

**Philosophy 1, The Examined Life**  
**Fall, 1998**  
**First Paper Assignment**  
**Due in Class Monday, September 28**

(Note: Late papers will be penalized. All papers, however late, must be in by Dec. 4 in order for you to pass the course)

Please write a short paper (three-to-five typed, double-spaced pages) on one of the topics below. Remember that your paper will be evaluated on how well it presents arguments and evidence. In general, the goal of presenting a clear, coherent argument will be furthered if you organize your paper around a single, engaging thesis statement (see handouts).

1. In Plato's Crito, the argument of the Laws of Athens appears to demand Socrates's absolute obedience to the law. And yet, in Apology 29b-e (p. 49 in Cahn), Socrates suggests that there are circumstances under which he would consider himself obliged to break the law. Can the two passages be reconciled? If so, how?
2. According to Aristotle, can anyone aspire to happiness? Given Aristotle's definition of happiness, is his own answer to this first question appropriate?
3. How would Hobbes explain self-sacrifice?
4. To what extent does the 1776 Declaration of Independence rely on ideas like those expressed in Rousseau's The Social Contract? How is this reliance significant?