Topic: Fashion trends and SN—position essay

Good: Pretty well written; well researched; interesting topic; clear argument emerges quickly; nice use of first person and clear voice. Strong tie to SN terms, via Gladwell.

Not so good: Moves very quickly at times; needs details. Some assertions and arguments need sources to back 'em up. Section on media is brief. No ending (as you write).

Style and formatting: MLA, few errors.

Overall: Yes, it is *much* better than your first essay draft—I'm very glad to see that! Not much to work on at a large level—you just need to slow down and add details to the argument. I'd consider more research about the reception of Gladwell—from Watts and others—especially for the last section, which is very short and needs help. I have pretty extensive comments on the piece, so my review here isn't that long.

I'd be happy to meet with you to help with the things you name in your self-eval

Grade: Check-plus

Grade if this was final: B-

Everybody gets this text: As with the first essay, these comments are not exhaustive. Please ask for expansion or clarification if needed. I will provide a handout which shows common problems and discusses correcting them, and we will discuss revision in class. Plan to revise quite a bit; that's the path to a good final grade.

Finally, please email me a computer file of your draft in .doc, .docx, or .odt format.

Topic: Depression and SN, SNS, teens and elderly--research

Good: Thesis up front; pretty broad research base. Relevant and interesting topic.

Not so good: *Very* broad, need to focus. Some questionable research sources. Heavy reliance on single sources in many places.

Style and formatting: APA

Overall: Too much going on. Rewrite with focus: teens, elderly.

Grade: Check

Grade if this was final: D or C-

Matt, as we briefly discussed after class, there's a lot going on here—too much. You need to focus. I suggest looking at one or two of the four or five issues raised here. Since you are doing a research essay, you need to get a diversity of sources on each point and really go into depth. Cut out the how-to or solution angles and focus on documenting the relationship between depression and social networks —whichever angle you consider is best.

It's probably a good idea to meet with me, given your non-existent margin for error.

Also, I'll have your other essay later this week. Since it is fewer points, I focused on the second essay first, and you should too.

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Topic: Advertising on SNS

Good: Great start, possibility for two papers here

Not so good: Gotta pick one!

Style and formatting: MLA, but needs some work

Overall: We talked a lot about this; see below.

Grade: Check-plus

Grade if this was final: C (yeah, those don't match up; that's okay)

Nick, I don't have a lot of specific marginalia on this piece because that approach doesn't fit what you wrote. I've thought about it and I think the best approach is, as you say on your self-eval, making a position paper out of the piece. Here's what I suggest: take the four-part framework Todi gives, and hammer it—work through each part and show why his argument fails. That involves taking paragraphs from the front half, pairing them with grafs from the second half, and rewriting. I numbered the paragraphs; here's what I think you do:

1/open and 17/close: funnely and wimpy—drop in favor of argument

2/you on Fb: use first part of this as your open

3/history, 4/difficulty: drop, this isn't terribly important

5/compare to traditional, Todi: last part of this continues your open

6/number of users and pair & contrast with new content that shows it doesn't matter, parts of 14/success

7/cost efficient: pair & with new content that shows it's not, and maybe 11/dismal results

8/targeted: pair & contrast with 12/targeted failure

9/increasing time online: pair & contrast to show this doesn't matter

10/rush to advertisers: drop, it's transition graf

15-16/Mafia Wars: rewrite with specifics about them—interesting but perhaps unethical—could use as case study at end

Let me know what you think...

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Topic: music and marketing

Good: great topic; nice idea to do Beatles case study; some strong sections.

Not so good: Short; Beatles case study disappears; detail lacking in many places; huge amount of correctness and other mistakes; research very lacking; loses steam at end.

Style and formatting: Not clear; very rough.

Overall: A better effort than your first draft, but still lacking in many areas.

Grade: check minus

Grade if this was final: D or F

Sid, I'm glad to see that you haven't completely missed the mark here. The topic is great and you have some interesting sections. But you have a very long way to go. Please see my marginalia; they are pretty extensive. You need to

- focus your essay from start to finish—the Beatles case study would be a way to do that;

- conduct far, far more research, backing up assertions throughout with quality academic sources, and properly document this work;

- meet the minimum length requirements;

- go into detail on every point—you do this better at the start of the essay than the end.

