I. Nozick's objection to Utilitarianism

Setup: Consider a case where we chop up Ryan to give his organs to five people. (We can imagine that this is part of an efficiently-run Survival Lottery, to make it cleaner.) Utilitarianism says we should chop him up. But intuitively, this seems bad; it seems like Ryan's *rights* are being violated.

Nozick considers two objections to Utilitarianism:

Objection 1: Keep consequentialism, reject hedonism. Be a "Utilitarian of rights".
        New proposal: "Act so as to minimize rights violations".
What's wrong with this new proposal?

Objection 2: Get rid of *consequentialism*, view rights as side-constraints.
According to Nozick, why does consequentialism gets the wrong answer about chopping up Ryan?

II. Nozick's positive view
Nozick's view is that rights are *side-constraints*. What does that mean?

In particular, Nozick thinks there is a fundamental side-constraint against *aggression*. What does he mean? To help think about this, compare the following two cases:

1. Chopping Up Ryan (again)
Ryan has healthy organs; five other people need transplants. You're the surgeon.

Your options:
1. Chop up Ryan. Ryan dies; the five live.
2. Don't chop up Ryan. Ryan lives; the five die.

2. Volcanic Islands
All of the TAs and Prof. Stancyzk are shipwrecked and wash up on two separate islands. There are active volcanoes on both islands, about to erupt. You are in a plane. You have enough gas to fly to just one island and save whoever's washed up there; whoever's on the other island will suffer a painful, fiery death.

Your options:
1. Fly to the big island. Prof. Stanczyk dies; TAs live.[1]
2: Fly to the small island. Prof. Stanczyk lives; TAs die.

What does Utilitarianism say about these two cases?

Nozick will make a distinction between the two. How could we spell out that distinction?

---

[1] Choose wisely

24.04J / 17.01J Justice
Spring 2012