

Philosophical Topics for Essays

These are suggestive topics. Choose one you have an interest in or passionate about. You can choose another topic but I must approve it.

Epistemology

Defense for or argument against:

Rene Descartes' Rationalism

David Hume's Empiricism

Descartes' Method of Doubt &/or Method of Inquiry

Descartes' rationalistic conclusion, "I think, therefore I am"

Gottfried Leibniz's *Law of Contradiction*

Kant's *Unity of Consciousness*

The existence of Intuition

Truth is objective

Truth is subjective

Solipsism

Metaphysics

Defense for or argument against:

Materialism

Idealism

Descartes' psycho-physical dualism

One of the seven World-Views (ultimate reality) discussed in class

The nature of man, "basically good", "basically evil", "Neutral"

Determinism

Free Will

others

Science

Defense for or argument against or limitation of:

Scientific approach to ethics

Scientific approach to religion

Scientific approach to psychology

Beginning research with a stated hypothesis

Science and medicine

others

Ethics

Argument for or against one of the Theoretical Systems of Ethics in your book

Issues related to the following general headings:

Abortion

Euthanasia

Capital Punishment

Sexual Morality

Birth Control

Homosexuality

Genetic Engineering -- Reproductive Technologies

Genetic Engineering and the Genes

Divorce and Remarriage

These are more specific Issues:

Nuclear disarmament (by US, or US control in other nations)

The war in Iraq (many issues here - be specific)

Body Piercing

Tattooing

Term limits

AIDS testing for health professionals

US involvement with AIDS issues in other countries

Home Schooling

Public School Uniforms

Capital Punishment

Prison: Penal vs. Rehabilitation

The insanity plea

Rape: The right of the victim and the right of the accused

Gun Control

Sex education in the public schools

Gender selection and abortion

Medicare/Medicaid reform

Surrogate motherhood

Genetic manipulation in botany

Cloning

Genetic manipulation in humans

Forced seatbelt laws

Forced motorcycle helmet laws

Use of tobacco in public facilities

The war in Iraq

Military Draft

Women on the front line

Drug testing for government employees

Drug testing of High School Athletes

Performance enhancing drugs among athletes

Immigration in America

Welfare reform

ACT and SAT for college entrance

Lowering the legal drinking age

Legalization of specific drugs

Danger of Virtual Reality

Danger of games like Dungeons and Dragons

Adopted children's rights to unseal adoption papers
Teacher testing
The No Child Left Behind program
Affirmative Action and mandatory quota in education and employment
Stem cell research
NAFTA
Animal Rights
Violence in Films
Violence in children's cartoons
Inter-racial marriage
Gay marriage
Gay's in the military
Alternative medicines
Year-round school
HMO
Electoral College
Cryonics
Artificial Insemination - by husband, by donor
In-vitro fertilization
Artificial sex selection
Affirmative Action
Reverse discrimination

Philosophy of Science

Arguments for/against a particular scientific paradigm
Government financing of the sciences
Government financing of medical research
Government financing of _____ (space exploration, alternative sources of energy, etc)
See ethics

Social/Political Philosophy

Some of the issues under ethics
Government controls on Capitalism
Socialism
Social Contract Theory
Government regulated Birth Control
Government regulation of _____"
The best form of government is _____
(federalism, capitalism, socialism, democracy, autocracy, limited socialism, limited democracy, theocracy, etc.)
Darwin's influence on Hitler's political philosophy
Darwin's influence on Marx's political philosophy
Darwin's influence on Capitalism

Philosophy of Art

The legitimacy of Plato's views of art
The legitimacy of Aristotle's view of art
The legitimacy of Marcuse's view of art
Defend or argue against a particular religious view of art
An issue regarding pornography
Censorship of art
When is art pornographic?
The influence of pornography upon sex crimes (rape, pedophilia, etc.)

Philosophy of Religion

Defend or argue against one of the rationalist arguments for the existence of God (Cosmological, Design, Ontological, other)
Defend or argue against Kierkegaard's religious existentialism
Government regulation of religion
Separation of Church and State
Freedom of Religion
Tolerance of Religion
Defend or argue against a religious view on a Social Issue (birth control, women in the priesthood, priest marriage, etc.)
A specific issue of Creation vs. Evolution (Natural Selection, the flood, Law's of thermodynamics, interpretation of dating processes (radio carbon, ocean-salt, earth's magnetic field, other)
An argument for/against one of the World Views covered in Class (Theism, Pantheism, Atheism, etc.)
Other

Other

Read one of the works of any of the authors mentioned in the book and do a critical evaluation of that work.