

## Paper 3

CORE 101 04A, Spring 2004

This is “the research paper” that all Symposium classes include. The paper will be ten to fifteen double-spaced pages long, and it should involve substantial research into the subject matter, as demonstrated by citing at least seven dependable sources.

In this class, the paper should attempt to convince the reader that a technology (you choose) had a particular, *unexpected* effect on human society — or that the technology failed to produce an effect that many people expected (or that people now erroneously attribute to the technology). You should use a variety of forms of evidence to convince your audience thoroughly; some possible forms of evidence include contemporary reports of the effect, historians’ analysis, logical arguments for how the technology could have the effect supposed, and statistics. (You are welcome to include images, graphs, and charts. They are not worth 1000 words, though, but 1/6 page.)

The word *technology* here is a broad term, including all types of inventions, including but not limited to medical developments, new features on existing products, and minor mechanical gadgets. If the introduction of heated seats into cars has had any major effects on society, then an analysis of that effect would be welcome.

Your paper should be aimed at an academic audience, whom you wish to convince of your thesis as a historical fact. For this audience, it is particularly important that you pay special attention to the weight of the evidence you present in favor of your thesis.

**Note:** You will adapt your subject into a 15-minute presentation to the class following completion of the paper.

There are two major restrictions to your topic. First, the technology must have come to prominence ten or more years

ago. This is for the practical expedient that it needs to have been around for a while for you to do a thorough job of researching it. As examples, the following two topics would be excellent, except that the technology addressed is too new.

- Cellular phones and the decrease in crimes related to road rage
- The effect of e-mail on the volume of junk mail sent through the post office

The other restriction is that the phenomenon must not be widely studied. If any educated American would know about the effect, or if there have already been entire books written on the subject, then you won’t have much new to say about it. The following two are example topics which would have been good if they weren’t so thoroughly studied already.

- Automobiles and the rise of suburbia
- The contribution of aerosol cans to the greenhouse effect

Because this assignment is a large fraction of the course, it is divided into several pieces, working toward the final product.

### Fri 13 Feb — Candidate topics (10 pts)

Since you’ll be spending a lot of time on this assignment, it is particularly important that you select a good topic. If you simply choose the first thing that comes to mind, then you’ll likely end up spending a lot of time on something that you don’t really find interesting.

Think of at least *two* possible topics for your paper. Submit a brief description of each thesis (one to three sentences for each), along with an analysis (two to four paragraphs) explaining your analysis of their relative merits. Your analysis could include your own personal interest in the subject — but it should also include your assessment of the broader interest

in the thesis and the potential for gathering support to prove the thesis.

To come up with topics, you could think of a technology and consider what unexpected effects it might have had, but it's difficult to approach the question that way. Instead, I would suggest that you might begin with an interest of yours and then think of ways in which it has changed over the years, and then think about whether any of them might reasonably be attributed to technological developments.

Submit these to me on paper or by e-mail attachment by 5pm.

### **Fri 27 Feb — Annotated bibliography (50 pts)**

Create an annotated bibliography. An annotated bibliography is essentially a list of references (listed as you would list them in the “works cited” section of a paper), with a brief description following each reference. For this assignment, each brief description should include the following, in whatever order sounds best.

- a one-sentence synopsis of the source and its relevance to your subject.
- a one-sentence description explaining what led you to the source.
- a brief description (one sentence or less) explaining the source's authority. In some cases, the authority will derive from representing a reputable institution (such as *The New York Times*); at others, the authority will derive from being a first-hand observer.

Your list must include at least six sources, including at least two “traditional” (i.e., non-electronic) sources. If they're all traditional, that's fine. You should really have many more than six. (One professor requires at least *twelve*.)

Your bibliography is due on paper or as an e-mail attachment by 5pm.

### **Tue 16 Mar — Sentence outline (50 pts)**

Prepare an outline of your paper, using short sentences or phrases for each point. Your outline should include all the evidence you plan to bring to bear on the subject. The outline should follow the traditional formal outline format, as illustrated on pages 527–528 of Axelrod and Cooper.

The outline is due at 2:40pm. I will review your outline before meeting you on or around Thu 18 Mar, when we will discuss possible changes before you delve into writing the paper.

### **Thu 25 Mar — First draft (50 pts)**

At this point, your draft need not be in completed form, but there should be at least seven polished pages done. Of course, if you have more, this will give me more to critique.

Your bibliography is due on paper or as an e-mail attachment by 5pm.

### **Mon 5 Apr — Second draft**

You should bring four (4) copies of your final draft to class to go over with your conference group. You will leave one copy with me.

### **Wed 7 Apr — Final draft (200 pts)**

Your final draft is due by 5pm, on paper or as an e-mail attachment. Note that this is the last day of school before Easter break.