Philosophy of Human Nature: Third Essay

Choose one of the following topics and write an argumentative essay of approximately 4 pages (typed, doublespaced and with appropriate margins). Your essay should go beyond the texts and lectures, although a clear statement of such information could be taken as a starting point for your own analysis. In your essays, you should offer reasons or arguments in support of the positions you take -- do not just state your ideas without some evidence to back them up. The crucial element is to defend a thesis; try to persuade your reader of your claims. It is by the strength of your arguments and analysis, as well as your comprehension of the philosophical theories, that your essay will be graded. You are welcome to do some research outside the texts we're using in the course to develop your essay, however, your essay should reflect your own thinking on the subject. All quotations or paraphrases (including arguments in layout format) must be fully and properly referenced in footnotes or endnotes (failure to do so will result in a reduction in grade up to one full grade level). The essay will be graded on a 10 pt. scale (with gradations of .25).

Please turn in the essay at Dr. Holder's office, Boyle 421, no later than the date and time below.

**Due date: Wednesday, May 8, 9:15 am.**

a) Present and evaluate the different arguments that Socrates and Thoreau would make in response to being drafted into military service for a war that they thought was unjust. How do the different arguments depend on different views of human nature? **Convince the reader that one position is the most plausible or strongest.**

b) **Defend** or **attack** the thesis that each individual is endowed with natural rights. How would you try to persuade a person who does not believe in God that each human being has natural rights?

c) What is the proper role for the opinions of the majority in political and/or moral matters? **Defend your position** by comparison and contrast with at least two of the thinkers we have studied.

d) Choose one of the two arguments in layout format from the "Crito" and write an argumentative essay evaluating the argument. Your thesis should state clearly whether you will **argue that the argument is strong or weak.** Be sure to give the whole argument in layout format before you analyze the premises.