

APPENDIX A

Sociology 443: Crime & Society
Dr. Jana Pershing
Spring Semester, 2005
GROUP DEBATE INSTRUCTIONS

Goal: The purpose of these presentations is to familiarize you with one contemporary controversial crime and/or criminal justice issue and to then present the debate or controversy to the class. This assignment also provides a set of partial responses to two of the course questions, 'What myths surround crime and criminal justice?' AND 'Does the criminal justice system effectively address the true sources of crime?'. The content of the group debates should be sociological/academic evidence rather than moral/ethical arguments.

Debate Format:

Four students will be assigned to each group so that two students may present each side of the controversy. The presentations should proceed in the following manner:

Student 1: present 2-3 main arguments supporting the "yes" side (*or, for group 12 the "rehabilitation" side*)
(not to exceed 7 minutes)

Student 2: present a rebuttal to the arguments presented by student 1
(not to exceed 7 minutes)

Student 3: present 2-3 main arguments supporting the "no" side (*or, for group 12, the "incapacitation" side*)
(not to exceed 7 minutes)

Student 4: present a rebuttal to the arguments presented by student 3
(not to exceed 7 minutes)

*** Presentations should not exceed 30 minutes in length. An additional 5 minutes may be set aside for questions from the class. Debate time limits will be strictly monitored. Full letter-grade deduction for all group members if the presentation goes beyond 30 minutes; this means that a debate with a letter grade of 'B' would be reduced to a 'C'. Full letter-grade deductions made on an individual-basis for students who arrive to class LATE on their group presentation day.**

Debate Outline & Annotated Bibliography:

Each group member is required to turn in a **typed** outline summarizing the main points of their presentation as well as an annotated bibliography listing a **minimum** of three academic sources used to research your section of the debate (**1/3 letter-grade deduction** for each academic source that is missing). You may use Internet sources if they are "academic" in content (.com websites are NOT typically academic). However, at least two of your academic sources must be traditional (or, "in print"). You may also use textbook material; however, this does NOT count as one of your three sources. Group members may use the SAME sources.

The debate outline and annotated bibliography are **DUE** the day you deliver your debate AND should be turned in to me **before** the class period begins (failure to turn these in on the debate day will result in a **1/3 letter-grade deduction** if you turn them in on the consecutive class day; they will not be accepted after that and you will receive a **full letter-grade deduction** from your debate grade). These deductions will be made on an **individual basis**. In

other words, you will not be penalized if you turn in an outline and annotated bibliography but one or more group members does not.

An annotated bibliography entails providing summaries of the main points of the articles and/or books that you used in gathering information for your section of the presentation. These should NOT be detailed reviews of the articles and/or books but should, instead, be succinct abstracts describing what information you gathered from each source in researching your side of the debate topic. Abstracts should be approximately 1 to 2 paragraphs for each source, not to exceed ½-page of typed, single-spaced print for each source. Bibliographies that are not annotated will receive a **full letter-grade deduction**.

* Refer to the last page for instructions on referencing sources in your bibliography.

Visual Presentation of Outline to Class:

Each group member is also required to present their debate outline to the class. You may either post your outline on a transparency OR photocopy your outline and pass it out to the class on your presentation day. If you display a transparency, **MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE PRINT IS DARK ENOUGH AND LARGE ENOUGH FOR THE CLASS TO SEE! FONT SIZE ON A TRANSPARENCY SHOULD BE AT LEAST 20-POINT TO ENSURE THAT THE PRINT IS LARGE ENOUGH TO BE READABLE.**

Failure EITHER to make outlines available to the class OR posting a transparency that is too small to read will result in a **1/3 letter-grade deduction** (again, these deductions are made on an individual basis).

Debate Critique Guidelines:

The purpose of this assignment is to critically analyze your debate topic. This assignment is done on an individual basis. The debate critique should be 2-3 typed, double-spaced pages and is DUE either on your presentation day OR the consecutive class day. The following information should be included-- in other words, ALL of the following questions should be answered:

- 1) Which point or issue on **each side** of the debate is the strongest or most convincing point raised? Why?
- 2) Which point or issue on **each side** of the debate is the weakest or least convincing point raised? Why?
- 3) How has your research influenced your personal opinion about the debate topic? In other words, has your thinking on the topic changed or did your research reinforce your opinion about the issue? It would be appropriate to discuss your opinion both before and after your research.
- 4) Also include a brief paragraph describing your experience working on the group project. You may comment about whether you feel that the work was equitably divided among group members.

Debate Day Check-List

On the day you deliver your presentation, remember to give me the following **four items** before the class period begins:

- **typed debate outline**
- **typed annotated bibliography**- *is it annotated?*
- **typed visual presentation of your outline**- *is it readable?*
- **typed debate essay** (OR, this may be turned in on the CONSECUTIVE class day)

Group Debate Questions:

GROUP 1: "Is criminal behavior biologically determined?"

