**Guide to “Think Pieces”**

**Bruce Gjeltema, Ph.D. – American History Survey Classes**

You are required to write four “Think Piece” essays during the semester, which the best three grades together will constitute your Think Piece grade for the course. They are short essay answers to specific questions addressed to documents.

Think Pieces should be 1 ½ to 2 pages in length. They must be typed, double-spaced, and use 12-pont font and one-inch margins. They should have titles and their pages stapled together. You are not to include footnotes in your think pieces.

A grade: Think Piece is a well-written, strongly supported, sophisticated, and interesting

 response that shows you read the entire assigned reading, grasped its main

 points, and took the time to organize your thoughts before answering the

 assigned question(s). The think piece is marked by solid prose and correct

 punctuation and spelling.

B+ grade: Think Piece makes some very good points but perhaps lacks logical construction,

 doesn’t answer the assigned question in a full or compelling manner, or has

 some minor problems with its prose, punctuation, and/or spelling.

B- grade: Think Piece offers a surface-level answer the assigned question, perhaps lacks

 structure, clarity, or compelling evidence, or is marked by too many grammatical

 and/or punctuation errors.

C+ grade: Think Piece is vague, doesn’t explicitly answer the assigned question, or suggest

 to the reader that you did not leave yourself enough time to do a good job.

 Otherwise solid think piece that possesses multiple grammatical and punctuation

errors will receive a C+ as well.

D+ grade: Think Piece reads like a hastily written response that suggest that the author did

 not carefully consider the assigned readings. Essays that possess grammatical,

 punctuation and spelling errors that seriously disrupt its clarity will also

receive a D+.

Failing Grade: Think Piece shows little or no evidence that you have read are considered the

 assigned document or have put in the appropriate amount of effort.