Reading: ‘1965 Blackout Archive’ on course webpage
For this part of the homework this week, read through the links to the 1965 and 2003 blackouts and come to class prepared with questions, comments and observations, to use in class discussion.

- **Everyone to read**
  - Read completely:
    - The Loudon Wainright article from Life Magazine
  - Skim:
    - Article on the August 2003 blackout: *What went wrong?*
  - From the NYTimes *The Night the Lights Went Out*
    - Read completely: Chapters 1, 8
    - Skim (read first sentence of each paragraph): Chapters 3, 4, 6 & 13
    - Read first pages then skim: Chapters 5, 12 & 14
    - Do not read: Chapters 2, 7, 9, 10, 11 & 15

- **GROUP ASSIGNMENT – While reading:** Each student will focus on one general topic below, and bring notes (see assignment 1 below) on this topic for discussion
  - (A) Our relationship to electricity in particular and technology in general – dependency/pride/love/fear/hate… relationship
  - (B) Compare and contrast the 1965 and 2003 Northeast blackouts – societal reactions, assumptions, causes (real and imagined) …
  - (C) The interaction and interdependence of engineering and government, or of engineers and policy-makers. The role of each as defined by themselves and as defined by the other group. …

**Objectives for Class Discussion**

- To gain a broad understanding of the dependence of human society on electricity
- To gain an understanding of peoples’ relationship with technology in general, and with complex engineering systems in particular
- To gain an understanding of how and why power blackouts occur
- To discuss the likelihood and impact of future electric power blackouts

**Assignments – based on ‘Group Assignment’ topic above**

**November 15:** *Hand in* no more than one page (typed) of questions, thoughts, observations, etc. We will be discussing these topics in class both on November 15 and November 17. (Note, these will be graded only in terms of ✓ ✓+ ✓-. The objective is to have everyone read through the posted readings and participate in the subsequent class discussion.)

**November 22:** *Hand in* a 3 – 4 page reflection on the blackout readings, class discussion and other thoughts you have had on this topic. The reflection must be well organized, including a title, introduction, conclusion and a logical flow to your writing, as well as a message or main theme to your essay. (Do not use any dangling prepositions, contractions or run-on sentences – one point will be deducted for each occurrence of these grammatical errors.)