

**ICT 390-201: SPECIAL TOPICS – Theory, Popular Culture, and ICT:  
Exploring Depictions of New Technology Using Netflix’s Black Mirror  
ONLINE | SPRING 2022**

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**FACULTY INFORMATION**

**Professor:** Renee Kaufmann, Ph.D.

**Email:** [Renee.Kaufmann@uky.edu](mailto:Renee.Kaufmann@uky.edu)

**Office Hours:** T,R 10:45 to 12:45pm EST **on Zoom** or by appointment

**Course Time:** ASYNCHRONOUS, ONLINE

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**Course Description**

Using the Netflix’s television show Black Mirror, this course will provide opportunities for students interested in exploring the darker side of new technologies and theory. Each Black Mirror episode explores our uses of technology and will be matched with theoretical frameworks for understanding potential behaviors around this phenomenon. Students are advised to consider the following before enrolling in and completing the course. **If interested, please note that Black Mirror is a fictional, future- based show with mature themes related to technology and society. With that being said, episodes can be disturbing, as they make feature graphic content that may be violent and/or sexual. These episodes will be watched on your own time and accompanied with a sheet to synthesize the theory(ies) discussed that week with the episode for class discussion.**

**Course Objectives**

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Describe theories chosen for this course.
- Develop skills to be a critical consumer of popular culture/information.
- Apply theory to understand implications of technology use via selected popular culture.
- Explain the different types/impacts of technology practices have in their own life experiences and the world around them.

**Required Resources**

- Access to Netflix for entire semester
- Additional readings will be posted on the course’s Canvas site.
- Laptop or tablet

**Student Evaluation**

Course grades are earned and are NOT negotiable. Final grades will be rounded (e.g., 89.5 is reported as an A but 89.4 will be reported as a B). Course grades will not be discussed via email or in class. Students must make an appointment or see me during office hours. Extra credit opportunities may be made available at the discretion of the instructor.

**Grading Scale**

90% – 100% = A (Exceptional Achievement)

70% – 79% = C (Average Achievement)

80% – 89% = B (High Achievement)

60% – 69% = D (Below Average)

0% – 59% = E (Failing)

## ICT 390-001 - Course Policies

### Submission of Assignments

All assignments will be submitted on Canvas in a .doc file, .docx file, video file, or unlisted YouTube link. All assignments, including papers, presentations, etc., should be submitted via Canvas.

**Assignments are due BEFORE 11:59PM EST on Sundays unless noted otherwise.** Prepare and submit all assignments on time. **Please submit assignments as doc, docx., or pdf files only** – unless noted otherwise. **Assignments are also NOT accepted via email.**

When submitting assignments on Canvas, label the assignment with your name and the assignment name. Students are responsible for keeping back-up copies of all work since electronic texts can be lost. All assignments must be written in Standard English with correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Assignments are to be completed solely by the individual. It is YOUR responsibility to make sure that your assignments upload correctly.

### Course Attendance

You are expected to log-on and engage in the course assignments throughout the week. Please do not wait until Sunday to log-on and complete your work. You will need to check announcements from me, the feedback I provide on your work and to the whole class. It is your responsibility to manage your time.

### Late Work

Given the current situation we are in, you may submit late work with a penalty (-10%). The assignment may be submitted up to three days late, after that a ZERO will result; **this excludes the final project.**

### Email Policy

Please give me up to 24 hours to reply to your emails, and I will do the same for you. I will typically not respond to emails after 5PM and on the weekends. Please remember to sign you email with your first and last name. I expect the language and structure of your emails to be professional. This includes punctuation, salutations/signature, etc.

### Civility and Professionalism

Students must learn to meet the standards of professional behavior and treat each other with respect. Critical inquiry is important, but attacking other persons, verbally or otherwise, is not accepted. Students must learn to receive and act on constructive criticism, be reliable and responsible, polite and respectable of others, and focus on producing above quality work. Thus, everyone is expected to conduct themselves professionally in this online class. Professional behavior also entails being respectful of others and their opinions—even and especially when you do not agree with them.

### Technology Information and Requirements

#### Technology Requirements

Minimum technical requirements for UK courses and suggested hardware, software, and internet connections are available at [ITS Student Hardware & Software Guidelines](#).

#### Technical Support

For account help, contact UK's [Information Technology Customer Services online](#), by [email](#), or by phone at 859-218-HELP (4357).

