Rubric for a 2000-Word Critical Essay on *The Environmental History of Computing* by Nathan Ensmenger

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General Guidelines

- The essay must be **2000 words** (+/- 10%).
- It should be well-structured with an **introduction, thesis statement, body paragraphs, and a conclusion**.
- The essay should engage critically with the article, presenting **a clear argument**, **strong analysis**, and **evidence-based reasoning**.
- Proper citation of the article and any additional sources following **MLA, APA, or Chicago style**.

Grading Criteria (100 Points Total)

I. Thesis and Argument (20 Points)

- **Excellent (18-20 points):** The thesis is clear, well-articulated, and presents a compelling argument about the article. The essay maintains a strong, focused argument throughout.
- **Good (15-17 points):** The thesis is present and reasonably clear, but may lack depth or specificity. The argument is generally consistent.
- **Satisfactory (12-14 points):** The thesis is vague or somewhat unclear. The argument is present but inconsistently developed.
- **Needs Improvement (0-11 points):** The thesis is absent or unclear. The argument is weak, unfocused, or inconsistent.

II. Analysis and Critical Engagement (25 Points)

- **Excellent (23-25 points):** Demonstrates deep understanding of the article, critically engages with key ideas, and presents insightful analysis. Addresses strengths and limitations of Ensmenger's arguments.
- **Good (20-22 points):** Engages with the article thoughtfully, identifying key themes and arguments, though analysis may lack depth in some areas.
- **Satisfactory (16-19 points):** Engages with the article but provides limited critical insight. Analysis is mostly summary rather than critique.
- **Needs Improvement (0-15 points):** Little to no engagement with the article's arguments. Mostly summary with minimal analysis.

III. Use of Evidence and Examples (20 Points)

- **Excellent (18-20 points):** Uses well-selected evidence from the article and relevant external sources. Quotes and paraphrases are well-integrated and support the argument.
- **Good (15-17 points):** Uses evidence from the article but may rely too heavily on summary. Some supporting examples may be underdeveloped.
- **Satisfactory (12-14 points):** Uses minimal or underdeveloped evidence. Quotes may be used without clear analysis or connection to the thesis.
- **Needs Improvement (0-11 points):** Little to no evidence from the article or external sources. Unsupported claims.

IV. Structure and Organization (15 Points)

- **Excellent (14-15 points):** Clear, logical structure. Strong introduction, well-connected body paragraphs, and a compelling conclusion. Transitions enhance readability.
- **Good (12-13 points):** Well-organized, though some transitions may be weak. Conclusion is present but not particularly strong.
- **Satisfactory (10-11 points):** Organization is somewhat unclear or repetitive. The argument may feel disjointed in places.
- **Needs Improvement (0-9 points):** Lacks clear organization. Ideas jump around with little coherence.

V. Writing Quality and Style (10 Points)

- **Excellent (9-10 points):** Sophisticated, clear, and engaging writing. Precise word choice and varied sentence structure. Few to no grammatical errors.
- **Good (7-8 points):** Writing is clear but may have occasional awkward phrasing or minor grammatical errors.
- **Satisfactory (5-6 points):** Writing is understandable but has frequent grammatical or stylistic errors that detract from readability.
- **Needs Improvement (0-4 points):** Frequent grammatical and stylistic errors make the essay difficult to follow.

VI. Citation and Formatting (10 Points)

- **Excellent (9-10 points):** All sources are properly cited in a consistent format (MLA, APA, or Chicago). No errors in formatting.
- **Good (7-8 points):** Citations are mostly correct but may have minor inconsistencies.
- **Satisfactory (5-6 points):** Some sources are improperly cited or missing citations. Formatting is inconsistent.
- **Needs Improvement (0-4 points):** Major citation errors or lack of proper citation. Formatting is not followed.

Total Score: _____ / 100

Comments:

Final Notes:

- Essays that **plagiarize** or lack sufficient engagement with the article will automatically receive a **failing grade**.
- Clarity, coherence, and depth of analysis are **essential** for a strong essay.
- Be sure to **proofread** before submission to avoid grammatical and citation errors.