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Final Topic Paper – “ I am Bartleby” Outline/Bibliography

OUTLINE – First Person Account of Bartleby’s Journey from His Perspective

I. Interview for Bartleby’s job

- Finds advertisement in the newspaper bout law firm job, responds to it
- Does not know why he chose to do the job if he is so apathetic
- Finds boss pleasant, answers his questions, picks up on impression of Bartleby as amiable
- Disappointed and depressed by corner office

II. First days of job

- Bartleby feels renewed sense of purpose
- Feels important because of his placement as a high-powered Wall Street firm
- Feels incredible pull to keep self busy – part of schizophrenia (Beja 559)

III. Encounter with first job he prefers not to do

- Starts to crash a bit, feels unfulfilled
- Unmotivated to work, feels like small cog in bigger machine
- Boss comes in with paper; looking at it, Bartleby chooses to prefer not to do it

IV. Continued casual strike on work

- Keeps telling Boss “ I prefer not to.”
- Feels alienated from the high-powered bosses his Wall Street law firm job surrounds him with since he is not one of them (Foley 92).

V. Abandoned interest of lawyer, who confirms Bartleby’s suspicions

- Boss gives up on Bartleby
- Bartleby confirms the feeling that he is not important to the boss except for

what he can do for him

- Decides he refuses to do other things as well, he feels important in his sense of rebellion against the expectations of modern society (Foley 102).

VI. Sent to the Tombs

- Bartleby is taken to the Tombs, notes the ways they try to help him (Beja 561)
- Feels dissociated from surroundings, is diagnosed schizophrenic
- Made sense to him to stop doing what he was doing (Beja 561).

VII. Is released from the Tombs, starves to Death

- Bartleby does not feel better after the Tombs, feels the exact same
- Has chosen to commit to not doing what he prefers not to do, sees no point in anything
- Starves to death, but is fine with it as it does not upset him

Beja, Morris. " Bartleby & Schizophrenia." The Massachusetts Review (1978): 555-568.

Foley, Barbara. " From Wall Street to Astor Place: Historicizing Melville's ' Bartleby'."

American Literature 72. 1 (2000): 87-116.

Sundararajan, Louise. " Being as refusal: Melville's Bartleby as Heideggerian anti-hero." Janus

Head (1999). <http://www.janushead.org/jhsumm99/sundararajan.cfm>.

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