Philosophy 1765
Second Short Paper

Below, you will find five groups of questions about *Naming and Necessity*. Choose one group and write a short (3–5 page, maximum of 1500 words) paper addressing the questions posed. One could, to be sure, write a good deal more about any of these questions. But you should adjust the depth of your discussion to its length.

The Questions

1. In the first lecture of *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke offers an argument against a form of the 'Description Theory of Names'. Explain this argument. Make sure you explain what role the distinction between necessity and apriority plays in that argument.

2. Kripke takes the argument he gives in the first lecture to refute only one particular form of the 'Description Theory of Names', a form he attributes to Russell (and Frege). What textual basis might there be for attributing this view to the Russell of "On Denoting" and "Knowledge By Acquaintance and Knowledge By Description"? Russell does not, in either of those papers, express a view about whether such statements as "St Anne was the mother of Mary" are necessary. Why should one suppose he is committed to the view that they are? Why, for that matter, should anyone be committed to the view that they are?

3. One way to understand the Description Theory of Names is as the view that proper names abbreviate definite descriptions. But there are different views about how descriptions themselves work. Consider the views of Russell and Strawson: What sorts of views about proper names would emerge from the different forms of the 'Description Theory' one would get by marrying it to these different

accounts of descriptions? How do these views relate to the different forms of the Description Theory discussed by Kripke?

4. On pp. 58–9, Kripke claims that, if you abandon the Description Theory in the strong form that includes thesis (6), then one thereby "give[s] up some of the advantages of the theory". In particular, one can no longer explain the informativity of identity-statements involving names in the way explained on pp. 28–9. Is that true? Can the Description Theory of reference-fixing not explain the informativity of identity-statements in the same way?

5. In Lecture II, Kripke argues against the Description Theory as theory of how reference is fixed. What are his two central arguments against this view? Why does he give both of these arguments? Would one of them be enough? Or do they make somewhat different points? Is one of them better than the other?