

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY
SOCIOLOGY 4410
2011 FALL
SURVEILLANCE AND SOCIAL CONTROL

Course Meets: Fridays 11:35 am- 2:25 pm in Loeb C665

Instructor: Jennifer R. Whitson

Office: A711 Loeb

Office Hours: Fridays 2:30-3:30pm.

Online Office Hours: Sundays 8:00-9:00 pm, through WebCT

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only in emergency use jwhitson@connect.carleton.ca.

WebCT email is the best way to reach me. I will answer WebCT emails within 48 hours.

Pre-requisites & precluded Courses: Fourth Year Standing

Course Description and Objectives:

How are surveillance technologies altering social life, especially in terms of shaping what we think, see, and do? This course will explore this question by mapping the complex ways that technologies and societies interact to produce security, fear, control, vulnerability, and/or empowerment. Some of the areas covered include social networking, anti-terrorism legislation, closed-circuit television (CCTV), racial classification schemes, hiding from the law, and a host of monitoring technologies in cyberspaces, workplaces, and the home. This will entail examining several theoretical approaches to the study of surveillance. Readings will be drawn from the social sciences and popular media to facilitate critical inquiry into the shaping of popular perceptions about the surveillance and social control.

The class is designed to give you freedom to develop and express your own ideas. The course goal is for you to cultivate sociological and technological literacy that will allow you to analyze and critique surveillance technologies as social entities.

Reading (s)/Textbook (s):

*** Completing required readings is central to your success in this course.***

Required readings: All of your required readings are posted on WebCT (using the Ares service).

Course Requirements & Methods of Evaluation:

This is an upper year seminar course. You are consequently expected to participate actively in

generating and pursuing discussion of issues. The aim of a seminar course is for all of us to discuss and analyze the assigned readings. Hence it is a REQUIREMENT for this course that you read all assigned readings prior to every class and actively participate in classroom discussion. This includes bringing questions/comments to class about the readings, asking questions, making *constructive* criticism of classroom presentations, and connecting themes discussed in class with contemporary events.

Five factors will be evaluated as part of this course. These are set out below.

Assignment	% of Total Grade	Due Date
300 word Abstract and Reference list (15 articles)	10%	October 14
Take-home response paper (1,250 words)	20%	November 4
In-Class Debates: Oral debate Written Reflection	10% 10%	Sign-up
Final Research Essay (2,500 words)	30%	December 2
Participation: In-Class	12%	Weekly
On-line	8%	

Note: The above is the *only* grade structure. You will not be permitted to improve your grade by completing additional work or assignments.

Reference List and Abstract- Due October 14th

On October 14th you will hand in a 300 word abstract of your final paper. This should be considerably advanced beyond a “I hope to look at...” style of summary. Instead, it should be a concise abstract of the argument you will be making in your final paper and identification of the sources you will potentially be drawing from.

In addition to your abstract, you must attach a list of at least 15 reference items pertaining to the topic of your final research essay. These materials will be drawn from academic journal articles, chapters in edited academic books, or academic articles published on the Web. **Note:** book titles and assigned course readings are not accepted. You should include the pertinent bibliographic information for the reference: title, author, year of publication, etc. You should also highlight what you see as the ten most promising references, indicating with a sentence or two why you think they might be important.

Rationale: The abstract is an opportunity to ensure you have selected an appropriate paper topic, to ensure an early start to the paper, and to ensure feedback on your paper so that you can earn a better mark on your final paper.

Many students have difficulty finding good sources, which are the backbone of good term papers. This assignment will follow an in-class session on how to find academic sources, explaining how they differ from non-academic sources. At this point, you do not have to read beyond the paper abstracts. However, by beginning your reading early, you will have a head start on your term paper. Once I have your reference list, I may recommend other relevant sources for you to check out.

