

Writing Project 1 (Claims and Evidence): Socioeconomic Organization Paper

Your Assignment: Write a short essay, between 4 and 6 pages in length (plus the bibliography) that puts forth and tests a central claim of your own about some narrowly defined aspect of the social and economic organization of households, and how it is reflected in two or three case studies (cultures or human societies). For example, you might build an argument about how Bengston's explanation for the rise and fall of extended family households in rural China (the patriarch and access to family land binds grand families) can be used to explain why the Kekchi Maya (from Wilk's article) resist architectural expressions of wealth differences in villages. You could also test it with data from Tell el-Hayyat, Jordan.

This week's readings all deal in some way with variability in the domestic economy of households and communities in very different social and historical contexts, just as last week's readings demonstrated variability in gender relations (Lyons and Mintz) and extended family household dynamics (Bengston and Wolf). How households go about fulfilling their basic needs and their social obligations (i.e., the domestic economy) depends in part on cultural particulars (what's acceptable, who inherits land, etc.), but also on their social organization (e.g., gender and age distinctions). Your task is to test a specific hypothesis about how one aspect of the domestic economy relates to one aspect of social organization in an original argument of your own construction. In doing so, you must use at least one of the four readings assigned for this week, as well as at least one of our previous readings, though I hope you manage to work in more than those two selections in some way. One strategy that might be useful to you is to think about how you can expand on what you've begun in your intertextuality excerpt to expand your focus to include the domestic economy as well as issues of gender and relationships between multiple generations of a household. Another is to think about possible explanations for the variability in social or economic organization that we've discussed; for example, *why* do you think it is that the common perception of women differs so dramatically between Mura villages in Cameroon and late 19th century America? What is it in those two societies that might explain why women are clever witches in one case and child-like delicate creatures in the other?

Writing Project Objectives: We have been working together on critical reading strategies, coming to terms with others' work, and actively using concepts, approaches, etc. to forward, counter, compare and contrast different texts. As you continue to practice each of these skills in this writing project, I am adding one more crucial task to the list: making and supporting a narrow, specific hypothesis (a claim) of your own. Therefore, you will come up with a central claim that is explained in your introduction to the essay, and structure the rest of your essay so that the different sections or topics you write about each serve as a line of evidentiary support for that claim. Each section needs to be explicitly tied back to that central claim. (Does it provide support for your hypothesis or not? Is it a counterexample? Is it crucial background for understanding the case study used to test the claim?) Keep in mind that you are not trying to definitely "prove" that your claim is true. Rather, you are trying to convince your reader that, at least in the case studies you discuss, there is good reason to believe that there is a strong connection between some aspect of the social organization and the domestic economy of households (*that connection is your central claim*). The Writing Studio handouts that I've posted on Course Documents can help you to formulate, revise, or narrow your central claim as you work through this writing project. Evidence in arguments like this is broadly defined; observations in particular case studies (Kekchi Maya or the Inuit), others' empirically-supported conclusions, patterns in one or more categories of data, and another's argument that you find especially compelling, all qualify as "evidence." The relative success of your efforts to both explain and to marshal evidence for your claim will be the most important focus of my comments and my assessment of your work.

Submission Guidelines: Use the following format in naming your Microsoft Word documents:

First draft: *Lastname.WP1.D1.doc* (for example, Beaulé.WP1.D1.doc)

Reverse outline: *Author's_lastname.Your_lastname.WP1.doc* (for example, if I am reverse outlining

John Smith's paper, I would name this document Smith.Beaulé.WP1.doc)

Second draft: *Lastname.WP1.D2.doc* (for example, Beaulé.WP1.D2.doc)

Final draft: *Lastname.WP1.D3.doc* (for example, Beaulé.WP1.D3.doc)

Note that documents created in Word 2007 have the extension .docx. About half of you are working in an earlier version of Word, and so will not be able to open the paper you need to reverse outline (unless you've downloaded the conversion pack from Microsoft here: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/products/HA101686761033.aspx>. By the way, there is no conversion pack available for Mac users yet). The other option (and the only option for Mac users) is to email the author requesting a document saved in an earlier Word format (a .doc, not .docx, file format).

Please upload all drafts of your paper to the appropriate Assignments folders in Unit 2 of our Blackboard course website. Once you attach your file (click browse to find it), make sure you click on Submit to send it to me, not Save, which uploads it to your Blackboard site, but does not allow me to access or download it. As with your response papers, I will make some comments in the header and margins of a draft of your essay, and send it to your Digital Dropbox. Please download this file and incorporate these revision suggestions into your final draft. If you disagree with your classmates' or my comments and revision suggestions, you may choose not to follow them, but you must explain what you disagree with and why in your final reflections. The extent to which you successfully address my revision comments (either by substantively revising your drafts or explaining why you choose not to do so at some particular point in your reflections) are also part of your grade for the project.

Project Calendar:

- **Saturday, 9/29, noon:** Please upload your complete first draft to the appropriate Assignments folder. This draft (as always) must include full and complete citations and a bibliography. Please also upload this same draft to your Group folder for the reverse outlining assignment.
- **Tuesday, 10/2:** Read and reverse outline your two workshop partners' first drafts. Submit a file with each reverse outline online before class (make sure both your name and the student author's name is on the page), and bring two hard copies to class (one for the workshop and one for each paper's author to take home).
 - **10/2, 8:00 pm:** Email me (cbeaule@duke.edu) a short passage from your first draft, and an explanation of what your particular citation concern is regarding that passage.
- **Thursday, 10/4:** large-group workshop of your citation concerns, and discussion of good citation practices.
 - **10/4, 5:00 pm:** Draft 2 of WP1 due at 5:00 pm. Upload the complete second draft to the appropriate Assignments folder in Unit 2.
- **Thursday, 10/11, 5:00 pm:** final draft of WP2 to be uploaded to Blackboard no later than 5:00 pm today.

Reflections Requirement: After the References page of your final draft, please take a few minutes to write two to three paragraphs that explain to me how you have substantively revised your essay since its first incarnation. I would like to read about which of the changes you made to your essay were inspired by your peers' comments, my revision suggestions, our in-class discussions, or others' reverse outlines of your papers, and which suggestions you chose to ignore and why. This is a simple exercise in reflection that helps us to sort out which kinds of feedback were helpful to us as writers, and how we made use of those various sources of feedback.

An alternative method of submitting your reflections is to use your iPod and microphone. You will be recording your small-group workshops and various discussions of your paper and revision strategies along the way. You may choose to edit these audio files with Audacity to produce an audio file no more than 5 minutes long that includes clips of specific suggestions, as well a recording where you explain how you chose to incorporate them. If the feedback you're addressing is written (e.g., my feedback on a draft), please read that comment into the microphone, followed by an explanation of how you've addressed it (or why you chose not to). Name your audio file *Lastname.WP1.feedback*, and submit it to either my digital dropbox or the iTunes U dropbox folder. Feel free to also use the iTunes U folder called Dropbox (the only one the entire class has access to) to exchange audio files and oral feedback with each other throughout the semester.