. will only benefit those who are engaged in them, and quite immediately so
- ☐ c. will, if successful, benefit a large number of people but only over longer periods of time

6. One reason that Scheffler provides for our significant dismay in the face of the doomsday scenario is that it would prevent the "personalization" of our relation with the future. By this he mainly means that

- ○ a. many persons would die in the eradication of humanity
- ○ b. we would no longer "exist" in terms of the social relations and memories of people
- ○ c. we could no longer think of the future as being directed towards some goal, like persons aim at goals

7. According to Scheffler, two strategies to sustain and preserve the things that are of value to us beyond our personal death is to promote traditions that incorporate this value and to become part of groups that adhere to this value.

- ○ True
- ○ False

8. Among others, Scheffler referred to cancer research as one of the projects that would be undermined by the prospect of a looming doomsday

- ○ a. because cancer research has become the most widely used example in the literature on the afterlife
- ○ b. because this project exemplifies the quest for knowledge which is a particularly important value
- ○ c. because this project does not only benefit particular people that are close to the researcher

9. The infertility scenario is supposed to show that if humanity did not continue to exist this would still leave a large number of activities that we deem to be of value and that we are emotionally engaged in.

- ○ True
- ○ False

10. In Scheffler's view, our attitudes towards the afterlife show that

- ○ a. we are more egoistic than it has often seemed
- ○ b. we are roughly as egoistic as it has often seemed
- ○ c. we are less egoistic than it has often seemed

11. Scheffler's book is based on a peculiar methodology which involves investigating "our" attitudes towards the afterlife, without questioning the rationality of these attitudes or examining their causal origins. From this investigation Scheffler infers wide-ranging claims about values, importance and meaning. What do you consider worthwhile about this methodology? What do you consider problematic about it?