Response Paper - Due November 4th

On October 28th you will be given a response paper assignment. The specifics of this assignment will be provided on that date, but in essence it will involve your being asked a question related to the topic of surveillance and analyzing it in light of the material that we have been discussing to that date. This is *not* a research paper. In fact, I want you to mirror the informal tone of the magazine and news articles

in your course readings. The response paper will be approximately 1,250 words in length.

In-Class Debates - Variable

There will be six debates held throughout the term (Sept 30, Oct 21 & 28, Nov 11, 18 & 25). You will each participate in one debate in which you will explore in depth a specific topic related to the course.

First, sign up for a debate topic and a position (i.e., "side") in weeks 1 and 2 of this seminar. You might end up arguing a position you do not personally agree with. For each debate, one team will debate another team on a given topic. Since enrolment might fluctuate, you might work individually or you might work in pairs or groups of no more than 3 students. During sign up, all debate topics/positions must be filled by at least one person before another name can be added to a topic/position. People working in teams consisting of more than one person will be marked collectively.

If you are working in a team of more than one person (i.e., more than just you), you will be marked collectively on your oral presentation. You will all be graded individually for your written reflections. It is your responsibility to ensure a fair division of labour. It is also your responsibility to contribute your best work to your team.

Oral Debate: 10%

For your debate topic, you will conduct research to support your "side" of the debate. Your research should include a minimum of 4 academic/scholarly sources in addition to course readings, and an unlimited number of additional sources. Based on your research, you will develop an argument in favour of your position, and present this argument in the debate. You should also prepare rebuttals (i.e., counter-arguments) in advance ("prepared rebuttals"), as well as prepare to respond for possible rebuttals by your opponent ("spontaneous rebuttals").

In-class debate structure:

Stage 1: Side A presents arguments for their perspective – up to 10 minutes;

Stage 2: Side B presents arguments for their perspective – up to 10 minutes;

Stage 3: Side A presents their "rebuttal"/ counter-argument (both prepared and spontaneous) to Side B – approximately 5 minutes;

Stage 4: Side B presents their "rebuttal"/ counter-argument (both prepared and spontaneous) to Side A – approximately 5 minutes;

Stage 5: Side A and Side B take alternating turns in free debate – approximately 10 minutes;

Stage 6: Debate is open to entire class to participate. Both Sides A and B are free to respond – up to 20 minutes.

As you engage in debate, you should take brief notes on your own spontaneous rebuttals. That is, you should jot down brief notes when you come up with arguments or points on the spot.

Written Overview & Individual Reflection: 10%

Due 1 week after your oral debate

One week after your debate, you will submit a hard copy of your debate, composed of:

- (1) your original, unmodified presentation of arguments (i.e., the document you are reading/ working off when you present), including your original, prepared rebuttals,
- (2) any notes you took on your spontaneous rebuttals,
- (3) the bibliography of all of your sources, and
- (4) a 1-2 page reflection on the debate itself in terms of the arguments advanced relating to your topic. **Each student must hand in their own personal reflection.**

Your reflection should be a contemplation of the argumentation in the debate in which you participated. For example, you should address questions such as: Were you persuaded by the arguments of your opponents? What were the weaknesses and strengths in your own verbal rebuttals/counter-arguments? What were the strengths and weaknesses of your opponents' position as they presented it? Were there any particularly good insights or questions by classmates? In what ways did the debate question constrain the structure of your argument? How has the debate stimulated further thought on this topic for you? Etc.

Policy Notes: All presenters are encouraged to discuss their debate with me for a few minutes at least one week in advance. Presenters who plan to use technology with which the classroom is not already equipped should notify me at least one week in advance to ensure access to the relevant technology.

The oral presentation of your debate may not be delivered late except as a result of a documented illness or personal emergency. (For those working in pairs or groups of three, if only one person is able to attend, that person will deliver the debate on behalf of the team on the original scheduled date. Therefore, be sure to share your work with your partner(s) in advance of the presentation date.) Without documentation for an absence on your own debate day, you will receive a 20% penalty. You will be expected to deliver your oral presentation in the next class in which it is practicable, which will be determined by the instructor.

