I am not distributing or posting a complete syllabus ahead of time for this seminar, because the syllabus will be composed, during the first two meetings, by the joint efforts of all those enrolled. Each participant will be asked to identify one work of literature, and/or some critical or analytical materials, for the group’s reading and consideration. Your own paper will then consider the work you ask us to read. Your contribution to the syllabus should be (or be about) a serious literary treatment or treatments of the predicament of being a lawyer, or a person compelled to take account of the law. For my contribution, I will ask the group to read Bernhard Schlink’s THE READER (1995) (I recommend the Vintage paperback edition, ISBN 0-679-78130-7), as well as these articles discussing the book:


All of the articles are available online.

We will discuss THE READER and the articles at the second class meeting. We’ll put together the remainder of the syllabus at the first two meetings, but you are asked to give some advance consideration to what you’d like to suggest for it. If you are uncertain about what to nominate, at the first class I will suggest some resources as well.

Here are some of the works that have been included successfully in the past:

- “A Jury of Her Peers,” a short story by Susan Glaspell
- BARTLEBY THE SCRIVINER, a novella by Herman Melville.”
- A UNIVERSAL HISTORY OF INIQUITY, a short story collection by Jorge Luis Borges.
• INHERIT THE WIND, a play by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee.

• THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, a play by William Shakespeare.

• TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD, a novel by Harper Lee.

• THE STRANGER, a novel by Albert Camus.

• PUDDN’HEAD WILSON, a novel by Mark Twain.

• THE CRUCIBLE, A play by Arthur Miller

• CHRONICLE OF A DEATH FORETOLD, a novel by Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

• BILLY BUDD, a novella by Herman Melville.

• ANATOMY OF A MURDER., a novel by Robert Traver

• BLEAK HOUSE (excerpts), a novel by Charles Dickens

• ANTIGONE, a play by Sophocles..

• ATONEMENT (abridged), a novel by Ian McEwan

• GROSS INDECENCY: THE THREE TRIALS OF OSCAR WILDE, a play by Moises Kaufman

• ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO’S NEST, a novel by Ken Kesey

• MACHINAL, a play by Sophie Treadwell

• THE PENAL COLONY, a novella by Franz Kafka