<u>Know that unless you revise extensively, addressing the shortcomings I name here, you will probably get a C or D on the essay, and a D or F for the class.</u>

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Topic: internet does not cause depression & isolation

Good: topic is not reactionary; some good research; nice statement of position at end of first graf

Not so good: a little short; title gives wrong impression; bit of a funnel at start and end; tends to bunch research (McKenna in particular); some organizational issues

Style and formatting: MLA, needs some work

Overall: MUCH better start than last time! Slow down and add details. Make sure that you go over each point carefully; see the hard copy notes for a lot more detail.

Overall structure works well except one graf which you might move to ensure the content directly related to depression is together.

Diversify your sources when they bunch up—you have a few folks who you cite four or five times in a row (McKenna is the first).

You might reposition the dating as a case study—examples—so you can focus more on the REAL argument. Dating is just one specific way that happens.

Grade: Check-plus

Grade if this was final: B-

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Topic: *Crash,* stereotypes, and connectedness—position essay

Good: very interesting, original, and ambitious topic; good work with film; *excellent* integration of quotations; theoretical base is sound

Not so good: a little short; paper doesn't integrate film and theory—it's analysis then film then analysis; some sections are over-academic and unclear; need to finish it

Style and formatting: MLA, needs some work

Overall: You have some work left to do, but it's manageable. Raise the profile of social networks (connectedness) throughout. Explain the scenes you work with more carefully. When you turn toward analysis, ensure the film is included—don't go to theory then back to the film. Keep it integrated. This is hard, so ask if you want help.

Grade: Check (thanks to the ambition and extra effort)

Grade if this was final: C+

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Topic: Critical analysis of Gladwell's neighborhood/family proposition

Good: interesting and focused topic; nice mix of academic and popular sources;

Not so good: Many correctness errors; heavy reliance on a few sources; seem unsure of argument; too much metadiscourse;

Style and formatting: MLA, some issues

Overall: Better than you think. But you still have some work left.

First, you need to decide what you want to write. I mean that in two ways:

Apropos the issue of race sort of taking over the essay, I see two things. First, you could just roll with that, and revise the first bit of the essay and shift your opening so your argument acknowledges the direction you end up heading in. If you don't want to do that, the second option is just not working that much with race. You're not obligated to. Take Crane as an example: even if he says, "Race is the #1 determiner," neighborhood is #2, and that's what you're interested in. So focus on that. I'd write something like, "While Crane found that race was #1, neighborhood was #2..." (more polished, of course) then go on to explain the latter in detail (so no readers think you miss his point).

Then, you need to decide just what the argument is and get to that without metadiscourse—the writing about writing which appears on page 2. In some limited cases, this is okay, but here (as below) it just makes you seem tentative or uncertain. Don't take us through the journey to your argument unless there's something *very* specific about that journey which is relevant for it. I don't think that's the case for you.

Part of the issue is the many ways to cast it: are you arguing that Gladwell is partially right? partially wrong? That neighborhood is less important than he says? Do you want to respond by saying, "Yes, hood is important, but family can overpower it, and here's how."

I'd like to see more research right up Gladwell's alley: his contention, so to speak, that nature overpowers nuture—that neighborhood is more important than family. Have you looked to critics of Gladwell? What about that "more important" that's the key to his argument? Seems to me the real issue might be figuring out what level of parenting is needed to enable the neighborhood to do its work—or to overpower the bad one.

You use a lot of questions, but don't have to. On page five, it would be just as effective to say, "Consider Oprah, and the countless people who were..." than to ask the question. I think the questions undermine your confidence.

I wrote more on the essay since this morning. I trust we'll be meeting to figure this out. If you want to pick a time, go ahead: https://zimbra7.wiu.edu/home/cb-dilger/Calendar.html?view=workWeek&date=20091130

Grade: Check

Grade if this was final: B-

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Topic: black death explained in SN terms = small world

Good: excellent open and close, very interesting, strong application of theory, nice use of diagrams, extremely well researched

Not so good: sometimes explanations very quick, wordiness throughout

Style and formatting: MLA, well applied—and I'll loan you a book for the image stuff

Overall: As before, you've busted your butt and kicked ass out of the gate. That makes your revision job very simple. Most of it is editing—cutting back on wordiness and replacing pairs sentences which have "A B. B C." structure with single "A B, C." sentences. I can help if you like—another book loan, perhaps?