Rationale: Debating provides a forum to examine the merits and demerits of perspectives on a given topic, while facilitating peer-to-peer education. Your debate reflection is an individual opportunity to consider and reconsider the merits and demerits of the arguments advanced both by you and your opponent in order further to advance your contemplation of an issue. It is also an opportunity to consider questions and perspectives presented by your peers.

Final Term paper - Due December 2nd

This entire course is designed to help you build a substantial research paper on any topic you might choose pertaining to the use of surveillance in social control. You are encouraged to write on any course-related topic that interests you. **You should consult with me concerning your choice of topic.** You are expected to produce *exceptional* final papers of approximately 2,500 words.

Although you are expected to commit to a research topic early in the course, you should also feel free to change your topic during the term as your interests change.

Term papers are **due the last day of class.**

Participation - Weekly

As an upper-year seminar class, you are expected to actively contribute to in-class discussion. This includes having read the material in advance of the class and making informed comments, observations and criticisms of the readings. **Note: simply attending class and making required presentations will count for a grade of 0 for classroom participation.** For full marks (and your added enjoyment) you're expected to keep up with our reading schedule, participate actively in our weekly seminars, and contribute to our discussions, both in-class and online.

1. In-Class Participation (12%):

You are required to attend class regularly, with the readings completed in advance, and to actively participate in group discussions and activities. Participation will be gauged by attendance **and** engagement in class discussion and activities.

2. Online Participation (8%):

There will be a discussion board on WebCT (starting this class) where you can post comments and responses to posted topics that relate to the readings, lecture and/or class discussion. I will post weekly discussion questions to a specific discussion board. You can respond to these questions or post your own comments regarding the week's material. These comments/questions should be at least several sentences long and demonstrate an engagement with the material and an attempt to employ a sociological perspective.

Each comment is worth 1%. You can post as much as you like, but in order to be eligible for full marks you must post in at least 8 of the separate calendar weeks listed below:

September 9 th -15 th	September 16 th -22 nd	September 23 rd -29 th
September 30 th -October 13 th	October 14 th - 20 th	October 21 st - 27 th
October 28 th - November 3 rd	November 4 th - 10 th	November 11 th - 17 th
November 18 th - 24 th	November 25 th - December 2 nd	

Please remember that these online spaces are a virtual extension of our classroom, and therefore, subject to the University's conduct regulations. At all times, you must respect your fellow classmates, and try to keep the discussion relevant to our course goals. When in doubt, follow The Golden Rule of Netiquette: *Don't post any comment you wouldn't read aloud in class.*

Grades:

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar (p 39), the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62	D - = 50-52
F = Below 50	WDN = Withdrawn from the course		

ABS = Student absent from final exam

DEF = Deferred (See above)

FND = (Failed, no Deferred) = Student could not pass the course even with 100% on final exam

All final grades are subject to the Dean's approval.

I am willing to reconsider grades for all components of the course **if there is a sound basis for why the previous grading was in error**. I will provide the appropriate appeals form for you to fill out. Individuals who would like to have an assignment re-evaluated should outline **in writing** the reasons why they believe their assignment/exam deserves a better grade. Assignments must be re-submitted no more than two weeks after the assignment was returned to the student.

Academic Regulations, Accommodations, Plagiarism, Etc.

University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and most anything else you might need to know can be found on the university's website, here:

<http://www.carleton.ca/calendars/ugrad/current/regulations/acadregsuniv.html>

Requests for Academic Accommodations

For Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations are required to contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre to complete the necessary *letters of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss their needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first class or ITV test. This is to ensure sufficient time is available to make the necessary accommodation arrangements.

- The deadlines for contacting the Paul Menton Centre regarding accommodation for final exams for the December 2011 exam period is November 11, 2011.

