Below are 5 quotes related to Consumerism: I chose them because they reflect the kind of apparently lunatic ravings that I have been making in this class regarding our facile sacrificing of the sacred for the sake of the expedient. For the large part, I think such ravings have had little impact and therefore to re-enforce the notion, this is your final last white paper assignment (and this is consistent with both your last group assignment and your very first reflective essay).

**In an essay of 1200 words: (reserve 500 words for part C)**

**a) of the five quotes below select the one that best describes our situation and defend that selection.**

**b) Integrating all of the quotes together, what is the combined message to us consumers?**

**c) Your generation is really the last one that can make a difference. You are giving the graduation speech at the Honors College ceremony. In 500 words, what do you say to your peers that will change their value system towards consumerism.**

“Armaments, universal debt, and planned obsolescence - those are the three pillars of Western prosperity. If war, waste, and moneylenders were abolished, you'd collapse. And while you people are over-consuming the rest of the world sinks more and more deeply into chronic disaster.”

“But even in the much-publicized rebellion of the young against the materialism of the affluent society, the consumer mentality is too often still intact: the standards of behavior are still those of kind and quantity, the security sought is still the security of numbers, and the chief motive is still the consumer's anxiety that he is missing out on what is "in." In this state of total consumerism - which is to say a state of helpless dependence on things and services and ideas and motives that we have forgotten how to provide ourselves - all meaningful contact between ourselves and the earth is broken. We do not understand the earth in terms either of what it offers us or of what it requires of us, and I think it is the rule that people inevitably destroy what they do not understand.”

“This is the postmodern desert inhabited by people who are, in effect, consuming themselves in the form of images and abstractions through which their desires, sense of identity, and memories are replicated and then sold back to them as products”

“We seldom consider how much of our lives we must render in return for some object we barely want, seldom need, buy only because it was put before us...And this is understandable given the workings of our system where without a job we perish, where if we don't want a job and are happy to get by we are labeled irresponsible, non-contributing leeches on society. But if we hire a fleet of bulldozers, tear up half the countryside and build some monstrous factory, casino or mall, we are called entrepreneurs, job-creators, stalwarts of the community. Maybe we should all be shut away on some planet for the insane. Then again, maybe that is where we are.”

“On the way from the Renaissance to our days we have enriched our experience, but we have lost the concept of a Supreme Complete Entity which used to restrain our passions and our irresponsibility. We have placed too much hope in political and social reforms, only to find out that we were being deprived of our most precious possession: our spiritual life. In the East, it is destroyed by the dealings and machinations of the ruling party. In the West, commercial interests tend to suffocate it. This is the real crisis”