

Mini Paper 2

Instructions: this assignment should be **printed out** and turned in **at the start of class on September 12**. This paper should be a paragraph or two. I like to grade as anonymously as possible, so please **do not put your name on the top of the paper, but instead put it on the opposite side of the page (or on a second page, if you can't print double-sided)**. If you have any questions about how to complete the assignment, please let me know.

1. You should use the selections from *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* by Robert Nozick to answer the following questions. Suppose we reconstructed Peter Singer's argument as follows:

- A. Experiencing starvation is bad.
- B. If it is in our power to prevent something bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we ought, morally, to do it.
- C. By donating to famine relief, we can prevent people from experiencing starvation without thereby causing other people to have similarly bad experiences.
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- D. We ought, morally, to donate to famine relief.

The passage you've read reveals that Nozick would say that this argument is unsound. Would he say that it is invalid, or that one of its premises is false, or both? And if he would think that one of its premises is false, which one? And why would he say this?

Some suggestions about writing this mini-paper (these hold for philosophy papers in general):

- Try to use as few quotations from the Nozick as possible, but instead explain things in your own words.

- Write as clearly as possible. Pretend you are tutoring a high school student, and they have asked you this question. You're best off writing as simply and directly as you can; using unnecessary big words or convoluted sentences will only confuse them. (An exception – you can assume they've been taught words like “valid” and “sound.”)
- Philosophers like it when you state things as precisely as possible. Try not to state things vaguely or incorrectly, even if you think I will know what you mean.