Peter Strawson, “Freedom and Resentment”

I. The Reactive and Objective Attitudes (72-83)
   A. What do the “optimists” and “pessimists” disagree about? (72-75)
   B. What is a reactive attitude (75-77)
   C. What sorts of occasions motivate us to suspend resentment toward someone who has injured/offended us, but not to suspend our ordinary reactive attitudes generally? What sorts of occasions motivate us to suspend our ordinary reactive attitudes toward others? (77-78)
   D. What is the objective attitude? And how does the distinction between reactive and objective attitudes allow Strawson to re-formulate the issue in dispute between the optimists and pessimists? (79-81)
   E. How does Strawson argue that the (possible) truth of determinism cannot (should not?) compel us to abandon our ordinary reactive attitudes toward others? (81-83)

II. Generalized/Vicarious/Moral Reactive Attitudes (83-89)
   A. How does Strawson distinguish personal from generalized/vicarious reactive attitudes? In what way are generalized reactive attitudes moral attitudes? (83-85)
   B. How does Strawson argue that the same sorts of circumstances which invite a suspension of our personal reactive attitudes also invite a suspension of our generalized/moral reactive attitudes? (85-86)
   C. How does Strawson argue that determinism is not relevant to the adoption of our moral attitudes? (87-89)

III. Where the Optimists and Pessimists both go Wrong (89-93)
   A. What does the pessimist recoil from in the optimists’ position and what, according to Strawson, is the reason for this recoil? (89-91)
   B. How does Strawson propose filling in the “lacuna” in the optimists’ position without appealing to the pessimist’s libertarian metaphysics? (91-92)
   C. What is the common factor in the mistakes of both the pessimist and the optimist? (91-93)
IV. Bok’s Critique of Strawson (from *Freedom and Responsibility*, 25-29)

A. How does Bok respond to Strawson’s first argument that determinism would not undermine our reactive attitudes because “our commitment to those attitudes is so deep that it would be, in practice, impossible for us to give them up entirely”? (26-27)

B. How does Bok respond to Strawson’s second argument that if we could choose whether or not to adopt our reactive attitudes it could only be for pragmatic reasons? (27-29)