Reading Reflections

Due Thursdays.

Rather than boiling down readings to their essence, reading reflections are an opportunity to summarize the main points of each week’s readings and explore themes within and between the readings. Not all readings each week are necessarily closely related, so look to the content heading for each session and section for clues about how readings might relate or not relate. If the two sets of readings in a give week are completely unrelated, then separate them out in to two shorter reflections. However, keep in mind that all of the course readings are related in one way or another. [Please Note: for weeks 3 & 7, the Becker readings should not be part of your reflections – these are a separate category of readings]

While reading assigned material you should take notes and annotate your copy (i.e. write in the margins). For each weekly reflection you should then summarize the main points of the readings and say something interesting about them, including but not limited to:

- How do the readings relate to each other?
- What themes do the readings explore, either individually or together?
- What ideas do you feel are most important in the readings? Why are they important?
- Do you agree or disagree with any of the readings? Why?

Length of reading reflections should be one page of narrative text, with the following Formatting options: 1.5 or double spacing, 11-12 point font, and 1-inch margins. Citing/referencing: there is no need for a complete bibliography, rather you can simply use the author(s) name (and a shortened title if we read more than one item from the same author), e.g. “Redford et al. suggest…”

Grading will be based on the overall quality of the reflections. A quality reading reflection demonstrates that you have read and understood the material, that you have thought about how the various readings relate to each other, and it demonstrates that you are taking a critical, analytical approach to the readings. In other words, these are not simply summaries of the readings. If a reading doesn’t make sense to you, it may be flawed. In such a case, you can raise questions about the reading in your reflection.

Weekly reflections will be both instructor and peer-graded (I’ll take the average). Therefore, you must bring two copies of your paper to class, one that I will keep and one that another student will grade. We will develop a grading schedule to rotate peer-graders. Three possible grades will be assigned as follows: ✓; ✓⁺; or ✓⁻ (check = 4 pts; check plus = 6 pts; or check minus = 2 pts).