

Harrington/English 101/In-Class Essay Exam #2/Directions: Write in Ink. Use inside covers of your large-sized bluebook for any invention/planning notes. Open Journal/Open Book.

Topic:

Civil disobedience is the active, public, conscientious breach of the law to bring about a change in law or public policy. Why must civil disobedience be non-violent? Why must it be public? Why must people who engage in civil disobedience be willing to accept punishment? Write an essay in which you analyze how King, Jr. in “Letter from Birmingham Jail” addresses these questions. Make sure to describe the rhetorical strategies employed by King, Jr.: what kinds of changes does King, Jr. want to see accomplished and what persuasive writing techniques are used in his essay to convince readers of the justness of civil disobedience? Include in your essay response the extent to which you his argument is convincing. Conclude your essay with an extended discussion reflecting on the extent to which you think civil disobedience is still a valid approach to acquiring racial and social justice. How and why would you be willing to use this approach today and in service of what cause or causes? If you don’t think civil disobedience is an effective strategy to use now, then conclude your essay with a discussion explaining why, and illustrate with relevant current examples that show how civil disobedience would not work today.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Be sure to present your observations/arguments/evidence in the form of a coherent essay—unified by a clear argument about the meaning of civil disobedience. Provide an introduction and a statement of your controlling idea, organize the body of your essay into logical subdivisions, use transitional sentences as needed, and suggest something of the wider significance of your analysis in your concluding sentences.

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