One thing to address: the microscope content is a bit anachronistic—I think it would do best all together in the later pages of the essay—see my note on that.

Grade: check-plus

Grade if this was final: B+

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Finally, please email me a computer file of your draft in .doc, .docx, or .odt format.

Topic: diseases and SN, using Gladwell as framework—position essay

Good: tight focus and interesting topic; pretty well written; overall better than your first draft

Not so good: details needed in some places, essay just stops at the end

Style and formatting: MLA

Overall: I think this essay is better than you think. Yeah, you have some work to do, but a manageable amount. I wrote a lot on the draft. Hopefully legibly.

We struggled a bit to define your argument, especially the relationship b/w disease and social networks. It's still a little unclear. I think I've figured it out: "Gladwell works with epidemics as a metaphor, arguing that we can learn about social networks by thinking about them as diseases. I want to argue the reverse, that social networks can teach us about disease, since many diseases are transmitted by social networks." Right? If so, print that out in 60 point font, tape it to the wall, and use it to guide revision.

Also, Gladwell does talk about this in some ways, doesn't he? Doesn't he talk about breast cancer and talking points for Af-Am women? If so, no big deal; just include that in your essay, then shift your argument slightly to deal with it.

To finish the essay: rewrite the open to clarify what's coming. Find a few more examples of SN connection to disease where research is emerging, or go into more detail about the two kinds of things you mention here. Add an ending. Then address the issues my marginalia raise, throughout the piece.

Grade: Check

Grade if this was final: C+ or B-

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Topic: SARS and social networks

Good: very interesting topic; pretty good research; many fascinating ideas and points made

Not so good: funnel in and out; a few organizational issues; detail lacking in some places; some unsourced or thinly supported sections; quotations need to be better integrated at times.

Style and formatting: MLA, very carefully applied

Overall: Much better start than last time. Don't worry about the big consequences until after showing how SN are critical for SARS transmission. Keep SN at hand all the time—tie it in.

In lots of places I write "slow down, add details"—do just that. If you think you are hitting the readers over the head with obviousness, you're doing it right.

A large part of this essay is about transportation, but some is not. I think you might reorganize it: give a general intro to SARS, then do all the transportation content, then the rest of the content—or the reverse, if the "rest" is the cause of the transportation elements.

In fact, the essay might be about SARS, transportation, and social networks...

BTW, you don't need to hand in your sources for the final.

Grade: Check

Grade if this was final: C+

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Topic: viral marketing—position essay

Good: interesting topic; scope is right I think; well written; good organization

Not so good: some cause and effect not well explained; details are sometimes lacking—slow down and explain carefully; in places heavy reliance on a single source (some of debatable accuracy); end of sections need summary of some kind before subheads

Style and formatting: APA, pretty well applied

Overall: I agree with about an argument, especially given the ending. What is your argument, after all? Your first step should be figuring that out, now that you've had some time away from the essay. That should guide the steps you need to take for revision: (1) figuring out where depth is needed; (2) doing additional research and/or getting sources you have on hand ready to use; (3) cutting stuff that's not relevant; (4) ensuring a tie in some way to social networks.

The next big question: what's the role of social networks here? It's strange to introduce it only to dismiss it at the end—and to some extent that happens with viral marketing too.

I wrote a lot on the draft. Hopefully legibly.

Grade: Check

Grade if this was final: B-

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Topic: Military DE isn't that great—position essay

Good: interesting topic; against the grain thesis; draw on personal experience

Not so good: seems very rushed, limited sources, not well organized, no clear argument

Style and formatting: needs work to get to MLA

Overall: A big step back from your first essay.

Grade: Check-minus

Grade if this was final: D or F

Matt, your self-eval is largely accurate. My guess is the problems here stem from the rush; you didn't get a topic until late, so you had two large problems: first, it's not exactly clear what you're arguing or how the military angle works—that is, are you arguing "DE is often a joke" or "DE doesn't work well for most military" or something in between?

