You are required to write a five (5) page essay on one aspect of the general topic we have been working on in Section I of the syllabus--the relationship between law and culture. This essay counts 20% of your semester grade. There are three possible topics dealing with law and culture printed on the “topics” pages. You are to select one. Your essay is due on Tuesday, October 30, 2007, in class. Your essay must be typed, double-spaced, with all margins of no more than one inch and a font (type size) no bigger than 12 point (the size of the type in this cover sheet). Staple the pages of your essay along with this cover sheet before handing it in.

In making reference to works we have read or to class discussion, use either footnotes or put the references in parentheses within your essay. If you quote more than two lines of material from the readings in any one place in your essay, place the quotation in a footnote so that it does not occupy too much space in the body of your essay. Do not take up space re-telling a story or re-stating the facts of a case. You may of course make reference to these things—that’s why you are asked to use the materials as part of your analysis. But in an essay of only five pages you should not use big chunks of valuable space to re-state a story or case with which we are already familiar. Doing so will cost you points.

Remember also that whenever you are giving your own opinion it should be given in relation to the materials that you are analyzing. It should not simply stand alone. For example, do write, “As the failure of Judge Danforth to bring order to the Puritan society of 1692 shows, an excessively authoritarian approach to law is not effective when a society’s basic values have eroded.” Do not write, “I don’t think authoritarian judges can be effective because they just turn people off or make them feel resentful.”

Please note that although this is a short essay, it takes more effort to write something short that is effective than to write something long. Accordingly, you should outline, draft, edit, and proofread your essay carefully. You are encouraged to discuss the topics with your classmates--that is part of the learning process--but the essay itself must be entirely your own work. Any act of academic dishonesty will be dealt with mercilessly.

In a course like Legal Studies 250, there is less emphasis on “correct answers” [plenty of this in the multiple choice exam], than on clear reasoning, careful thinking, and appropriate use of references to course materials. And remember, this is a general education course; part of your grade and of our comments will be based on the clarity of your writing.

__________________________________    _______________________
(print your name)      (Topic number of your essay)
(1, 2, or 3)

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(your student number)