

Blog Post 2: Close Reading Dave Eggers's *The Circle*

Minimum 500 words

Due Monday, September 29th

For your second blog post I would like you to pick a small, *specific* moment in Dave Eggers's novel *The Circle* (2013) to closely and carefully interpret. First, choose a passage that you find interesting, problematic, confusing, or intriguing and that you might have something to say about. This passage should be at least a sentence but no longer than a paragraph. Please quote the passage *in full* at the *beginning* of your blog post and remember to give a page citation.¹ Again for this post I again want you to focus principally on *form*, on *how* the novel is constructed and creating meaning, and I want you to do this by closely and carefully *interpreting* the passage you've selected. How is Eggers's language working? How is he constructing his narrative and why? How does he create characters? How does he mobilize metaphor and other figurative language? How is he engaging with history? How is he choosing to represent the Circle? Why does it matter that the novel is engaging with narrative and technology in the way it is? What is interesting and important about what you have noted and observed? What kinds of things does the novel reveal about life in the twenty-first century? About social media, big data, control, and networks? About entertainment, politics, history, simulation, the human, etc.? You do not have to answer all (or any) of these questions, as they are designed to get you thinking about form, about narrative as a form and narrative as intimately linked to technology, and ultimately thinking about *why* and *how* Eggers's is constructing his novel in the specific manner that he is. Obviously any focus on the passage you have selected will encourage and necessitate an engagement with other places in the novel and with the novel as a whole, but the more specific, incisive, and narrow your focus here, the stronger and more interesting your analysis will be.

Also, again, I would like you to make an *argument for an interpretation*, and to get right to the heart of the matter in your reading as quickly as possible. I am most interested in what you have to *say* about the novel here and *why* you are saying it than I am in receiving merely a description or synopsis (remember your audience, your classmates and I have read the novel). Though informal, I still expect your work to be rigorous. These posts should be critical, incisive, and interpretive. Further, 500 words is not much space, so your writing and thinking should be specific, focused, and concrete.

Lastly, though not required for this post, obviously Eggers's novel is in conversation with many of the critical and theoretical pieces we've read so far. So feel encouraged to put your writing in conversation with the work of Alexander R. Galloway, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, or any of the other essays we've read this semester.

¹ I imagine you will want to treat the passage like an epigraph at the beginning of your post, potentially italicizing and indenting it to signal the quotation.