

Assignment 3: i203 – Social and Organizational Issues of Information

Notes:

- Assignment 3 is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, April 24th, 2008.
- Bring **two** stapled copies of your assignment to class.
- Papers should be double-spaced, 12-point font, double-sided (if possible)

Part I (80%)

Select any **TWO** of the five papers listed below (which are drawn from our syllabus), and for each of them do the following:

1. In no more than two or three sentences, and in your own words, clearly state the paper's problem space.
2. Quote the key sentence(s) that most succinctly state the author's argument(s), and report them. **Remember that an argument is usually found in only one or two sentences.** If there are multiple arguments addressed in the paper, be clear about this and handle them separately. Your response to this part will consist entirely of the author's quoted text, in this format:
 - a. Main Argument: "This is the author's argument text" (Author, p.2).
3. In approximately two paragraphs, summarize how well you think the author did at stating a clear problem space, justifying it, and presenting and supporting arguments. What did they do well, what did they do poorly, and **why**? Note that we are not interested in whether you think the author is right or wrong. Instead, we want your assessment of the quality of the author's work in laying out a problem, justifying it, and arguing it.

Ackerman, Mark S. 2000. "The intellectual challenge of CSCW: the gap between social requirements and technical feasibility." *Human Computer Interaction* 15:179-203.

MacKenzie, Donald. 1996. "Chapter 10: Tacit Knowledge and the Uninvention of Nuclear Weapons." in *Knowing Machines*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Leonardi, Paul M. 2003. "Problematizing 'New Media': Culturally Based Perceptions of Cell Phones, Computers, and the Internet among United States Latinos." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 20:160-179.

Ryan, Dan. 2006. "Getting the Word Out: Notes on the Social Organization of Notification." *Sociological Theory* 24:228-254.

Granovetter, Mark. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *The American Journal of Sociology* 78:1360-1380.

Part II (20%)

In light of your work on Part I, consider **your final paper topic** and do the following:

1. Re-state your problem space clearly and succinctly in a maximum of 2-3 sentences.
2. Re-state the main argument(s) that you expect to make. Each argument should be 1-3 sentences maximum. Remember, this is not the justification—just the argument(s).

If you have done a good job, your response to this part is going to be very short and concise. Note that we are aware that many of your arguments are still in progress and may change; however, your argument(s) reported in this assignment should be realistic, defensible, and feasible as a class research paper. We want you to use this part of the assignment to move your final paper forward.

Suggestion: To get the most out of this part of the assignment, you should **avoid** going back to what you have already written on your final project (e.g. Assignment 2). If you have been struggling with defining a clear argument, try starting fresh and thinking about how to frame a successful argument and problem space in light of what you have done with Part I of this assignment. You may also find it useful to ask yourself whether or not your response meets the evaluation criteria that you used in Part I.