

Paper assignment # 2

PHIL 13195
Jeff Speaks

Due: Thursday, November 14

Below are four topics for your second full length paper. You are welcome to come up with your own topic, though you must get my approval by e-mail first. If you do this, the question that I approve should be on the first page of your essay. The papers should be at most 5-7 pages in length, double-spaced and with reasonable margins and font.

A late penalty of 3 points per day, including weekends, will be assessed for any papers which are handed in late. Papers should be handed in either in class or to my office at 205 Malloy Hall.

If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted under the honor code, please contact me.

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1. Mackie and Plantinga disagree about whether free will can explain the existence of evil caused by human beings, given an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent God. Explain Mackie's objection to the use of free will in a response to the problem of evil, and Plantinga's reply. Which do you think is correct? Why? Can free will play an important role in an explanation of the existence of evil caused by human beings?
2. Plantinga and van Inwagen give different accounts of some of the evil that we observe in the world which is not directly caused by human beings. Do you think that either, or both, views are plausible? Why or why not? Do we have to choose one? If so, which?
3. Is free will compatible with divine omniscience? Consider the arguments of Edwards and Plantinga.
4. Is free will compatible with determinism? Consider the arguments of Hume and van Inwagen.