

ESSAY GUIDELINES

Soc. 192 Fall 2004

The **ESSAY ASSIGNMENT** is the most in depth of the three components of the course. The essay is an opportunity for you to engage with an entire section of the course: readings, lectures, and outside material. This is a formal essay; it should be 6 pages, typed, double-spaced, and copy-edited. The goal is to tie together the readings, lecture, and at least two outside academic source (that is, scholarly journals or books). ***Internet sources, newspaper articles, and magazines are not accepted.*** As with any formal essay it should have an introduction, the substance of your argument, and a conclusion.

You may choose any topic that relates to the substantive material of the course. The only requirement is that it builds on the materials from lecture, the readings, your relevant outside sources, and you must relate this topic to your own life. Sociology is a lived experience, and this paper should show the connections between social theory and lived behavior as you have experienced it. Some topic ideas for the essay could be: 1) Durkheim discusses social solidarity and collective effervescence. Discuss a moment in time when you have experienced such a phenomenon. How did it make you feel? What were the reactions of the group as a whole? What are the implications for society? 2) Marx's idea of false consciousness addresses the reasons why social revolution has not yet occurred, yet it also can help to explain how people delude themselves, are deluded by social or political ideology, or how we as a society are in denial about social problems. Discuss how you have experienced false consciousness in your life (where you or another person was clearly under some illusion). How was this functional for society as a whole? How was it related to the dominant ideology? Lastly, 3) Pick a local group and volunteer some time with them (this should probably be an community service group, like a get out the vote drive, a political campaign, a union, an advocacy organization, etc). What are they doing? Why do they do it? Why do they do it in the way that they do? Analyze this group, their actions, and their achievements in terms of what we've talked and read about in class.

The following are requirements to get a passing mark on the paper:

- You must use **at least two outside academic source (that is, scholarly journals or books)**. *Newspaper articles and magazines are not accepted as academic sources. You may use them if you get prior approval.*
- You **CANNOT** use internet sources unless you get approval at least a week in advance.
- You **MUST** include a bibliography of your references.
- You **MUST** relate the material to your own life

One final note: **PLAGIARISM**. It is expected that you will turn in your own work. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will be treated as such. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting without citation, paraphrasing without citation, using another student's work from this semester or the past, using your own work from the past, or using quotes or full papers from the internet. If you don't know what plagiarism is, please take a moment to educate yourself by visiting <http://www.csus.edu/admbus/umannual/UMP14150.htm>. Please act with integrity—do not risk your academic career, it's not worth it.