Problem two: you didn't have time to find the sources you need to get this done right. Without that work, there's not much to say about this. A start towards that:

http://chronicle.com/blogPost/Unmuzzling-Diploma-Mills-Dog/8175/

http://communication.ucsd.edu/dl/

http://heldref-publications.metapress.com/app/home/contribution.asp?referrer=parent&backto=issue,4,9;journal,11,35;linkingpublicationresults,1:119934,1

http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/fall53/valentine53.html

http://stevendkrause.com/2009/08/20/teaching-online-and-how-i-warn-students/

http://www.changemag.org/Archives/Back%20Issues/March-April%202009/abstract-real-and-fake.html

http://www.whnt.com/news/takingaction/whnt-amcom-official-fake-diploma,0,4817962.story

Look these sources and their writers up in Google and see whose citing them with the "Cited by" tool —that will help you find more. You might also look at keywords like accreditation, diploma mill, academic rigor, and assessment.

If you want to meet to talk about this, I'd be happy to.

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Topic: travel and SN—position essay

Good: interesting topic you're motivated about (or at least were...)

Not so good: no argument emerges, little if any research, runs out of steam

Style and formatting: MLA, but few if any citations

Overall: Never really gets off the ground, unfortunately. There are some good anecdo

tes to draw from, and some other parts which could be useful going forward.

Grade: Check

Grade if this was final: F

Chelsey, I know you wrestled with this, and it's pretty obvious you still are. It's a good idea for use to meet and talk about this. I'd like to hear more about the sources you found. I'm curious why they aren't in the essay in some form.

My suggestion is get this topic off the ground ASAP, working with the notion of friendship and/or travel. I shared some articles with you earlier; I'm not sure why they didn't show up here. I looked some more, trying some different keywords, and found:

Why Are You Learning a Second Language?
http://www.psych.rochester.edu/SDT/documents/2003_NoelsPelletierClementVallerand_LL.pdf

Exploring the Impact of Study Abroad on Students' Intercultural Communication Skills: Adaptability and Sensitivity : http://jsi.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/9/4/356

Mobilities, networks, geographies By Jonas Larsen, John Urry, K. W. Axhausen
http://books.google.com/books?id=xM5ctpr3l-4C

Intercultural experience and education By Geof Alred, Michael Byram, Michael P. Fleming
http://books.google.com/books?id=W328RYmsJAMC

Deconstructing travel: cultural perspectives on tourism By Arthur Asa Berger
http://books.google.com/books?id=2Ua4BAy4zfgC&source=gbs_navlinks_s

I tried "travel motivation", "travel broaden horizons" and "travel friendship" in Google Scholar.

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Topic: context, SN, and epidemics—position essay

Good: well written; good research; interesting topic which synthesizes several sources; strong ending

Not so good: some sections pretty vague, at times argument is not clearly stated; some long parts without sourcing (see top 2); some quotes or material not followed with explanation.

Style and formatting: MLA, a few goofs here and there

Overall: A fine effort which needs some work but should turn out to be an excellent essay.

Up front, you need an argument of some kind. I think that would help focus later when you get a little vague. How about something like, "In the work of many social network theorists, context is the most important element." You could expand on that a bit—if I have it right? Then relate each of the ideas you present to context in one way or the other.

Push on the broken window stuff more. The point there is the bad environment MAKES bad people.

Many of your quotes would work better if introduced. For example, on page 5, adding "As Gladwell wrote" and "Like Watts pointed out" to the quotes from them would help a lot. Similarly, avoid ending a paragraph with a quote—better to follow with your explanation of it.

In your self-eval you write about adding scenarios. That might help. The biggest problem is some sections are vague and it's hard to tell how context is related. More specific examples or scenarios might make ties to context easier to understand. There's no issue with length yet—try a few "For example" bits and see if it helps.

Grade: Check-plus

Grade if this was final: B-

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Topic: computer viruses &c and social networks—research essay

Good: interesting topic; some good research and diversity of sources;

Not so good: slow start; not much detail; need a much stronger focus and more ties to social networks; need an ending; not clear if it's research or position essay

Style and formatting: MLA, well followed

Overall: There are some good spots here, but there's a lot going on and the essay doesn't have a strong focus. Once you get to page 4, you work through spam and phishing very quickly, without a lot of detail, and social network concerns are pretty minimal.

