

Cultural Studies
Fall 2017

Final Essay

For your final paper, you will choose one of the analytical papers you wrote earlier in the semester to expand into a 10 page, thesis-driven, critical research paper. Your final papers should incorporate at least one of our in-class readings, but outside research will also be required. An annotated bibliography, which must include at least three sources, should be posted to moodle, along with your final paper, before midnight on December 4th.

A bibliography is a list of sources containing basic information such as author, title, publisher, etc. An annotation is a summary and/or evaluation. So, an annotated bibliography includes basic bibliographic information **as well as** a summary and/or evaluation of each of the sources. A good annotated bibliography will do the following:

- Summarize
 - What are the main arguments? What topics are covered? If someone asked me what this article/book was about, what would I say?
- Assess
 - Is this a useful source? How does it compare with other sources in my bibliography? Is the information reliable? What is the goal of the source?
- Reflect
 - How does this source fit into my research? How does the source help shape my argument? How can I use this source in my research project? Has the source changed how I think about my project?

For more on annotated bibliographies, and their formats, visit
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/>

Annotated Bibliography: Sample

Cavender, Gray. "In search of community on Reality TV: *America's Most Wanted and Survivor*," in *Understanding Reality Television* eds. Su Holmes and Deborah Jermyn. London and New York: Routledge, 2004.

Cavender's chapter examines how Reality TV deals with the concept of community and argues that the programs actually undermine and erode a

sense of community while seemingly trying to promote it. He argues that reality programs such as *America's Most Wanted* and *Survivor* undermine notions of a viable community. Reality TV discourses presume the existence of an idealized community and Cavender suggests that, in particular, real crime programming presents that community as under attack while appealing to community to aid in the crime fighting. Cavender's article examines the divide between the political goals and actualities of reality crime programming, decoding many of these programs' narrative strategies. The article's conclusion is especially interesting in its attempts to link provisions of the Patriot Act to *America's Most Wanted* suggesting that both "generate only a *faux* community, one that obliterates trust, a prerequisite for a viable community" (169). Cavender's analysis of the rhetorical strategies of reality crime television is useful, but his interrogations of 'community' and its role in Reality TV discourse are beyond the scope of my project.

McCarthy, Anna. "Stanley Milgram, Allen Funt, and Me: Postwar Social Science and the 'First Wave' of Reality TV," in *Reality TV: Remaking Television Culture*. New York and London: NYU Press, 2004.

In this article, McCarthy situates the "first wave of reality TV in the broader context of popular and intellectual culture, examining the intersections between the realist capacity of the hidden camera as a potent tool for the production of social knowledge and the methods as well as techniques of social science...up to and including the broadcast of PBS's *An American Family*" (22). She traces Allan Funt's early work for *Omnibus* and *Candid Camera* and suggests his camera had an innate sociological impulse. The advent of *Candid Camera* was concurrent with the rise in popularity of the social sciences. McCarthy contends that the methodology of *Candid Camera*, taken to an unethical extreme, helped define the structure of Stanley Milgram's simulated interaction between the state and its citizens. McCarthy references Laurie Oulette's persuasive article in this collection, suggesting that "If...reality genres today often serve a neoliberal cultural agenda that outsources the state's social functions (for example, policing or social welfare) to popular media, it is worth asking how the hidden camera's production of knowledge about ordinary people might have expressed models of civic responsibility and moral behavior in an earlier period" (23). This historiographic look at questions that remain vital today helps me situate my research in a historical continuum. Many of Funt's *Omnibus* films seem worth looking at as precursors to modern day reality crime programming.