Write a 5-7 page essay on ONE of the following topics. Your essay is due in class on
THURSDAY October 5. Be sure to include page numbers and a title that conveys your
thesis.

This time your audience is not a class member, but an average American citizen. Imagine
that your essay will appear in the book review section of the Sunday newspaper. Your
audience has not read the book. Let us imagine that they will want to read it after reading
your essay.

1. *The Ox-Bow Incident* is a book about how members use and abuse their privileges. The
book tells the story of a lynch mob. Clark uses the various motivations of the mob’s
members to explore the causes of the abuse of power.

Write an essay analyzing the motives and causes driving the *Ox-bow* mob. Be sure to
answer the question: what does this book say about the nature of membership.

2. *The Ox-Bow Incident* is a book about the difference between power (force) and
authority. Davies believes that the law should reflect “the moral nature of man” (49). Law
is made up of procedures and rules that the political community owes everyone—member
and non-member, citizen and stranger alike. But young Tetley sees the law as a tool for
displaying power; it is about order not justice. It is the tool high-status members use to
control low-status members, and which members use to exclude and dominate non-
members.

Write an essay analyzing the two theories of law in the book. Be sure to answer the
question: which view comes closer to the truth?

3. *The Ox-Bow Incident* was written in 1940, in the darkest days before World War II.
Fascism was at its height, and Walter Van Tilburg Clark wrote the book to defend his
cosmopolitan point of view.

Write an essay analyzing the book’s cosmopolitan ideas. Be sure to define your terms
carefully.

4. *The Ox-Bow Incident* is a meditation on the contrasting roles of reason and sentiment
in society.

Write an essay analyzing what Clark is saying about these two faculties, their uses and
proper spheres.