You need a pretty extensive revision. Start by getting to the point more quickly—the social network aspect of computer viruses and other malware. That's the focus of the course and should be the focus of your interest. Go back to your sources and look for communication, contact, etc—and show how THAT is the key element at work here.

By adding more detail about certain things (viruses, trojans, etc), you can drop the less developed parts (spam and phishing). The SN aspect dominates the spread of this stuff: email viruses, shared flash drives, whatever. Similarly, the how-to content you end with is very sparse and contains at least one mistake; that's another reason to skip it for focus on the SN stuff—it's very hard to get right.

Use more ways to integrate quotes, and match tenses in quotes (past tense, for example, when discussing the ILOVEYOU virus).

The writing took a big step back from your previous essay. I assume that's because it was rushed—if you aren't sure why let's talk more about it.

Grade: Check-minus

Grade if this was final: D or C-

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Topic: Social psychology did Gladwell's stuff before he did—position essay

Good: Interesting topic quickly narrowed to manageable argument. Well written and reasonably argued.

Not so good: some rambly paragraphs; a few sloppy citations (get page #s); a few sources are of questionable quality; at times it's hard to tell how Gladwell differs from SP (if at all), and how the concepts you named differ from each other; quite a few unsourced portions.

Style and formatting: MLA, pretty well applied

Overall: Another strong draft. With some more carefully selected sources, and some revision to more clearly delineate what you're arguing, this will be excellent. Make sure to add sources (as you say) to fill out what you are arguing and to ensure you draw from a diverse pool of social psychologists.

You might put some of the terms you work with in quotes to show them different from the rest of your text. Watch the way you work into and out of quotes better. And don't be afraid to say "For Gladwell..." and/or "For social psychologists [like Ashe]..." in your essay.

Grade: Check plus

Grade if this was final: B

Also, I'll note here that your in-class presentation kicked ass—you were first, and you set the bar high. I was thrilled by that, believe me ;)

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Topic: Military use of SNS: no in combat, OK in green zone—position essay

Good: Topic of great interest to you; will be able to work something out

Not so good: Very wide scope, quite a bit unsourced, "ban it" argument is somewhat reactionary

Style and formatting: MLA, needs work

Overall: We had a conversation about this, and the need for a strong rewrite driven by research. You came up with six more possible sources—that's not enough. Aim for 20, even higher. Not all of them will be useful, of course—so you need a wide range to pull from.

On revision, if you want to make this specific argument, you need to "sell" more the cause and effect, and the match between the problem you outline and the solution you pick. You need to be a lot more specific about why they can't be used in forward areas but can be used in green zones. I'd also outline more specifically some of the other limits you want to see fit.

Here are some issues identified on the hard copy:

1A: as I said I'm not sure internet addiction is widely recognized.

1B: you need to connect this to military use—show that Facebook jealousy, so to speak, is a real problem for people in the military.

2A: we talked about the poor quality of this source. Find a different one. Also, again, I'm not sure Durkheim applies; you need to show that it does.

2B: here you name "the military" as a noun—not properly. Also, consider that the military needs to worry about spouses for morale purposes.

2C: if you want to argue this, you need a direct source. Show that one causes the other.

2D: don't generalize from one person's experience; get some better data that shows soldiers can and should do without.

3A: I appreciate the attempt to return to Kruzel here, but the restatement doesn't match what he says.

3B: Source this: according to whom?

3C: Source this.

4A: Flow into quote better: Donna Miles, of the American Forces Press Service, shows that the US military is "using social network services..."

4B: There's a relevance question here—if the argument is about personnel, why even include this section on the military itself? It does raise a fairness question, and that undercuts you a bit.

4C: This paragraph is kinda crammed in—no sources, not well connected to the previous. And by talking about how great SNS are, you undercut the "no forward area" use.

4D: "course pack"—no. Cut the metadiscourse, and don't imagine this in a class context.

5A: You directly contradict yourself here—not good.

Also, push hard on correctness: personal for personnel; ban for banned, etc.

Grade: Check

Grade if this was final: D

Also: we talked about revising your first essay, since I didn't give you good feedback on it. That's still possible, but I'd like to see some improvement on this one first—there's far more at stake. So I pushed very hard on the review, offering a lot of detail.

Let's touch base about this at the end of this week.

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