Project 4 – Philosophical Argument (Problem and Solution)

For this 8- to 10-page research project, your challenge is to choose an issue and, through careful research and analysis of multiple sides of the situation, to develop a recommended solution. The specific topic is your choice, but it must somehow relate to ideas we've discussed in class this semester.

Your project should be formatted according to MLA standards (see p. 308 of CTA), and it will include both an annotated bibliography (see p. 268 and attached), and a Works Cited page.

Common Organizational Format for Philosophical Argument (see p. 219-223)

Introduction:
* State the problem (provide context) - approx. 1 para.
* State the structure of your essay (your argument or your solution) - approx. 1 para.
* State alternative solutions (but show that they are less adequate) - approx. 1-2 para.
  *(This section could also define terms, or provide historical or cultural comparison)*

Body:
* Propose arguments in support of your solution (argument, evidence, analysis) - 4-5 para.
* Arguments answering possible objections (present, counter) - approx. 1-2 para.

Conclusion:
* Summary, resolution and conclusion - approx. 1 para.

Project Planning: Use your time carefully. First you will select a topic and conduct inquiry to narrow your stance (stasis). As you continue to research, you will develop a tentative thesis and an outline, as well as a working bibliography. You should consider topics and ideas we explored this semester for your research. If a topic interests you, conduct some preliminary research to determine whether you’d like to focus in this area. You must develop an argument about your topic - no information essays or reports are acceptable.

Schedule: We will work on this assignment in multiple stages, as indicated on your syllabus.
- Project introduction Wednesday 4/25
- Mandatory library re-orientation Monday 4/30 (search, topic, evaluating sources)
- Writing workshop session Wednesday 5/2 (thesis, organization)
- Annotated bibliography due Monday 5/7 (workshop on effective quote integration)
- Writing workshop session two Wednesday 5/9 (counterarguments, intro and conclusion)
- Rough draft due Monday 5/14 (peer review)
- Final project due Wednesday 5/16. No exceptions! Have back-up plan for emergencies.
**Possible Research Paper Topics**

Identity, Stereotypes, Self-definition (Ruggiero, Maslow, Viktor Frankl)
Maslow's Hierarchy “Self-Actualization” and/or Viktor Frankl’s “Transcendence”
Social Media and Identity Performance, Happiness, Independence (Twenge, Jhally)
Generational Assumptions (Twenge)
Fear of Technology (Twenge)
Advertising and Rhetoric (Jhally)
Gender Stereotypes and Advertising (Jhally)
Social Influence of Commerce and Technology (Twenge, Jhally)
Cultural “Codes” Accommodation and Resistance (Jhally)
Political Rhetoric and Power (Speech, debate, advertising, press)
Satire or Comedy as Disruptive Power (Kristof)
Environmental Balance and Animal Rights (Kristof)
Environmental Balance and Waste/Consumption (Jhally, Royte)
Children’s Literature and/or Folk Tales (Grimm, Disney, Gordimer)
Individual Rights and Community (Jhally, More, Gordimer, LeGuin)
The Trolley Problem and Its Applicability to Programming Self-Driving Cars (Foot)
Privacy Rights and/or “Surveillance” (Gordimer)
Free Speech and the Anonymity of the Internet (trolling, misinformation, positive potential)

Any ideas from group presentations or from discussion board posts (go further in analysis)

Try to see this as an opportunity to learn more about a subject that interests you, rather than a mandatory culmination of the class. Consider the ways you regularly conduct research, whether searching online for information or talking to a friend about classes you should take.

**Source requirements:** use at least 5 valid secondary sources, as follows:

- **All five required sources must be credible.** Draw on a wide variety of sources to enter the conversation regarding your argument, but ensure that these sources are all credible. See p. 258-261 of the text for tips on source evaluation. Rely on the databases at MiraCosta Library for quality articles and texts, and if unsure, check with your professor or librarian.

- **At least two of these sources must be scholarly.** This means a source that is peer reviewed or published in a recognized scholarly source (journal or a university publisher).

- **Use the library’s digital collection of encyclopedias to begin your project.** These will help to guide your research.

- **Wikipedia is not a valid source** because the accuracy of articles varies and the information is generally only basic. It can still provide good background and the bibliographies can help to start your research (see CTA p. 253).