## Resources

[Distance Learning Library Services](#)

[Carla Cantagallo](#), Distance Learning Librarian, 859-218-1240

### **Midterm Grades for Undergraduate Students** (Senate Rules 6.1.3.A)

Mid-term grades will be posted in myUK by the deadline established in the [Academic Calendar](#).

### **Excused Absences** (Senate Rules 5.2.4.2)

Senate Rules 5.2.4.2 defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: (a) significant illness, (b) death of a family member, (c) trips for members of student organizations sponsored by an educational unit, trips for University classes, and trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events, (d) major religious holidays, (e) interviews for graduate/professional school or full-time employment post-graduation, and (f) other circumstances found to fit “reasonable cause for nonattendance” by the instructor of record. Students should notify the professor of absences prior to class when possible.

If a course syllabus requires specific interactions (e.g., with the instructor or other students), in situations where a student’s total EXCUSED absences exceed 1/5 (or 20%) of the required interactions for the course, the student shall have the right to request and receive a "W," or the Instructor of Record may award an “I” for the course if the student declines a “W.” (Senate Rules 5.2.4.2.1)

### **Verification of Absences** (Senate Rules 5.2.4.2.A, B, C, and E)

Students may be asked to verify their absences in order for them to be considered excused. Senate Rule states that faculty have the right to request appropriate verification when students claim an excused absence due to: significant illness; death in the household, trips for classes, trips sponsored by an educational unit and trips for participation related to intercollegiate athletic events; and interviews for full-time job opportunities after graduation and interviews for graduate and professional school. (Appropriate notification of absences due to university-related trips is required prior to the absence when feasible and in no case more than one week after the absence.)

### **Assignments Due During Prep Week**

You have your **Theory and Popular Culture Reflection** paper due Wednesday, April 27 before 11:59PM EST. This is the last day of classes. We do not have a final exam in this class.

### **Religious Observances (Senate Rules 5.2.4.2.D)**

Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays. Please check the course syllabus for the notification requirement. If no requirement is specified, two weeks prior to the absence is reasonable and should not be given any later. Information regarding major religious holidays may be obtained through [the Ombud’s website](#) or calling 859-257-3737.

### **Make-Up Work (Senate Rule 5.2.4.2)**

Students missing any graded work due to an excused absence are responsible: for informing the Instructor of Record about their excused absence within one week following the period of the excused absence (except where prior notification is required); and for making up the missed work. The instructor must give the student an opportunity to make up the work and/or the exams missed due to the excused absence, and shall do so, if feasible, during the semester in which the absence occurred. The instructor shall provide the student with an opportunity to make up the graded work and may not simply calculate the student's grade on the basis of the other course requirements, unless the student agrees in writing.

### **Accommodations Due to Disability**

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC coordinates campus disability services available to students with disabilities. Visit the [DRC website](#), [email the DRC](#), contact them by phone at (859) 257-2754, or visit their office on the corner of Rose Street and Huguelet Drive in the Multidisciplinary Science Building, Suite 407.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement and Title IX Information**

UK is committed to providing a safe learning, living, and working environments for all members of the University community. The University maintains a comprehensive program which protects all members from discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. For complete information about UK's prohibition on discrimination and harassment on aspects such as race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, and sexual orientation, please see [the electronic version of UK's Administrative Regulation 6:1 \("Policy on Discrimination and Harassment"\)](#). In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex in academics, employment, and all of its programs and activities. Sexual misconduct is a form of sexual harassment in which one act is severe enough to create a hostile environment based on sex and is prohibited between members of the University community and shall not be tolerated. For more details, please see [the electronic version of Administrative Regulations 6:2 \("Policy and Procedures for Addressing and Resolving Allegations of Sexual Assault, Stalking, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Sexual Exploitation"\)](#). Complaints regarding violations of University policies on discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct are handled by the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity (IEEO), which is located in 13 Main Building and can be reached by phone at (859) 257-8927. You can also visit [the IEEO's website](#).

Faculty members are obligated to forward any report made by a student related to IEEO matters to the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity. Students can confidentially report alleged incidences through the Violence Intervention and Prevention Center, Counseling Center, or University Health Services.

### **Academic Integrity– Prohibition on Plagiarism (Senate Rules 6.3.1)**

Per University policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, up to suspension from the University may be imposed.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). Complete information can be found on the [Academic Ombud](#) page. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited.

Senate Rule 6.3.1 (see current [Senate Rules](#)) states that all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission.

When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording, or content from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work (including, but not limited to a published article, a book, a website, computer code, or a paper from a friend) without clear attribution. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work, which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be. Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone.

