

COM 4435: Communication Research Methods
Dr. R. Glenn Cummins, Summer 2007
Article Summaries

For each outside reading assigned in this class, you will be required to write a brief (roughly 1-2 page) summary of the article. In a few paragraphs, you should address **some** (but not necessarily all) of the following questions:

- Start with a general introduction to the topic being examined. Then state the purpose of this particular article. In other words, what are the author(s) trying to do?
- Briefly describe the context of the research (i.e., related literature, theory, historical context, etc.) What is/are the author(s) basing their work on?
- Perhaps paraphrase the research questions or hypotheses the author(s) propose.
- How were they addressed (i.e., what method did he/she/they use)?
- In general, what did they find out? Were the hypotheses supported?
- What's the relevance or usefulness of the information? What does this individual study have to say about research on this topic?
- Do the authors note any weaknesses? Do you spot any?
- Do the authors offer any suggestions for future research?

Keep in mind that these are merely suggestions, and you will not always address every single point. Decide for yourself what you should include and what you shouldn't.

These summaries are **not** merely your opinion of the article, but more of a summary of past scholarship. When writing your summaries, try to adopt a more formal, scholarly, and detached tone. **Do not confuse formal with complex, dense, and confusing.** The rules of good, clear writing are always paramount. KISS.

By "detached," I mean avoid first person. For example, instead of saying "I think that the article should have talked about..." instead say "The authors failed to discuss..." The words "I think..." shouldn't ever find their way into scholarly writing of this nature.

Please do not spend excessive time worrying about these summaries. I want evidence that you've read (with some degree of thought and care) the assigned readings. Most importantly, these summaries serve as excellent practice for writing in a scholarly style.

Your summaries are due the day we are scheduled to discuss the related assigned reading. **Late papers will not be accepted, and neither will electronic submissions.** Summaries must be typed, double spaced, and in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1" margins. As per your syllabus, these summaries are worth 4% of your final grade.

As always, contact me with questions. My email address is rcummins@kennesaw.edu, and my phone number is 678-797-2078.