For Religious Obligations:

Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious obligation should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory event.

Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodation policies, or may contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

For Pregnancy:

Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as your own and is a serious academic offence. For the details of what constitutes plagiarism, the potential penalties and the procedures refer to the section on Instructional Offences in the Undergraduate Calendar.

What are the Penalties for Plagiarism?

A student found to have plagiarized an assignment may be subject to one of several penalties including: expulsion; suspension from all studies at Carleton; suspension from full-time studies; and/or a reprimand; a refusal of permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program; academic probation; award of an FNS, Fail, or an ABS.

What are the Procedures?

All allegations of plagiarism are reported to the faculty of Dean of FASS and Management. Documentation is prepared by instructors and/or departmental chairs.

The Dean writes to the student and the University Ombudsperson about the alleged plagiarism. The Dean reviews the allegation. If it is not resolved at this level then it is referred to a tribunal appointed by the Senate.

Plagiarism and cheating at the graduate level are viewed as being particularly serious and

the sanctions imposed are accordingly severe. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the Carleton University Student Academic Integrity Policy (See <http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/advisingcentre/academic-integrity/>). The Policy is strictly enforced and is binding on all students. Plagiarism and cheating – presenting another’s ideas, arguments, words or images as your own, using unauthorized material, misrepresentation, fabricating or misrepresenting research data, unauthorized co-operation or collaboration or completing work for another student – weaken the quality of the graduate degree. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Students who infringe the Policy may be subject to one of several penalties including: expulsion; suspension from all studies at Carleton; suspension from full-time studies; a refusal of permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program; academic probation; or a grade of Failure in the course.

Assistance for Students:

Student Academic Success Centre (SASC): www.carleton.ca/sasc

Writing Tutorial Services: www.carleton.ca/wts

Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS): www.carleton.ca/sasc/peer-assisted-study-sessions

WebCT & CONNECT

You must have access to WebCT to do well in the course. I will use WebCT to send important emails and announcements to the class. It is important that you check WebCT frequently. Information provided on the WebCT course page will be considered to have been provided to all registered students within 24 hours of posting. Any announcements you miss will be your responsibility.

For me to respond to your emails, I need to see your full name, CU ID, and the email must be written from your valid CONNECT address. Therefore, it would be easier if you would **send all email from inside your WebCT account**. Please see me if you have concerns about computer access. If you have any problems check <http://edc.carleton.ca/webct/students> . If you do not have or have yet to activate your CONNECT account, you may wish to do so by visiting <https://portal.carleton.ca/>.

Important Information:

Assignments

Students must always retain a hard copy of all work that is submitted.

Missed Classes

You are responsible for knowing the material and announcements presented during seminars whether or not you attend class. Please arrange with another student to get missed notes and announcements. An excellent way to get in touch with fellow students is on the WebCT Discussion Boards.

Classroom Expectations and Behaviour

Please do not disrupt other students’ ability to hear the seminar (e.g., do not arrive late or leave early, begin packing your belongings before class ends, chat while others are speaking etc.).

Technology Notes:

Laptop computers and other portable technologies should be used in class only as learning-facilitation tools. During class, it is not acceptable to play games, answer email, surf the web, answer cell phones, text message, or engage in other non-class-related activities. Your participation grade will be penalized if you break this rule.

Why? Not only do these practices negatively affect your learning and participation, but they also distract others and create an environment of disrespect.

COURSE CALENDAR & READINGS:

All readings are available on reserve at the Carleton library and/or online through WebCT. Some of these are pdf files, some are direct links to the web, while others are links to the library system where you would have to navigate the journal itself to access the article.

Note: This is a tentative class reading schedule and will be modified as required.

Readings marked below with an “*” are required readings.

The other references are provided as examples of spectacularly interesting non-academic writing. They are short, you should take a look at them.

