

POLITICAL ECONOMY & SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

...the point however is to change it.
<http://academic.evergreen.edu/curricular/pesm/>

Winter 2007

For the Wednesday, Jan 24 workshop, we would like you to begin brainstorming on your essay: consider which question you would like to examine, review the readings, lectures, films, etc., and identify which program texts you will most likely synthesize in your essay and bring this to the workshop.

Synthesis Essay Guidelines

A synthesis essay requires you to relate the themes of different readings to each other in a clear analysis and argument. The primary purpose of the essay is to help you integrate material covered in the program to date – readings, lectures, films, seminars – in a coherent and meaningful fashion. It is therefore not necessary, nor do we expect that you do outside research. However, if you do refer to supplementary sources, they should be used sparingly and only in support of your main argument and should be fully referenced in your bibliography.

Please write an essay of 5-7 double-spaced typed pages. Your essay should draw convincingly from all or nearly all of the recent readings and other materials to date relevant to your argument (roughly materials from the three weeks prior to your group's due date). It must work in some depth with at least three sources. It needs to engage the program materials in synthesis and analysis to show your reasoning, provide evidential support, and evidence careful judgment.

It is essential that you think through your argument carefully and that it be well-supported by reasoning, analysis, and factual evidence. The paper should be organized around this thesis and its coherent development. A successful response needs to be concrete and well grounded in the program materials. This means you will need to carefully think through a way to frame and focus your essay so as to allow for a well-developed and plausible explanation.

Each aspect of your position or argument must be documented. Documentation answers the questions: "Where did you find this information? What sources support each point in your argument?" Documented evidence should be drawn from the program books, articles, lecture, and films. Follow a consistent documentation style Chicago, APA, or MLA for documenting your footnotes and bibliography (see the library's Citation & Style Guides through our program page or through the library homepage). You can find out more about documentation and citation at the writing center and in a writing handbook (there are plenty in the library's reference section and we've placed one on the program's reserve shelf in the library).

Please take care in your writing. This means treating your readers with respect by drafting, organizing, revising, and proofreading your essay. It should be presented with appropriate grammar, sentence structure, proofreading, citations, and a full bibliography. Your essay needs page numbers and a title.

On **Feb 2**, you will bring to seminar a copy of the essay: 5-7 pages, stapled, 12 point double-spaced. (In Zoltan's seminar, turn in 2 copies.) Keep in mind this essay will be revised and expanded (8-10 pages) by Week 9, using additional assigned readings from the second half of the program.

On the other side you will find optional essay questions. You can choose any one of these questions to answer or you can choose another topic altogether as long as you follow the above guidelines.

Optional Synthesis Essay Questions

If you choose to answer one of these questions indicate in your header which question you are addressing.

1. A key topic of PESH this quarter has been neoliberalism or what's sometimes called globalization or corporate globalization. We might consider that neoliberalism can also be seen as the global restructuring of women's labor. In what ways has neoliberalism changed the lives and work of different women around the world? Throughout your essay give specific examples and ideas based on books, films, lectures, guest speakers, workshops, etc. this quarter.

2. Given what we have read so far this quarter: In the face of neoliberalism what alternatives do countries around the world have? What are the various obstacles countries face in charting a different path? Throughout your essay give specific examples and ideas based on books, films, lectures, guest speakers, workshops, etc. this quarter.

3. How has social movement organizing methodology changed in this era of capitalist globalization? What are aspects that are more difficult as capital and labor mobility becomes more "flexible"? What are opportunities and alternate socio-economic models that contemporary globalization opens up for social movements? Throughout your essay give specific examples and ideas based on books, films, lectures, guest speakers, workshops, etc. this quarter.

4. Capitalist globalization and the increase in militarization and war are often viewed as separate issues. Globalization is usually depicted as an economic and multilateral process, whereas militarization is depicted as a military/political and unilateral process. How would integrate the two themes, to make them two parts of a larger whole? How do natural resources and social movements fit into this integrated whole? Throughout your essay give specific examples and ideas based on books, films, lectures, guest speakers, workshops, etc. this quarter.

5. Particular multinational corporations have been criticized for their low wages, use of sweatshop labor, discrimination, environmental destruction, and violations of human rights and indigenous rights. In thinking about current socio-economic problems, is the origin primarily in the most objectional "Wal-Mart-style" corporations, in the entire category of "big business" corporations, or in the system of global capitalism generally? Cite specific examples and case studies. Given your answer, how would you structure social movement organizing and pose socio-economic alternatives? Throughout your essay give specific examples and ideas based on books, films, lectures, guest speakers, workshops, etc. this quarter.

6. Examine the question whether capitalist globalization is "new" or "not new," with regards to culture, economic restructuring, the state, gender and racial differences, technological innovation, and the mobility of capital and labor.