

Response Pieces

one due each lecture, except for the first (Jan. 7) and last (Apr. 1)

Each week before class you are to write a short reflective piece responding to some part of the week's assigned readings – a “response piece”. The purpose of these response pieces is: (a) to enhance our classroom discussion of the readings; and (b) to help you come up with and develop ideas and material for your term paper.

Guidelines

Each response piece should be approximately 250 words in length (i.e., one double-spaced page). More important than length, though, is content: each response piece should explore a single, original idea you had in response to the week's reading. **Response pieces should not be mere summaries** of the readings, or any part of the readings; **you must do some analysis or synthesis of the assigned material.** This can be as simple as pointing out some part of the week's reading that confused you and explaining why it confused you. Or you may write about how some part of the week's reading reminded you of this other thing and explain why this connection is interesting. Or you may lay out an argument from the week's reading and explain why you think it's faulty. Or you may develop an objection to a claim made in the week's reading. Basically, just pick something from the week's reading that struck you and explain why it struck you.

Turning it in

Response pieces must be submitted on Blackboard (under “Response Pieces”) by 6 p.m. the day of each lecture. If you're unable to submit your response piece through Blackboard (because your computer's crashed or the Internet's down or whatever), you can email me your response piece or bring a hard copy to class.

Response pieces may be formatted however you wish. You may submit your response piece on the assignment submission page either as an attached file (.pdf or .doc or .rtf, please), or as a copy-and-pasted text submission.

Bringing it in

In class you will be exchanging response pieces with your classmates, so **you must bring a copy of your response piece with you to class as well**. You may bring either an electronic or a hard copy, but if it is electronic you must be willing to share the device the electronic copy is on with others.

Grading

Response pieces will be graded on a 2 point scale:

- 2 points for an adequate response
- 1 point for an inadequate response
(because too short, or superficial, or off-topic, or whatever)
- 0 points when no response has been submitted on time

Determination of adequacy/inadequacy is at the discretion of the instructor.