Date	Topic	Readings	Debate Schedule	Notes/ Due Dates
Sept 9	Introduction	no readings today	Sign up for Debate!	
Part I - Theory				
Sept 16	Foucault & the Panopticon	*Foucault, Michel. 1977. “Panopticism.” Pp. 195-228 in <i>Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison</i> . New York: Vintage. http://foucault.info/documents/disciplineAndPunish/foucault.disciplineAndPunish.panOpticism.html	Sign up for Debate!	
Wk 2		*Shearing, C.D., and P.C. Stenning. 1985. “From the Panopticon to Disney World: The development of discipline.” Pp. 335 - 349 in <i>Perspectives in Criminal Law: Essays in Honour of John L.L. J. Edwards</i> . Toronto: Canada Law. Downey, Tom. 2010. “China’s Cyberposse.” <i>The New York Times</i> , March 7 . http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/07/magazine/07Human-t.html?pagewanted=all		
Sept 23	Deleuze & Control Society	*Deleuze, Gilles. 1992. “Postscript on societies of control.” <i>October</i> 59(Winter):3 - 7.	Finalize Debate Schedule.	There are 3 assigned readings this week. Not the usual 2.
Wk3		*Haggerty, K.D., and R.V. Ericson. 2000. “The Surveillant Assemblage.” <i>British Journal of Sociology</i> 51(4):605-622. *Jones, Richard. 2000. “Digital Rule: Punishment, control and technology.” <i>Punishment & Society</i> 2(1):5-22.		

Part II - People Watching

<p>Sept 30 Wk4</p>	<p>The Kids R Alright</p>	<p>*Moore, Dawn, and Kevin D. Haggerty. 2001. "Bring it on Home: Home Drug Testing and the Relocation of the War on Drugs." <i>Social & Legal Studies</i> 10(3):377 -395.</p> <p>*Kupchik, Aaron, and Torin Monahan. 2006. "The New American School: preparation for post-industrial discipline." <i>British Journal of Sociology of Education</i> 27(5):617-631.</p> <p>Doctorow, Cory. 2007. <i>Little Brother</i>. [London] : C. Doctorow, E-book downloaded at: http://craphound.com/littlebrother/download/ Chapters 1 through 4.</p>	<p>Debate 1</p>	<p>Last day to withdraw from fall term and fall/winter courses with a full fee adjustment.</p> <p>Your turn! In-class anonymous student evaluation of the course. If there are issues you'd like to raise, or improvements you'd like me to make, tell me now!</p>
<p>Oct 7 wk5</p>	<p>NO CLASS TODAY! (work on your abstract & references)</p>			
<p>Oct 14 Wk6</p>	<p>Policing & Intelligence</p>	<p>*Goffman, Alice. 2009. "On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto." <i>American Sociological Review</i> 74(3):339-357.</p> <p>*Whitaker, Reg. 2006. "A Faustian Bargain? America and the Dream of Total Information Awareness." Pp. 141-170 in <i>The New Politics of Surveillance and Visibility</i>, edited by Richard V. Ericson and Kevin .D. Haggerty. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. (library e-book)</p> <p>Carr, Paul. 2011. "To Cops At Least, Criminal Oversharing is Caring." <i>TechCrunch</i>. http://techcrunch.com/2011/02/06/overshare-bears/</p>	<p>Debate 2</p>	<p>Abstract and Reference list due</p>
<p>Oct 21 Wk7</p>	<p>The Pleasures of Watching</p>	<p>*Sessions, Lauren F. 2009. "'You Looked Better on MySpace': Deception and Authenticity on Web 2.0." <i>First Monday</i> 14(7). http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2539/2242</p> <p>*Mathiesen, T. 1997. "The Viewer Society: Michel Foucault's 'Panopticon' revisited." <i>Theoretical Criminology</i> 1(2):215 - 234.</p> <p>Segal, Debra. 1993. "Tales from the Cutting-Room Floor." <i>Harper's Magazine</i>, 50-57.</p>		

