

## 150F FINAL

**Choose One & put the number of your choice on the cover-sheet of your response. Include your topic sheet with your exam. Submit this topic sheet along with your response.**

- 1.) This semester we have traced the influence of existential thought on a variety of writers. A consistent concern of the existentialists and the writers is the condition of alienation. Analyze the treatment of this phenomenon in **four** novels we read this semester.
- 2.) In many of the novels there is a palpable sense of fragmentation or discontinuity in actions, character motivations, temporal settings, etc. Joan Didion has called the condition of post-war life one of “atomization.” Analyze the treatment of fragmentation or discontinuity in **four** novels from our syllabus.
- 3.) In his essay “The Literature of Exhaustion,” John Barth argues that the literature of the post-war period is one that reveals “felt ultimacies,” his expression for a literature that seems extreme, explores life and ideas out on the edge, and deals with ideas that seem urgent and compelling. Analyze **four** novels in terms of “felt ultimacies” which you locate and define in the texts.
- 4.) In American literature before the twentieth-century, space was often equated with infinitude, fulfillment of possibilities, even Edenic perfection. By examining **four** novels we read this semester, how is space depicted in this literature? Are the associations the same or different, and what do these similarities or differences suggest about the fiction in this period?

**Due:** Monday, December 8, in class--no exceptions

**Length:** 5-6 pages

**Format:** Papers should be neat and free of extreme typographical errors. Double-space and use 1" margins. Use only a 12 pt font and print on only one side of the page. Number pages, beginning with second page, in upper right hand corner, and secure pages only with a staple in the upper left hand corner. On a cover page center the title and put in the lower right hand corner your name, the date the assignment is due, the topic number you are addressing, and my name.