

## ***Extra-Credit Assignment***

### **Instructions**

Choose **one** of the questions below and answer it, using your own words and at least **two** different sources (not including the textbook). Your answer should be typed and approximately 400-500 words in length (1 ½ - 2 pages). You must cite any quotes and you may only paraphrase one or two sentences at a time. For guidance on sources and citations, see the research paper handout on guidelines and citations.

This is worth up to four percent of your final course grade (i.e. the final grade is assigned out of 100 possible points – this can add up to four more points to your total)

This is **due at the beginning of class on Monday, December 8.**

1. John P. Roche argues that the founders were a "group of extremely talented democratic politicians." What political assets did they have that, according to Roche, contributed to their success in winning popular approval for the Constitution?
2. Briefly describe two examples of the "unfunded mandates" criticized by many analysts of "regulated federalism."
3. Name the top ten political action committees (in terms of monetary contributions to individual candidates) in the 2008 elections. Describe any patterns that you can discern (i.e. which groups are more likely to give?). Compare this overall list to the top ten PAC contributors to your Congressperson.
4. Which 2008 presidential candidate(s) received the endorsements of the following newspapers in the Chicago metro area: *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Daily Herald*, and at least one of these: *Chicago Defender*, *Daily Southtown*? Compare and contrast the arguments given for the endorsement in two of these papers.
5. Who owns the newspaper, newsmagazine, radio or television station, or website from which you obtain most of your news about politics? How is it connected (by ownership, especially) to other media outlets? For example, is it part of a "chain" or "holding company?" Why do you prefer this source of political news?
6. Summarize two of the "Top Twenty-Five Censored Stories of 2007," providing citations to the original sources of these stories. In what sense are these stories "censored?"
7. Pick an issue in politics that concerns you and find **two** interest groups that take conflicting positions on that issue. Describe their positions and compare/contrast the actions (e.g. lobbying, litigating) they have taken to pressure government on that issue.
8. Pick an issue in politics that concerns you (other than elections) and find the results of a public opinion poll taken in the six months on that issue. Describe the poll results, focusing on who commissioned the poll, how the results were publicized, and, if possible, some of the actual wording of questions.