

In his discussion of omnipotence, Aquinas suggests that one reason God cannot do just anything is that God cannot make a contradiction true. Aquinas thought that God could not make a contradiction true because if a contradiction is true then everything is true, and God cannot make everything true. This assignment requires you to do two things: (i) prove that if a contradiction is true then everything is true, and (ii) answer some questions.

In your proof you will use three inference rules. In each rule, ' $x \vdash y$ ' means "from x validly infer y ". The three rules are:

1. Conjunction Elimination (\wedge -Elim): $(a \wedge b) \vdash a$

Example: from (Jeff is a man and Trump is President) infer that Trump is President. If a conjunctive sentence is true then each conjunct is true. For example, if one line of your proof is

(1) $g \wedge r$

then you can validly infer (write) on a lower line of the proof:

(2) r

2. Disjunction Introduction (\vee -Int): $a \vdash (a \vee b)$

Example: from Jeff is a man infer that (Jeff is a man *or* pigs fly). If a sentence is true then either that sentence or some other sentence is true. For example, if one line of your proof is

(1) g

then you can validly infer (write down) on a lower line of the proof::

(2) $g \vee r$

3. Disjunction Elimination (\vee -Elim): $(a \vee b), \sim a \vdash b$

Example: from ((Jeff is a man or pigs fly) and Jeff is not a man) infer that pigs fly. If a disjunction is true and one disjunct is not true, then the other disjunct is true. For example, if two lines of your proof are

(1) $g \vee r$

(2) $\sim r$

then you can validly infer (write down) on a lower line of the proof:

(3) g

Name:

Using only those inference rules and only premise (1), show how to get from (1) to (5). In each step, say which rule you used. To do the assignment, print off this sheet and hand-write your answers, then hand in the sheet next class period.

- (1) $p \wedge \sim p$ premise
- (2) from (1) using rule:
- (3) from (2) using rule:
- (4) from (1) using rule:
- (5) q from (3) and (4) using rule:

Questions

1. Do you think that God can make a contradiction true?: Yes/No (circle one)

If you circle Yes here, do questions 2., 3., and 5., and skip question 4. If you circle No, skip 2. and 3. and do 4. and 5.

2. If you circled Yes for 1., do you think everything could be true?: Yes/No

3. If you circled Yes for 1. and No for 2., explain which inference rule used above (\wedge -Elim, \vee -Int, or \vee -Elim) you reject and why.

4. If you circled No for 1., do you think God is omnipotent? Explain why you do (not) think God is omnipotent.

5. Assuming that all the inference rules are valid, explain in your own words why the proof shows that if a contradiction is true then literally everything (every statment and its negation) is true.