

PAPER 2

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Intro Philosophy

5–7 pages (double-spaced, normal font and margins), due via email to me (sider@rutgers.edu) by 9am on Monday, May 1. (Note the later due date than what was originally announced.)

This is another focused assignment, though broader in scope, in which you must *extract*, *justify*, and *evaluate* an argument from a text. You should re-read the instructions from paper 1 on extraction, justification, and evaluation. Be especially careful in the evaluation phase to stay focused. Your evaluation should not consist of general musings on the subject matter. Rather, you should consider a specific objection to the argument you have presented, and you should back up what you say with clear reasons.

Although your assignment will be based on a relatively short selection, you ought to read the whole article containing the selection to be sure you understand the context in which the selection occurs. Choose one of the following assignments:

1. In section 2 of his article, “Why We Have No Free Will and Can Live Without It”, Derk Pereboom gives an extended argument against compatibilism. Begin your paper by introducing the issues—quickly explain the problem of freedom and determinism and say what compatibilism is. Then, extract, justify, and evaluate Pereboom’s argument against compatibilism. The argument you extract should capture the entirety of the main line of thought Pereboom offers in the section. In the justification phase (when you go through the argument you have extracted and say, line-by-line, why Pereboom thinks the premises are true) you will need to—briefly—describe each of Pereboom’s four cases.
2. Doctors are never allowed to kill patients, not even when the patient is suffering from a painful incurable disease. But in certain cases, doctors are allowed to let patients die (by withholding care that would otherwise prolong their lives). In his article “Active and Passive Euthenasia”, James Rachels argues that this is unreasonable. He argues that either doctors should never be allowed to cause patients to die (whether by killing them or letting them die), or they should be allowed both to kill patients (only in certain highly regulated situations of course) as well as let them die.

You should read the whole article, but your paper should focus on the four paragraphs on p. 685 in which Rachels argues that the distinction between killing and letting die is not a morally important one. The first of these paragraphs starts with “One reason why...”; the fourth paragraph ends with the sentence “Morally speaking, it is no defense at all.” After an introductory paragraph or two in which you introduce the main issues, your assignment is to extract, justify, and evaluate the argument in these four paragraphs.