Oct 28 Wk8	Disappearance, Forgetting & Ubiquitous Computing	<p>*Jean-Francois Blanchette, and Deborah G. Johnson. 2002. "Data Retention and the Panoptic Society: The Social Benefits of Forgetfulness." <i>The Information Society</i> 18(1):33 - 45.</p> <p>*Monahan, Torin. 2009. "Dreams of Control at a Distance: Gender, Surveillance, and Social Control." <i>Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies</i> 9(2):286 -305.</p> <p>Rosen, Jeffrey. 2010. "The Web Means the End of Forgetting." <i>New York Times</i>. http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/25/magazine/25privacy-t2.html?pagewanted=all</p> <p>Ratliff, Evan. 2009. "Gone Forever: What Does It Take to Really Disappear?" <i>Wired</i> http://www.wired.com/vanish/2009/08/gone-forever-what-does-it-take-to-really-disappear/</p>	Debate 3	Take Home Assigned today
Part III - "You Ain't Nothin' But a Number"				
Nov 4 Wk9	Who are You? Classification & Identification	<p>*Bowker, Geoffrey C., and Susan Leigh Star. 1999. "The Case of Race Classification and Reclassification under Apartheid." Pp. 195-225 in <i>Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences</i>. The MIT Press. (available as library e-book)</p> <p>*Torpey, J. 1998. "Coming and Going: On the State Monopolization of the Legitimate 'Means of Movement'." <i>Sociological Theory</i> 16(3):239 - 259.</p> <p>Austen, Ben. 2011. "What Caricatures can Teach Us about Facial Recognition." <i>Wired</i>. http://www.wired.com/magazine/tag/facial-recognition/</p>		Take Home Due
Nov 11 Wk 10	Risk, Efficiency & the Surveillance Society	<p>*Aas, K.F. 2006. "'The Body Does Not Lie': Identity, Risk and Trust in Technoculture." <i>Crime, Media, Culture</i> 2(2):143 - 158.</p> <p>*Lyon, David. 2003. "Surveillance as Social Sorting: Computer codes and mobile bodies." Pp. 13-30 in <i>Surveillance as social sorting: privacy, risk, and digital discrimination</i>. London: Routledge.</p>	Debate 4	

		<p>available as library e-book</p> <p>Brin, David. 2004. "Three cheers for the Surveillance Society!" <i>Salon.com</i>. http://www.salon.com/technology/feature/2004/08/04/mortal_gods</p>	
Nov 18	Dataveillance, Advertising & Consumer Drones	<p>*Turow, Josphe. 2006. "Cracking the Consumer Code: Advertisers, Anxiety, and Surveillance in the Digital Age." Pp. 279-307 in <i>The New Politics of Surveillance and Visibility</i>, edited by Richard V. Ericson and Kevin D. Haggerty. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. (available as e-book from library).</p> <p>*Andrejevic, M. 2007. "Surveillance in the Digital Enclosure." <i>The Communication Review</i> (10)4: 295-317.</p> <p>Angwin, Julia. 2010. "The New Gold Mine: Your Personal Information & Tracking Data Online." <i>Wall Street Journal</i>. http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703940904575395073512989404.html</p> <p>2010. "What They Know - Mobile." <i>Wall Street Journal</i>. http://blogs.wsj.com/wtk-mobile/</p>	Debate 5
Nov 25	Resistance is Futile?!?	<p>*Marx, G.T. 2003. "A Tack in the Shoe: Neutralizing and Resisting the New Surveillance." <i>Journal of Social Issues</i> 59(2):369 - 390.</p> <p>*Gilliom, John. 2006 "Struggling with Surveillance" Pp. 111-129 in <i>The New Politics of Surveillance and Visibility</i>, edited by Richard V. Ericson and Kevin D. Haggerty. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. (available as e-book from library).</p> <p>Schneier, Bruce. 2008. "The Myth of the 'Transparent Society'." <i>Wired</i>. http://www.wired.com/politics/security/commentary/securitymatters/2008/03/securitymatters_0306</p>	Debate 6
Dec 2	Catch Up		Papers Due Today
Wk 13			

Pointers for Reading the Assigned Articles

Many students initially find it difficult to assess and critique academic papers. Below are some guidelines to help hone your critical thinking skills, and to stimulate intellectual discussion in the classroom.

