

## 21H.181

### Libertarianism in History

#### Debate #1: Rules and Roles

The subject of our debate is the conflict between the theories of John Rawls and Robert Nozick. The prompt for the debate is as follows:

Robert Nozick's libertarian defense of the minimalist state and his entitlement theory of holdings involve, *inter alia*, a refutation of John Rawls's account (in *A Theory of Justice*) of what justice requires of us. Does Nozick's account successfully and persuasively rebut Rawls's embrace of the claims of equality and distributive justice? Argue for and against.

We will follow the rules of the Lincoln-Douglas style of debate. Please be prepared to argue the following positions and roles:

1. Preparation time (five minutes): class as a whole
2. First affirmative constructive (ten minutes): affirmative team students 1 and 2
3. Cross examination by negative (ten minutes): negative team students 1 and 2
4. First negative constructive (ten minutes): negative team students 3 and 4
5. Cross examination by affirmative (ten minutes): affirmative team students 3 and 4
6. First affirmative rebuttal (ten minutes): affirmative team students 5 and 6
7. Negative rebuttal (ten minutes): by the negative team as a whole
8. Second affirmative rebuttal (ten minutes): by the affirmative team as a whole
9. De-briefing, recuperation, and rendering of judgment (ten minutes): class as a whole

For those not familiar with these debating terms, note that "affirmative" means you should answer "yes" to the question posed in the prompt, and the folks arguing for the "negative" should answer "no." "Constructive" means you should lay out your own arguments in support of your position. "Cross examination" means that you should ask questions of the folks who have just spoken. The first affirmative "rebuttal" should address both your opponent's arguments and your own. The two subsequent rebuttals should each address the arguments of the previous speech and summarize the debate for the judge (that's

me, and I will try to have a gavel in hand lest our civilized Lincoln-Douglas style deteriorate into something resembling the British House of Commons).

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Spring 2014

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