**CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE ?’s**

Answer four of the following in approximately 200-250 words. That’s approximately ¾ of a page of average size writing on narrow-ruled notebook paper. Pick four you can speak intelligently about. Then, pick one of your four to post on the class discussion board. Your original post must be up by class time Friday. You will then need to respond in approximately 100 words each to two other students’ posts by midnight Sunday night.

1. (236) “The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be **abused and perverted**. . . (The Mexican War is) the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool.” Is this still true today? Support with evidence.

2. (236) “Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient.” Explain what he means by this. Provide two examples from modern government.

3. About government – “It does not keep the country free. It does not settle the West. It does not educate. The character inherent in the American people has done all that has been accomplished.” Keeping Thoreau’s message in this quote in mind, what is the quality of the character of American people now? What is America accomplishing?

4. What does Thoreau believe about “majority rule” on p. 237? What do you believe? Explain. . .

5. (237) “The only obligation which I have a right to assume, is to do at any time what I think right.” Explain why this is a worthy idea. Explain also why this is a dangerous one.

6. What’s his point about taxes on p. 237?

7. (239-240): “I saw yet more distinctly the State in which I lived. I saw to what extent the people among whom I lived could be trusted as good neighbors and friends; that their friendship was for summer weather only; that they did not greatly purpose to do right; that they were a distinct race from me by their prejudices and superstitions, as the Chinamen and Malays are; that, in their sacrifice to humanity, they ran no risks, not even to their property; that, after all, they were not so noble but they treated the thief as he had treated them, and hoped, by a certain outward observance and a few prayers, and by walking in a particular straight though useless path from time to time, to save their souls.” What does he believe about people? Do you agree?

8. (240): “There will never be a really free and enlightened State, until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power. . .” Do individuals know what’s best for them (and therefore need no government)? Or do they need to be protected from themselves?

9. Align Thoreau with modern political views. Which political party would he embrace? How would he respond to current political battles in our country? With whom would he side?