

## Midterm Review Study Guide – Current Events I, II, III, IV

The exam will take place 2nd period Monday for II-III, 3rd period Monday for I, 5th period Monday for III, and 4th period Wednesday for IV. It will make up about 20% of your semester grade. The midterm will consist of 4 short answer questions. The questions will require you to draw comparisons and make contrasts among selections from the texts we read this semester. The exam is interpretive, not factual. It will provide you with all the texts you'll need. To prepare for the exam, please reread the magazine and newspaper articles we studied during the semester, and make notes on the quotations below. You may use your notes during the test. I'll ask you about the following selections:

### 1. Crime & Punishment

It is better to prevent crimes than to punish them. This is the fundamental principle of good legislation, which is the art of conducting people to the maximum of happiness, and to the minimum of misery . . . .

Would you prevent crimes? Let the laws be clear and simple, let the entire force of the nation be united in their defence, let them be intended rather to favour every individual than any particular classes of people, let the laws be feared, and the laws only (fear of the laws is healthy, but fear of people is . . . a source of crimes).

– Cesare Beccaria, “Of the Means of Preventing Crimes”,  
*Of Crimes & Punishments*, 1764

The [American prison] system has three big flaws, say criminologists. First, it puts too many people away for too long. Second, it criminalises acts that need not be criminalised. Third, it is unpredictable. Many laws, especially federal ones, are so vaguely written that people cannot easily tell whether they have broken them.

– Mark Kleinman, “Rough Justice in America”, *The Economist*, 7/24/10

### 2. Terrorism

In July he [Hanif, a 16-year-old Al Qaeda recruit] got permission from his commander [at the training camp] and went home [to his parents' house in Karachi, Pakistan].

He's been there nearly two months now. Just as his Arab friends warned, he says, he keeps encountering evils, distractions, luxuries, and temptations. “There are terrible things on the Internet and on the street that can corrupt your soul,” he says. “You have to be careful.” He had been home only 10 days when his Taliban uncle began urging him to get married and go into business. His father too is pressuring him to finish school and get

married. “You’ll be a better martyr,” his father argues. Hanif doesn’t buy it. “If I get engaged, as my parents want, the life I love is over,” he says.

He spends hours on the computer in his bedroom surfing Taliban, Qaeda, and Iraqi jihadi Web sites and interacting with like-minded young men in militant chatrooms. He avoids any contact with women on the Web, even on Islamic sites, calling it a waste of time. He watches DVDs of jihadis ambushing U.S. forces in Afghanistan and Iraq . . . . “I miss the mountains and my fellow mujahedin. My heart is not happy here.”

The boy wrote a last will and testament, like all Qaeda suicide bombers, and it remains on his computer, addressed to all of his male kinsmen. He urges them to join the jihad and seek martyrdom “so I will see you, my beloved brothers, in the company of virgins with me.” The document was dated Dec. 21, 2009, just as he was turning 16.

– Sami Yousafzai & Ron Moreau, “Inside Al Qaeda”, *Newsweek*, 9/13/10

When [Khalid Sheikh] Mohammed was sixteen, he told American interrogators, he followed [his older brother] Zahed’s lead and began attending the [Muslim] Brotherhood’s desert camps. It was there that he became enamored of the idea of jihad and studied the ideology – anti-Western, anti-Semitic, anti-modern – of Sayyid Qutb, the Brotherhood’s most influential theorist . . . .

The idea [of hijacking airliners and flying them into American buildings] . . . . required pilots, and teams of men able to overwhelm defenseless air crews. It required money and the ability to move it around the globe. And it required willing suicide bombers – of whom, Mohammed has said, there was a surplus . . . .

Though Mohammed stayed physically separate from Al Qaeda’s leadership, he became the organization’s effective head of operations . . . .

His plots were scattered, frenetic, even feral; they had an almost random quality. Mohammed, almost certainly will talk. He likes to talk. It is less certain that he will have anything to say. The mastermind of 9/11 seems to have had no grand strategy, or, really, any strategy at all.

