

LAW PERSONAL STATEMENT

Sometimes, ignorance can be a good thing: it is through my own ignorance of the law that I chose to develop an understanding of it and now I wish to study it as it is far more than the dull application of black and white rules; there are always fresh debates, constant changes and controversial decisions to analyse and discuss. After participating in the Sutton Trust Cambridge Law School, I was captivated by jurisprudence and why laws are obeyed. I read "Judges" by Panner who argues that the mysticism adopted by the courts means that laymen feel hostile so are less willing to obey. I disagree: I believe the procedures of the courts demand respect from laymen and make their submission to the law likely. Picking up on references to Austin, I researched his Command Theory but did not agree after reading Hart's "The Concept of Law". Austin says that laws are orders backed by threats; but Hart points out that the laws on will creation are not backed by these and are obeyed. I also feel that there is an aspect of voluntary assent to obeying laws which is not caused by threats. To broaden my knowledge, I read "Invitation to Law" by Simpson which gave me an outline of the topics studied in a degree. After attending a law Masterclass at Pembroke College, I was intrigued by kettling, a riot control method which Prof. McBride discussed, and made a blog to give myself a way to dispute such hot issues and recreate the discussion-based atmosphere in which I find weaknesses being exposed in my ideas as I debate with myself, which allows me to strengthen them. Along with my objection to kettling, I also wrote about my disagreement to Mrs Padfield's opposition to whole life orders after studying the Law in Focus series. A week-long internship at Linklaters further enabled me to expand my knowledge as I could see law in diverse areas. My 15 minute speech on the immorality of kettling won me the best presenter award. To keep up with the law, I am a reader of the Times Law page and the UK Human Rights blog. Doing exercises in a virtual law class helped me see what a law degree entails and I believe my A Levels prepare me: French has taught me communication and memory skills, crucial to convey ideas clearly and recall precedent-setting cases whilst Maths has given me logical reasoning skills, vital for forming arguments and analysing cases. My extra-curricular activities show my ability to manage my time well, my independence and motivation towards learning, critical for the study of law. I devote my free time to Keech Hospice, a primary school, kick boxing, being chairman of the college executive group and an ambassador; I set up a debating group which allowed me to develop my advocacy, reasoning and analytical skills, which I hope to extend through my study of law, and I partook in the Sutton Trust USA scheme and arranged work experience at a café in France to boost my oral skills. For more cases to explore like in the virtual class, I delved into "What About Law?" and was intrigued by how the law balances individual rights with the welfare of society. I widened my interest in how the law can act in a utilitarian way through Prof. Virgo's extension material on criminal law where necessity as a defence for murder when separating conjoined twins was discussed. Separated, one will die, together both will die. It being a defence could mean that cases such as R v Dudley and Stephens could be defensible as the killing of one person saved three, but is this a just reason to murder? In one case, necessity seems to be a defence but in the other it seems not to be. I feel that sometimes the crime is so wicked that it cannot justify the results, which Sandel says is the difference between categorical and causational morality in his "Justice" series. I look forward to tearing down more barriers of ignorance through the study of a dynamic subject like law, which allows lifelong learning. This infinite chance to develop intellectually is captivating.