

**Instructions** Pick **one** of the following questions and write a 6-8 page paper in response. You are also welcome to write on a topic of your choosing, but must discuss this topic with me at least one week prior to the due date. Please turn in a hard copy at the start of class *and* submit an electronic version through [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com). (You may submit your papers to me via email in lieu of turning in a hard copy, but I need to have these by the beginning of class.) See the syllabus for the relevant turnitin.com information. Your paper will be considered on time as long as you turn in the hard copy at the start of class. For no reason should you skip class or be late to submit a copy to turnitin.com. No paper grade will be released, however, until it is submitted to turnitin.com.

Paper extensions will not be granted except for extenuating circumstances. In order to receive such an extension, you must request permission in writing at least two days before the due date. Grades on late papers will be reduced as indicated on the syllabus.

Papers should be argumentative essays, not summaries. Your task is to stake out a clear position with your thesis statement and then to support that claim with evidence from the text. You should always *explain quotations* in order to demonstrate the point you are making by calling on them. Saying "The author believes x. This can be seen in: "*quotation 1*" is not explaining a quotation. Again, your task is to discover the author's argument and to present it with explanation, *not* to present your opinion in light of what you have read. You may cite quotations parenthetically by page number in our edition. A bibliography is unnecessary; simply use a clear reference to the book being used before the page number (*eg. (2nd Discourse, 131).*).

**Remember that your first task is to ANSWER THE QUESTION.**

**Requirements:** *Staple* your papers! If you do not have a stapler, it is a good investment for the rest of your life. Each paper must have an *original title*; "final paper" or some variation is insufficient. Papers should be double spaced with 1-inch margins. Use 12 point and either Arial, Times New Roman, or Garamond font. *Number pages*. You may complete a paragraph on a ninth page, but do not start a new one.

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1. Rousseau tells us in the *First Discourse* (and elsewhere) that luxury is perhaps *the* problem that leads to the degeneration of humanity and man's existence as a respectable moral being. Yet, Locke tells us (mainly in the *Second Treatise* but also in various places in the *First*) that the natural law (aka Reason) not only sanctions but indeed obligates man to work the earth and appropriate it as his property (see *Second Treatise* §26 among others).

Either (1) Defend Locke against the charges leveled by Rousseau that his political philosophy leads to the degeneration of man, or (2) Support Rousseau's attack by indicating how Locke's political philosophy leads to man's moral decay. A good essay will address *both* thinkers' positions, show how they relate, and argue for the superiority of one position over the other with reference to appropriate texts.

2. Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau all have what we have come to call "social contract" philosophies. Hobbes, as we saw, had argued for the necessity of absolute power vested in one man in order to enforce compliance with the contract that gives legitimacy to government. This was understood to be the only means of attaining the security that men want, but which entirely lacks, in the state of nature. John Locke attacks the notion of absolute government and compares it to submitting oneself to slavery (*Second Treatise* §23 among others). Explain Locke's argument *against* Hobbesian absolute government, and explain why Locke's "limited" government is not *so* limited as to be ineffective and incapable of preserving the peace established by the contract that creates civil government for the purpose of protecting individuals' rights (namely, of private property).

A good essay will *focus* on Locke and merely keep in mind Hobbes' argument. You should either *defend* or *reject* limited government, articulate what it is and in which ways it is limited, and assess its sufficiency or insufficiency for maintaining order necessary to the continuation of the State. It would be helpful to consider the *goals* of the government to which we enter by contract, what we *want* or expect from it as members/citizens, and the powers that Locke gives and denies to it.

3. Although Hobbes had made no such normative claim regarding man in the state of nature (as it is fundamentally a- or pre-moral), Rousseau urges his reader not to side with Hobbes in concluding that man "is naturally wicked, that he is vicious because he does not know virtue" (*Second Discourse* §35). On the contrary, Rousseau argues for man's natural goodness, despite agreeing with Hobbes not only on his understanding of the defect of all modern definitions of natural right prior to Rousseau, but also that man is naturally solitary or asocial!

Explain Rousseau's critique of the State of Nature laid out by Hobbes by presenting the State of Nature as Rousseau sees it. Indicate the basis, for Rousseau, of natural man's "goodness." At some point in human "history", however, Rousseau must grant that Hobbes' depiction of human behavior becomes an accurate depiction. What is responsible for the change? Do we, after the descent into something *like* the Hobbesian state of nature, retain anything of our natural condition according to Rousseau's state of nature? Does this retained element of natural life have any implication for political life and human community that one can see in the difference between Hobbesian and Rousseauan politics? Explain.

You may find it useful to consider Rousseau's take on natural sentimentality, the emergence and importance of "mine" v. "thine", and the sentiments that give rise to that distinction. You do not need to provide the causal mechanism by which these *new* sentiments emerge, but you should tell what they are and how they relate to human behavior and desire(s)