

Sociology 647 - Sociology of Sport

Instructions for Panel Position Paper

Piliavin

You will be required to prepare a short paper of 4-5 pages dealing with the panel topic to which you have been assigned. You will also be required to participate in the panel discussion for that topic. These are discussions - not formal debates. However, I have assigned each person to one side or the other, in order to stimulate discussion. The following are instructions for preparing the paper.

1. Begin your paper with a topic sentence that states the proposition you are discussing and indicates whether your paper is in agreement or disagreement with the proposition. In the remainder of the first paragraph, indicate briefly the outline of the line of argument you will take. I have had to assign some of you to topics that were not your first choice, or to the opposite side from your preference. Even if you do not believe in the side to which you have been assigned, you should be able to defend it by attempting to refute the arguments for the position you do believe in.
2. In the remainder of the paper, each paragraph (or two) should take up one of the arguments, with its supporting material. Each paragraph should also have a structure, with a topic sentence that introduces what that paragraph will be about. It is OK to have several arguments in one paragraph, if they are related in some way (e.g., a list of benefits that might be expected to flow from a policy), but it is better in general for each paragraph to cover one set of ideas. Writing more, shorter paragraphs is better than fewer, longer ones. You should back up your position with reasoned arguments, examples, research findings, etc., not just with the assertion of your personal feelings and prejudices. Emotional appeals without substance are not usually convincing (although emotional arguments backed up by facts work well). The final paragraph sums up and concludes your overall argument.
3. As a *bare minimum* you must read *five* articles, chapters, or internet sites dealing with your general subject, and make use of the information in your paper and panel presentation. (You may not count the textbook or the articles reprinted in Eitzen toward your minimum number of references, although you may use and cite arguments you find there.) You can find relevant articles by reading the

assignments in your textbooks and looking up articles or books mentioned in them. You should also use the Internet, MADCAT, and the various social science databases available in our electronic library. There is a sports database: SPORTDISCUS, which should be particularly useful. Do learn about Memorial Library, if your experiences have been mainly in Steenbock and H.C. White. The Reference Room librarians are particularly helpful. Usually a scholarly article will be of greater value than a story from *USA Today*, *Sports Illustrated*, or other magazines and newspapers. The quality of your sources and the thoroughness of your research will certainly be factors in the quality of the arguments you can present in the panel and in your paper - and hence in your grade.

4. Cite the material you take from the references, whether you quote the actual language or merely paraphrase or summarize the material, by using the form (Aitken, 1993). Of course, you should use quotation marks if you quote any phrases or sentences exactly, and add the page number where the quote is to be found. *At the end of the paper list all of your references*, giving author(s), title, place, publisher, and date (if a book) or author(s), title, journal, volume, date, and pages (if an article). Put the references in alphabetical order by author name; do not number them. Failure to follow citation format instructions will be penalized. Reference formats are below; the form for internet citations is flexible.

JOURNAL ARTICLE: Janet Lever, 1976, "Sex Differences in the Games Children Play", *Social Problems*, 23:478-487.

CHAPTER IN A BOOK: Aitken, Brian W.W. 1993. "The Emergence of Born-Again Sport". Pp.197-214 in Charles S. Prebish (Ed.), *Religion and Sport*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

BOOK: Robert Lipsyte, *Sportsworld*, New York: Quadrangle Books, 1975.

INTERNET (suggested): NCADI: 1995 National Household Survey. Online. Internet. 6 April 1997. Available URL: <http://www.health.org/pubs/95hhs/highlite.htm>

5. Please number the pages in your papers.

6. Papers for all panels will be due on Tuesday, July 13. It would, however, be wise

to have your paper in rough draft for your presentation date.

Instructions for panel presentation.

You must make an oral summary of your arguments from your paper (or your notes, if you present in week 3) during the panel discussion of your topic. You should speak for about 5-8 minutes. It would be best if you did not read your paper; that tends to bore people. Just summarize the basic points you want to make. If you suffer from anxiety about speaking in public, however, you may read your paper. (One double spaced page takes about two minutes to read.) If you do not show up to take part in the panel discussion on your day, your grade will be heavily penalized, even if you later hand in an excellent paper. It is not fair to your co-participants and the rest of the class.

Journals specializing in the study of sport:

Anthropology and Sport

Journal of Applied Sport Psychology

Journal of the Legal Aspects of Sport

Journal of Sport and Social Issues

Journal of Sport Behavior

Journal of Sport Psychology

International Journal of Sport Psychology

International Review for the Sociology of Sport

Sociology of Sport Journal

Women in Sport and Physical Activity Journal

Sports database: *SPORTDISCUS*

Writing tips

This is not a writing course, but it is an upper division course, and I will base a portion of your grades on grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. An excellent UW web source to consult for such questions is

<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/index.html>

I am old-fashioned enough to believe that clarity of presentation reflects clarity of thought. Some very common problems to be avoided:

Sentence structure. Sentence, and independent clauses within sentences, must have a subject and a verb. Two independent clauses in a sentence must be separated by either a semi-colon (;) or a conjunction (e.g., and or but).

Possessives and plurals. Plurals do not have an apostrophe (') before the "s"; possessives do, except for *its*. A singular possessive is "apostrophe s"; "They played with the girl's basketball"; a plural possessive is "s apostrophe": "The girls used the boys' bats".

That vs. who. When using a dependent clause to modify a noun, use "that" to begin the clause if the noun is non-human, but use "who" if it is human. For example, "The girl who was called out argued with the umpire." However, "The ball that hit the batter bruised him badly."

Matching number. All of us are trying to use non-sexist language now, and one can end up with awkward sentences doing it. There is a temptation to use "they" instead of "he or she" when writing sentences that begin with a singular subject (e.g., "the athlete") and then refer to the same person at a later point. Don't do this. If it is a particular person (e.g., Sammy Sosa, Martina Hingis), use the appropriate pronoun. Otherwise, you should just get into the habit of writing in the plural.

Plagiarism

Using someone else's words, whether from a published author, an internet site, or another student, is the worst academic sin that exists. The punishment for it is severe. It is also remarkably easy to catch. Please don't do it.