– Terry McDermott, “The Mastermind”, *The New Yorker*, 9/13/10

### **3. Wealth**

One interpretation of all this [the results of a UC Berkeley study] might be that selfish people find it easier to become rich. Some of the experiments Dr Piff conducted, however, sorted people by the income of the family in which the participant grew up. This revealed that whether high status was inherited or earned made no difference – so the idea that it is the self-made who are especially selfish does not work. Dr Piff himself suggests that the increased compassion which seems to exist among the poor increases generosity and helpfulness, and promotes a level of trust and co-operation that can prove essential for survival during hard times.

– Anonymous, “The Rich Are Different From You And Me”,  
*The Economist*, 7/31/10

[Sean Parker, Napster co-creator and founding president of Facebook,] turns his knowledge and instincts toward Internet business strategy as a way, he says, of “re-architecting society. It’s technology, not business or government, that’s the real driving force behind large-scale societal shifts.”

– David Kirkpatrick, “With A Little Help From His Friends”,  
*Vanity Fair*, October, 2010

Li Caihe, a 19-year-old from Gansu province, works a 12-hour shift attaching nine parts to the motherboard of a Nokia N90 handset. “It takes so much concentration, it was very stressful at first,” she says. “I know I can go to a counselor, but I don’t think it will help. I’m pretty adaptable, and I can cope. When I speak to my parents, I try to sound happy. I don’t speak about my stress.” Li shares a dorm room with seven other girls and plans to stay on for another year. After that she hopes to open a small business back home, a beauty salon perhaps.

A 23-year-old man who gave his name only as Cheng spray-paints plastic sheets that are then molded into handset covers. He says conditions are much better than at his three previous employers, though he did take part in a one-day strike of 70 people in May that was organized by his department to protest exposure to toxic fumes. They wanted better protection than the paper masks they continue to use. He was skeptical about morale-boosting exercises like the rally in August. “Everyone is happy when they are playing,” he says. “After this event, people who are depressed will get depressed again. It’s all superficial.”

Guo Yan Bing, a 25-year-old from Henan province who works in logistics, spoke while having his eyebrows shaped with a razor on his day off. He lives off-campus with his fiancée in a one-room apartment that costs \$44 per month, exactly the amount they receive from Foxconn as a rental subsidy. “This factory is too big,” he says. “Low-level and mid-level management aren’t educated, and they aren’t nice to people. I blame [Foxconn’s CEO Terry] Gou for this. It’s always about the boss trying to squeeze money.”

Li Xiaofeng, a 20-year-old from a farm in Hunan province, joined Foxconn in May 2009 to work on an HP color printer assembly line at the Longhua campus. Her generation, she says, is far less accepting of long hours, low pay, and verbally abusive managers. “Youth, especially those born after 1990, have a lot more enthusiasm and passion but are easily depressed once they meet obstacles,” explains Li. “We are less able to endure suffering.” She complains about the cockroaches in her dorm and how she couldn’t shower for three days after the water had been turned off recently.

– Frederik Balfour & Tim Culpan, “Chairman Guo”,  
*Bloomberg Business Week*, 9/13/10 - 9/19/10

These days, as co-founder and chief creative officer [of ModCloth], [Susan] Gregg-Koger, 25, still hand-picks all the clothes, shoes and accessories featured on the site (most sell for less than \$100) and seeks out designers who fit ModCloth's aesthetic. [Eric] Koger, the CEO, oversees the technical side. The site gets around 2 million visitors every month and is on track to surpass \$50 million in sales this year.

– Jennifer Wang, “It Doesn’t Take A Million”, *Entrepreneur*, 9/10

#### 4. Feminism

Your brand is what others say about you when you're not in the room.

– Ella L.J. Edmonson Bell, “You’re Got The Power”, *Essence*, 10/10

But evidence suggests that one woman on a board of directors is not enough. “The magic number is at least three,” [Maddy] Dychtwald [the author of the book *Influence*] says. “One is tokenism. Two creates conflict between the women. When you have three, the women create mentorship relationships, all kinds of alliances, and their presence has an overall good effect on the board.”