When a student's assignment involves research in outside sources or information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she has employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content, and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas, which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain.

**Please note: Any assignment you turn in may be submitted to an electronic database to check for plagiarism.**

#### **Academic Integrity – Prohibition on Cheating (Senate Rules 6.3.2)**

Cheating is defined by its general usage. It includes, but is not limited to, the wrongfully giving, taking, or presenting any information or material by a student with the intent of aiding himself/herself or another on any academic work which is considered in any way in the determination of the final grade. The fact that a student could not have benefited from an action is not by itself proof that the action does not constitute cheating. Any question of definition shall be referred to the University Appeals Board.

#### **Academic Integrity – Prohibition on Falsification/Misuse of Academic Records (SR 6.3.3)**

Maintaining the integrity, accuracy, and appropriate privacy of student academic records is an essential administrative function of the University and a basic protection of all students. Accordingly, the actual or attempted falsification, theft, misrepresentation or other alteration or misuse of any official academic record of the University, specifically including knowingly having unauthorized access to such records or the unauthorized disclosure of information contained in such records, is a serious academic offense. As used in this context, "academic record" includes all paper and electronic versions of the partial or complete permanent academic record, all official and unofficial academic transcripts, application documents and admission credentials, and all academic record transaction documents. The minimum sanction for falsification, including the omission of information, or attempted falsification or other misuse of academic records as described in this section is suspension for one semester.

#### **Course Material Copyright Statement**

Materials distributed or made available to students in connection with this course may be copyright protected. They are intended for use only by students registered and enrolled in this course and only for the instructional activities associated with and for the duration of this course. They may not be converted to or retained in another medium or disseminated further.

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The University of Kentucky is committed to our core values of diversity and inclusion, mutual respect and human dignity, and a sense of community (Governing Regulations XIV). We acknowledge and respect the seen and unseen diverse identities and experiences of all members of the university community (<https://www.uky.edu/regs/gr14>). These identities include but are not limited to those based on race, ethnicity, gender identity and expressions, ideas and perspectives, religious and cultural beliefs, sexual orientation, national origin, age, ability, and socioeconomic status. We are committed to equity and justice and providing a learning and engaging community in which every member is engaged, heard, and valued.

We strive to rectify and change behavior that is inconsistent with our principles and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. If students encounter such behavior in a course, they are encouraged to speak with the instructor of record and/or the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity. Students may also contact a faculty member within the department, program director, the director of undergraduate or graduate studies, the department chair, any college administrator, or the dean. All of these individuals are mandatory reporters under University policies.

## **Bias Incident Support Services**

Bias Incident Support Services (BISS) provides confidential support and advocacy for any student, staff, or faculty member impacted by bias, hatred, and/or an act of identity-based violence. BISS staff aid impacted parties in accessing campus and community resources, including the Bias Incident Response Team, the University's official reporting system for acts that negatively impact a sense of belonging. Campus and community consultation and educational opportunities centered on inclusion, diversity, equity and belonging is a resource also provided by BISS. For more detailed information please visit the [BISS website](#) or contact them [via email](#).

## **Counseling Center**

The UK Counseling Center (UKCC) provides a range of confidential psychological services to students enrolled in 6 credit hours or more, psychoeducational outreach programming (including QPR suicide prevention), and consultation to members of the UK community (students, faculty, staff, administrators, parents, concerned others). Please visit the website <https://www.uky.edu/counselingcenter/> for more detailed information, or call 859.257.8701.

## **Martin Luther King Center**

The Martin Luther King Center (MLKC) supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, and appreciated as a source of strength. The MLKC's year-round programs and activities that focus on the importance of cultural awareness and cross-cultural understanding support its three primary goals: 1) sponsoring cultural and educational programming; 2) offering opportunities for student support and development; and 3) through programmatic linkages with a wide variety of civic and community agencies, promoting community outreach, engagement, and collaboration. Students can reach the MLKC via phone at (859) 257-4130, by visiting them in Gatton Student Center Suite A230, [via email](#), and by visiting [the MLKC website](#).

## **Office of LGBTQ\* Resources**

UK is committed to supporting students and upholding the University's efforts to promote inclusion among our community. UK faculty and staff employees support inclusion and diversity throughout the University, including the ways in which faculty structure classroom conversations and manage those dynamics. To assist in these efforts, students are welcome to provide the names and pronouns they prefer. One easy way to do this is by using the pronoun feature of UK's Name Change Form. (More information about the form can be found on the [Office of LGBTQ\\*'s website](#).) Otherwise, students can

provide this information to faculty members directly.

Discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity is prohibited at UK. If you have questions about support, advocacy, and community-building services related to sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender identity, students are encouraged to visit the [website of the Office of LGBTQ\\* Resources](#).

### **Veteran's Resource Center**

Being both a member of the military community and a student can bring some complexities. If you are a member of the military or a military veteran or dependent, please let me know when these challenges arise. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, mandatory training exercises, issues with GI Bill disbursement, etc. can complicate your academic life. Please let me know if you experience complications and I will do my best to work with you. If you are a military student serving in the National Guard or Reserve it is in your best interest to let all of your professors know that immediately. You might also consider sharing a copy of your training schedule as well as any orders activating you. The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) can provide a letter for your professors validating your absence but be aware that there is no current UK policy protecting military students who miss class due to short term activations such as long weekend drills, annual training, or emergency activations. See the instructor or the VRC for details.

The VRC is a great resource for members of our military family. If you have questions regarding your VA benefits or other related issues, the VRC has a full complement of staff to assist you. The VRC also provides study and lounge space, as well as free printing. Please visit the VRC website, [email the DRC](#), visit them in the basement of Erikson Hall, or call the director, Tony Dotson, at (859) 257-1148.

### **Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) Center**

If you experience an incident of sex- or gender-based discrimination or interpersonal violence, we encourage you to report it. While you may talk to a faculty member or TA/RA/GA, understand that as a "Responsible Employee" of the University these individuals MUST report any acts of violence (including verbal bullying and sexual harassment) to the University's Title IX Coordinator in the IIEO Office. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you can visit the [Violence Intervention and Prevention \(VIP\) Center's website](#) (offices located in Frazee Hall, lower level; [email them](#); or call (859) 257-3574), [the Counseling Center's \(CC\) website](#) (106 Frazee Hall; (859) ), and the [University Health Services \(UHS\) website](#); the VIP Center, CC, and UHS are confidential resources on campus. The VIP Center accepts walk-in appointments.

### **Student Resources (for a complete list see the link below)**

The University offers a variety of resources to students. Visit the University Senate's Resources Available to Students to access that list (<https://www.uky.edu/universitysenate/student-resources>).

## ICT 390 – Course Assignments

### **Weekly Theory Application (WTA) - (60 points)**

Each week we apply the theory to the show either as a WTA or in a discussion board. For the WTA, this is based on that week's theory and viewed episode. You may be asked to respond to the following question in Canvas. You will be graded on completeness of your answer, support used, and correctness. There will be six of these WTAs (each worth 10 points).

- What was the technology problem presented in this episode?
- How was the theory used/illustrated in this episode?
- What connections to current news do you see with this episode and theory?

### **Discussion Board (DB) – (60 points):**

Each week we apply the theory to the show either as a WTA or in a discussion board. For the discussion board, you will need to post a response to the question and also respond to at least ONE of your peers by Sunday. You will need to pay attention to what is being asked of you for the discussion board. You will be graded on correctness and completeness of ideas. There will be four discussion board prompts (each worth 15 points).

### **Interactive Questions (IQ) – (100 points)**

These online, interactive videos that discuss the theory and/or check your understandings on the content. There are ten videos each worth 10 points. You can take the quiz as many times as you would like.

### **Theory and Popular Culture Podcast (200 points)**

For the final project in this class, you will be required to create a 10-minute podcast. You will need to choose ONE episode and ONE theory from class. You can pick any episode (even if we used it for class). Only condition: You may not use the same theory and episode combination from class (e.g., SCOT and San Junipero).

In the podcast, you need to address the following in your podcast:

- Have a theme for the episode.
- Debrief the episode for your listeners. You can assume that your audience for the podcast has seen the episode, but you will summarize the highpoints/highlight.
- Bring in theory from the class (at least one). Talk about how theory could help explain some of the show's messages about technology consumption.
- Make sure to end with a thinking point – what should your audience think about in regard to what you discussed in the podcast?
- Make a connection to a real-life news event.
- You will need at least 3 oral citations; ONE should be the theorist of the theory.
- Have structure to your podcast (e.g., introduction and conclusion)

Points Allotted for the Podcast Final Project:

- Outline Brainstorm Topic Approval (10 points)
- Rough Draft Transcript (15 points)
- Peer Review (20 points)
- Transcript (35 points)
- Podcast (120 points)

### Theory and Popular Culture Reflection (40 points)

In 3-4 pages (double spaced, Times New Roman 12pt), reflect on your experiences in the course. How will your experience in this class help you in future courses or future employment? What do you believe will be most useful to you as an individual? What will be most useful to your employer? How was the overall structure of the class? What recommendations do you have to improve the class? What was unexpected about the course or what you learned?

