

POLITICAL & SOCIAL THOUGHT

Entitlement & Just Holdings

Instructions

When doing the reading for this class, there are the two basic kinds of information you need to understand:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What premises, assumptions, reasons, evidence, and other important considerations lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, it is *information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support and justify accepting the author's conclusions as opposed to other ones.

Reading

Nozick, R. (1974). *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*. New York: Basic Books.

(Excerpts are from "The Entitlement Theory", "How Liberty Upsets Patterns", and "Redistribution and Property Rights".)

Questions

1. What are the elements of Robert Nozick's entitlement theory of justice? What seems to justify this view?
2. Nozick presents his famous "Wilt Chamberlain" example to illustrate problems with patterned theories of justice. (Chamberlain was a famous basketball player. If you prefer, think about another famous athlete like Kobe Bryant or Lionel Messi.)
What problems is Nozick's example supposed to reveal about patterned theories?
3. How does Nozick justify his claim that "taxation of earnings from labor is on a par with forced labor" (p. 169)?

To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses (unless you miss or are late to class, and must then submit a written reading question review).

You do need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting. You may, during the following class, be randomly selected to present answers to these if selected to do so for a verbal reading question review.