– Jennifer Braunschweiger, “Attack of the Woman-Dominated Workplace”, *More*, 9/10

Here's the problem, in short: The assertive, authoritative, dominant behaviors that people associate with leadership are frequently deemed less attractive in women. Male mentors who have never faced this dilemma themselves may be hard-pressed to provide useful advice. As one of our interview participants describes, even well-intended mentors have trouble helping women navigate the fine line between being “not aggressive enough” or “lacking in presence” and being “too aggressive” or “too controlling” . . . .

Male sponsors can be taught to recognize such gender-related dilemmas. Women in Sodexo's reciprocal-mentoring program, for example, have been promoted at higher rates than other high-potential women at the company, in part because the senior male mentors serve as career sponsors and (thanks to the upward mentoring) learn to manage their unconscious biases.

– Herminia Ibarra, Nancy M. Carter, and Christine Silva,  
“Why Men Still Get More Promotions Than Women”,  
*Harvard Business Review*, 9/10

What astounded me is that in the past decade, 100,000 mothers have been deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq. Not even the Soviets, the Israelis, or the Iraqi Baathists have sent mothers of infants or toddlers to the front lines. And I wondered as I spoke to many of them, what does it tell us about American women that they fought for this right? And did they? Or is the military exploiting the notion of equality, with its blanket mandatory deployment, because we need so many bodies to feed the global

military machine? Institutions, after all, tend to fulfill their own needs and catch up with the consequences later. No doubt the military, one of the most conservative institutions in America, did not set out to change the shape of the American family by sending so many mothers away from their kids for a year at a time. But the wars have had just that effect.

– Elizabeth Rubin, “Bye-Bye Baby”, *Vogue*, 9/10

[Sarah] Palin owes her power to identity politics, pitched with moralistic topspin. She exploits the . . . populist impulse . . . “the yearning for a society run by and for ordinary people who lead virtuous lives” . . . .

According to almost everyone who has ever known her, including those who have seen the darkest of her dark side, Sarah Palin has a great gift for making people feel good about themselves. Her knack for remembering names and faces and the details of her interactions with people – and for seeming to be present to the person in front of her – constitute an extraordinary power of engagement. Now she is using that power in a fundamentally different way. In part she is using it in the service of her own ambitions. But she is also planting the idea with audiences that they might not be good enough, by telling them she things, they’re plenty good, no matter what anybody else may say. (“They talk down to us . . . . They thing that if we were just smart enough . . . .”) To some, the message sounds like an affirmation. But is it really? Or does it seed self-doubt and rancor among her partisans, and encourage them to see everyone else as malign?

– Michael Joseph Gross, “Sarah Palin: The Sound and the Fury”,  
*Vanity Fair*, 10/10

For feminists watching in slack-jawed amazement as this bizarre Year of the Woman unfolds, the immigration focus is particularly disturbing. When the bodies of people of color, particularly women and children, suffer the consequences of the anxieties and actions of white women claiming political and social power for a select few, that ain’t feminism. As Kate Harding pointed out in a Jezebel.com post, feminism has been scorned and derided by politicians and the mainstream media until this very select group of conservative, antiprogressive women started claiming the term. So why is the Year of the Woman so powerful an idea only when the women in question are right-wingers? Do they get some sort of credit, as Melissa Harris-Lacewell asserted on GRITtv recently, for being “independent thinkers” because they step outside of their expected identity group? Or is it more like what *SF Gate* columnist Mark Morford pointed out in a recent dispatch: “With power, glory, and long overdue cultural advancement comes a whole delightful s–bag of downsides, drawbacks, jackals, and bitches to poison the party”? If there is anything to celebrate about the rise of right-wing women and their attendant violent rhetoric, maybe it’s that politics and even “fighting back” on a primal level are no longer cast as the province of men. But it’s also proved that equal representation alone won’t be enough to create real feminist politics.

– Sarah Jaffe, “Tea Stained”, *Bitch: Feminist Response to Popular Culture*, Fall 2010