**Total to be earned: 460 points**

### Tentative Schedule: Spring 2022

*Alternative show: Students may choose an “alternative episode” from the Twilight Zone or Star Trek to apply the theory for the week. This is the student’s responsibility to find an appropriate alternative show/episode.*

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
Week 1		
Jan 10	Review syllabus Introduction to theory How do I apply theory to the world around me? (Part I)	Complete Sunday before 11:59PM EST: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read the syllabus and assigned readings</li><li>• Interactive Quiz</li><li>• Discussion response #1 is due</li></ul>
Week 2		
Jan 18	Introduction to theory How do I apply theory to the world around me? (Part II)	Complete Sunday before 11:59PM EST: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read assigned readings</li><li>• Interactive Quiz</li><li>• Discussion response #2 is due</li></ul>
Week 3		
Jan 24	Theory Day: Technological Determinism Watch: Nosedive, Season 3, Episode 1 Episode Discussion for Technological Determinism	Complete Sunday before 11:59PM EST: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read assigned readings</li><li>• Interactive Quiz</li><li>• WTA #1 response is due</li></ul>
Week 4		
Jan 31	Theory Day: Social Construction of Tech Watch: San Junipero, Season 3, Episode 4 Episode Discussion for Social Construction of Tech	Complete Sunday before 11:59PM EST: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read assigned readings</li><li>• Interactive Quiz</li><li>• WTA #2 response is due</li></ul>
Week 5		
Feb 7	Theory Day: Mutual Shaping Watch: Hang the DJ, Season 4, Episode 4 Episode Discussion for Mutual Shaping	Complete Sunday before 11:59PM EST: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read assigned readings</li><li>• Interactive Quiz</li><li>• Discussion #3 response is due (Respond to at least one person)</li></ul>
Week 6		

Feb 14	Theory Day: Technology Acceptance Model/ Diffusion Watch: Arkangel, Season 4, Episode 2 Episode Discussion for TAM and Diffusions of Innovations	Complete Sunday before 11:59PM EST: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read assigned readings</li> <li>• Interactive Quiz</li> <li>• WTA #3 response is due</li> </ul>
Week 7		
Feb 21	Theory Day: Domestication Theory Watch: USS Callister, Season 4, Episode 1 Episode Discussion for Domestication Theory	Complete Sunday before 11:59PM EST: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read assigned readings</li> <li>• Interactive Quiz</li> <li>• WTA #4 response is due</li> </ul>
Week 8		
Feb 28	Theory Day: Computers as Social Actors Watch: Be Right Back, Season 2, Episode 1 Episode Discussion for Computers as Social Actors	Complete Sunday before 11:59PM EST: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read assigned readings</li> <li>• Interactive Quiz</li> <li>• WTA #5 response is due</li> </ul>
Week 9		

Mar 7	Theory Day: Media Equation Watch: Rachel, Jack, and Ashley Too, Season 5, Episode 3 Episode Discussion for Media Ecology	Complete Sunday before 11:59PM EST: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read assigned readings</li> <li>• Interactive Quiz</li> <li>• WTA #6 response is due</li> </ul>
Week 10		
	<b>Spring Break</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>
Week 11		
Mar 21	Theory Day: Cognitive Dissonance Watch: White Christmas, Season 2, Episode 4 Episode Discussion for Cognitive Dissonance	Complete Sunday before 11:59PM EST: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read assigned readings</li> <li>• Interactive Quiz</li> <li>• Discussion #4 response is due (Respond to at least one person)</li> </ul>
Week 12		
Mar 28	Review Theories Mapping Out the Podcast	Outline Brainstorm Topic due Sunday before 11:59PM EST
Week 13		
April 4	Podcasting Work Week	Rough Draft Transcript due Sunday before 11:59PM EST
Week 14		
April 11	Podcasting Work Week	Peer Review due Sunday before 11:59PM EST
Week 15		
April 18	Podcasting Work Week	Final Podcast with Transcript due Sunday before 11:59PM EST
Week 16		
April 25	Reflecting on Experiences	<b>Reflection due before 11:59PM EST on Wednesday, April 27</b>