

Humanities 1 Essay #1

Overview: This essay asks you to respond to Freud's theorization of "civilization." You will choose one of the topics below, then refine that topic into a specific question that you will answer using appropriate evidence from the assigned texts. Your first paragraph should state clearly both the problem/question you are answering and your thesis.

Length: 3-5 pages, typed, double-spaced.

Citation: Use [MLA format](#). Cite page numbers for Freud, line numbers for Aeschylus. You need not cite specific page numbers for Marcuse (if you are using the online source), but you need to identify the section of the reading: "Political Preface 1966," "Preface," or "Introduction."

Topics: Choose one of the topics below.

1. Explain, analyze, and evaluate Freud's claim that "whether one has killed one's father or has abstained from doing so is not really the decisive thing. One is bound to feel guilty in either case, for the sense of guilt is an expression of the conflict due to ambivalence, of the external struggle between Eros and the instinct of destruction or death." (*Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 95)
2. Do you agree or disagree with Marcuse's claim that "Freud's theoretical conception itself seems to refute his consistent denial of the historical possibility of a non-repressive civilization . . ." ("Introduction" to *Eros and Civilization*, p. 5)
3. Explain, analyze, and evaluate Freud's critique of the Christian injunction to "love thy neighbor as thyself." What does he think is the origin/cause of this command? How does he evaluate it? (*Civilization and Its Discontents*, pp. 65ff)
4. Compare (and contrast) the view of civilization represented in *Prometheus Bound* with Freud's understanding of civilization.
5. Explain, analyze, and evaluate Marcuse's claim that "Today the fight for life, the fight for Eros, is the *political* fight." ("Political Preface 1966" to *Eros and Civilization*, p. xxv)