

WRITING ASSIGNMENT**PHILOSOPHY 167****SPRING, 2005**

Professor Richard Arneson

This assignment is due in class on Wednesday, June 1. Late papers will be subject to grade penalty.

Write an essay of about five to eight pages on one of the following topics. Please indicate which topic you have selected on the title page of your essay. Your essay will be evaluated according to the cogency of your arguments, the soundness of the understanding of course materials that you display, and the clarity of your prose.

1. Just assume the following controversial claims are true: (1) the use of the nonrenewable fuels coal and oil for power by the earth's population at present and expected future rates will eventually deplete the stocks in 75 years and, since there will be no fully acceptable substitute, future generations of humans will be on the whole and on the average far worse off than the present generation, and (2) the use of coal and oil for power by the earth's population at present and expected future rates will irreversibly initiate a global warming process that will cause great harm to future generations commencing in about 75 years, and (3) in virtue of 1 and 2, the use of coal and oil by you and me now increases the risk that these harms will actually ensue. –Given 1, 2, and 3, what (if anything) must we do, to avoid violating the Lockean individual moral rights of future generations of people, according to the characterization of such rights that Robert Nozick advances in *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*? (See especially Nozick, chapters 4 and 7 and also Peter Railton's essay "Locke, Stock, and Peril.") Explain the implications of Nozick's principles concerning what we ought to do in the face of these problems. In your view, are these implications of Nozick's principles plausible or implausible? For what reasons?
2. In her essay, "What Is the Point of Equality?", Elizabeth Anderson criticizes a position she calls "luck egalitarianism." Her criticism develops in part by affirming an alternative position she calls "democratic equality." Taking Ronald Dworkin's doctrine of equality of resources to be the target of her critique of luck egalitarianism, to what extent is her critique successful? State your reasons.
3. In chapters 8 and 9 of *Sovereign Virtue* Ronald Dworkin applies his doctrine of equality of resources as developed in chapter 2 to policy issues of health care and poverty relief (unemployment and underemployment benefits and aid to single parents of young children). In the course of applying the chapter 2 doctrine he also modifies or clarifies it to some extent. Defend or attack Dworkin's ideal of equality of resources in the light of the policy recommendations he draws from it.

4. Suppose that a society is composed of two types of people, grasshoppers, who strongly prefer leisure time and a laid-back relaxed lifestyle over lucrative employment or self-employment, and ants, who strongly prefer working hard to gain a high income over cutting back on hours at paying work to gain extra leisure time. Both ants and grasshoppers vary in the extent to which they possess marketable and nonmarketable talent. Consider the question, what social arrangements are fair to both types of people. The philosophies of John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Ronald Dworkin, and Elizabeth Anderson imply different answers to the question. Pick two of these authors. (Of the two you pick, one must be either Dworkin or Anderson.) Explain what answer each of the two authors you have selected would give to the question posed and defend one or the other answer as superior (or if you prefer, you may take the position "a pox on both your houses" and attack both of the authors you have selected).

In completing this assignment you must comply with the moral norms encapsulated in the UCSD policy on plagiarism.