I *strongly* recommend that after you have read the paper that you take 5-10 minutes to concretely think about the paper. This will be the most important time you spend in relation to each assigned article. Use this time to note *two or three points* that you would like to make about the piece if you are called upon to comment on the reading, and formulate 1 question that flows from the week's topic. You are free to address any points you like, but as a form of guidance, consider the following:

- How does the reading relate to other readings we have done?
- Are some parts of the argument stronger than others?
- Does the author provide sufficient evidence to make his/her argument?
- Are there important factors or counter-arguments that the author has overlooked?
- Is there an example or counter-example from current events that can be used to illustrate a point related to the article?
- If the author is correct, what consequences would follow for society, policy, theory, etc?
- What political implications result from the author's position?
- Is the argument made in the paper and example (or refutation) of a point in a different article that we read?
- Can the lessons learned in that paper be applied to other societies or cultures?
- Were there parts of the paper that require further clarification?
- Could you apply a concept that the author has introduced in another setting?
- Did you think of another historical example that reinforced or contradicted the author's argument?
- If you had a strong reaction to an article, why do you think you had such a reaction?
- Do concepts from your other classes provide insight into this paper?
- What additional evidence would you need to be convinced of his/her argument?
- How could the author improve his/her argument?
- What does the argument tell us about society, or human nature?
- Do the conclusions match the evidence?
- Is there anything else you think is interesting and/or relevant?

Policy and Guidelines for Written Assignments:

Extensions and Late Assignments:

- All assignments are expected to be submitted on time, unless you have: i) a medical note from a doctor explaining that you could not complete the assignment; ii) an explanatory note from the Paul Menton Centre (See Special Accommodations, below); or iii) special permission for an extension from me.
- You may submit written assignments up to 3 days late without penalty; however, late assignments will not receive extensive written feedback.
- Written assignments submitted more than 3 days late will be docked 5%/day, up to a maximum of 20%. Assignments handed in more than 7 days past the due date will not be accepted, and will score 0. In other words, plan ahead, develop a work schedule, and stick to it. Any request for an extension beyond 3 days must be submitted by email to the instructor at least one week before the due date.
- Failure to complete or hand in a written assignment earns a zero on that project.

Notes for Handing in Assignments:

- Please don't bother using fancy cover sheets, duo-tangs, etc. Simply staple your paper in the left hand corner.
- Keep an electronic and paper copy of any assignments you hand in. If I cannot find my copy of your paper and you cannot immediately provide another copy I will presume that the assignment was not handed in.
- Papers should employ proper formatting as outlined in one of the different academic styles, such as the MLA or APA format. This should include a cover sheet that indicates your name, student number, title, instructor's name, course number, and **word count**. Word count should not include your references. Papers should have page numbering, one inch margins, be double spaced, and use 12 point, Times New Roman (default) font.
- If you are unfamiliar with an academic style you should consult one of the many books in the library that will provide guidance on academic styles. The library also has online guides found here: <http://www.library.carleton.ca/help/online/Writing and Citing>
- Late papers can be handed in to the Sociology office (Loeb, 7th Floor). The administrative assistants in the office will date stamp late papers.
- **Never** slide an assignment under my office door. They are apt to be lost. Moreover, as I am often not in my office for days at a time, they will be graded as being late according to the day they are found (if they are ever found).
- Be sure to back up your work (both locally and to network drives) and print out hard copies regularly as you write. That way, if your computer fails, you can always locate another computer at the University to finish your work.