

Writing Assignment #2

Instructions: Please answer each question below connecting YOUR experiences to the textbook. That is, how do your observations or experiences demonstrate the sociological concepts outlined in Chapter 2 and in other chapters we have covered since the start of class.

Two Days without the Media (see p. 47)

- (1) Begin by keeping a written log for forty-eight hours of exactly how much time you spend with some form of media. Include all time spent watching television, on the Internet, reading books and magazines, listening to music, viewing films, even using smartphones – any activity that can be construed as part of the media monopoly on people's time.

Turn in your detailed log of your media usage.

- (2) Next, eliminate all use of the media, except for that required for work and school, for a forty-eight-hour period. Keep a log as you go of what happens, what you are thinking, what others say, and how people interact with you.

Turn in your detailed log of the media blackout.

Warning: if you try the media blackout, be sure to have some plan in place for having your family and/or friends contact you in case of an emergency!

- (3) Think about the enormous influence that the mass media have in shaping everyday life, including your self-concept and your relationship with other people. **Describe in detail these relationships. Use sociological concepts to make your connections.**
- (4) What does this exercise teach you about **cultural hegemony**? Explain in detail. In your answer, be sure to define cultural hegemony and relate it to your media blackout.
- (5) What does this exercise teach you about the role of mass media in shaping society? Explain in detail using evidence from your logs as well as the sociological studies and concepts from your textbook.
- (6) How would each of the following theoretical frameworks explain what happened during your media blackout. Be sure to define each theory and then apply this theoretical approach to **YOUR media blackout** in your answer.
 - a. Functionalism,
 - b. Conflict theory,
 - c. Feminist theory, and
 - d. Symbolic Interaction.