

Reading Questions for March 6

These questions cover excerpts from a book by Robert Nozick called “The Entitlement Theory of Justice.” The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

*Background:*

We are now looking at debates regarding redistributive taxation. In other words, we are asking whether it is morally acceptable for the well off to be taxed and for the money to be redistributed to those who are less well off. This debate is closely connected to one we have seen already when talking about whether there is a right to health care. We will be looking at two theorists who were mentioned during that debate – John Rawls and Robert Nozick. Today we will be looking at Robert Nozick, who is against redistributive taxation.

*Questions:*

1. In the second section (“Historical Principles and End-Result Principles” – pages 529-30) Nozick distinguishes between two sorts of principles. What are the two sorts? Which does he favor? Why does he favor it? Are his reasons good ones?
2. In the fourth section (“How Liberty Upsets Patterns” – pages 532-534) Nozick gives an example involving Wilt Chamberlain. What point is he trying to make through his example? Is what he has to say plausible?