Public Opinion and the American Legal System
A Survey of the How the American Legal System Works and What the Public Thinks About It
(New College, Sarasota, FL – January 2006)

Meetings: Mondays and Thursdays, 2-4:30pm in the Four Winds Cafe

Expectations

- Participants will come to Independent Study Project (ISP) meetings prepared. It is crucial that all students do the reading and come prepared to ask questions and bring up discussion topics at our meetings.
- Two participants will be asked to be discussion leaders for each meeting. Discussion leaders should get together to discuss the readings and should send me a list of discussion questions by 10am on the day of the meeting. I may choose to add questions that I think are important.
- All participants need to do a one-page write-up for each meeting. These write-ups are due by 10am on the day of our meeting.
- The final project for this ISP will be a 10-15 page research paper or critical essay. Participants should discuss their paper topics with me by January 23rd. The paper is due (emailed to me) on January 31st.

Wednesday, January 4th
Why Do We Have a Legal System?

Readings:


Friday, January 6th
How Does the Legal System Work?

Readings:

Monday, January 9th

Why Do People Break the Law?

Readings:


Thursday, January 12th

Public Perceptions of Crime and Litigation Rates

Readings:

Monday, January 16th

Determining Responsibility / Blame

Readings:


Thursday, January 19th

Determining Punishment

Readings:

**Monday, January 23rd**

**How Well Do Our Remedies Work? What are the Alternatives?**

*Readings:*


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**Thursday, January 26th**

**Wrap up**

*Readings:*