CDR

Empathy or Assertiveness?

Instructions

When doing the reading for this class, there are the two basic kinds of information you need to understand:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

It is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern, since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible position on an issue, rather than another.

Reading

Machiavelli, N. (2010, August). Cruelty and mercy. Is it better to be loved than feared? In J. Bennett (Ed. & Trans.), *The prince* (pp. 35–37). Early Modern Texts. https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/machiavelli-1532part2.pdf (Original work from 1532)

Questions

1. What is Niccolò Machiavelli's answer to the question about whether it is better for a ruler to be loved or feared? How does he justify his answer? What role do assumptions of psychological egoism play in his justification?

To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.