GROUP 2: "Are juvenile offenders treated too leniently?"

GROUP 3: "Should gambling be illegal?"

GROUP 4: "Should illicit drugs (i.e. marijuana, cocaine) be legalized?"

GROUP 5: "Should pornography be illegal?"

GROUP 6: "Should prostitution be legalized?"

GROUP 7: "Is our criminal justice system free of racial biases?"

GROUP 8: "Will gun control reduce crime?"

GROUP 9: "Should prison overcrowding be dealt with by releasing minor criminal offenders?"

GROUP 10: "Should capital punishment be abolished?"

GROUP 11: "Should the insanity plea be allowed in criminal court trials?"

GROUP 12: "Should the criminal justice system focus on rehabilitation or incapacitation?"

Note: You may request to research specific debate topics, although I cannot guarantee that you will be assigned to a particular group. To make a request, please turn in your name along with your TOP THREE preferences. Or, if there are other students in the class with whom you would like to work, you may also make a request in writing.

GROUP PRESENTATION EVALUATIONS

I will evaluate each presentation according to two general criteria:

1. CONTENT & ORGANIZATION

You should start your section of the presentation by introducing yourself to the class. This means giving your full name.

Each presentation should be based on academic evidence and should be ACCURATE. Each presentation should also be clearly organized and each point concisely delineated.

Students #1 and #3 should NARROW THE FOCUS of their discussion to two or three main points. Seven minutes is NOT enough time to cover all issues relevant to your topic.

Students #2 and #4, who rebut students #1 and #3 respectively, should do just that. The content of your presentation should be a critique of ALL main points raised by the person whom you are rebutting. New information should NOT be included in these sections unless it is directly related to the rebuttal of a specific point.

2. DELIVERY

Each presentation should be clearly and effectively delivered-- this means giving the class eye contact, speaking loudly enough so that people can hear you, and speaking slowly enough so that your points are clear. Also, **DO NOT READ FROM YOUR NOTES! FULL LETTER-GRADE DEDUCTION** for reading from your notes-- these deductions are made on an individual basis. NOTE: if you have learned the material you have researched, reading or memorizing a speech is NOT necessary.

*** I also expect each group to monitor their time. It is up to you to ensure that each group member stays within the 7-minute time frame. Remember, this is a group effort and you will receive a group grade.**

PLEASE PRACTICE.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1) What happens if one of your group members fails to show up or is late for the presentation?

You are expected to proceed with the presentation. Under these circumstances I will only evaluate the sections of the presentation that are delivered. In other words, your grade will NOT be negatively impacted. If a group member is late, he or she will receive a full-letter-grade deduction.

2) What happens if you have fewer than 4 members in your group or if one or more members drops the class before your presentation date?

Each student is expected to deliver only one section. You will not need to 'do extra work' or compensate for sections not covered. However, if a group member drops the class you should notify me ahead of time.

NOTE: This is the evaluation form that you will receive upon completion of your group debate and group debate essays. Please remember that each group receives a GROUP GRADE that will be located in the lower left-hand corner of this evaluation form. Although the group grade is a reflection of the overall quality of the group presentation, I will also provide comments to each person using the score key listed below followed by written comments.

GROUP DEBATE: EVALUATION FORM

GROUP #

Student 1:

content & organization _____
delivery _____

typed outline & annotated bibliography? yes / no
visual presentation of outline to class? yes / no

Student 2:

content & organization _____
delivery _____

typed outline & annotated bibliography? yes / no
visual presentation of outline to class? yes / no

Student 3:

content & organization _____
delivery _____

typed outline & annotated bibliography? yes / no
visual presentation of outline to class? yes / no

Student 4:

content & organization _____
delivery _____

typed outline & annotated bibliography? yes / no
visual presentation of outline to class? yes / no

SCORE KEY:

- ++ = excellent
- + = very good
- /+ = good
- / = average
- = below average

GROUP DEBATE GRADE: _____

LIBRARY RESEARCH FOR GROUP DEBATES-- GETTING STARTED

In addition to conducting a general search of the library database for academic books on your topic, you may want to leaf through the table of contents of the following sociology, deviance and crime journals. It would also be appropriate to conduct a literature search using one of the library databases, for example *Sociofile*. Many of our library's journal articles are available on microfiche. More current issues are available in the new journal section. Library assistants are available to help you learn how to access databases and to find materials.

PRELIMINARY LIST OF ACADEMIC JOURNALS:

Social Problems

Law & Society

Research in Social Problems & Public Policy

Deviant Behavior

Criminology

Journal of Crime & Delinquency

American Sociological Review

American Journal of Sociology

Sociological Quarterly

Criminal Justice & Behavior

Sociological Perspectives

Journal of Interpersonal Violence

CQ Researcher

Directions for References

SOURCE DOCUMENTATION IN BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

author's name(s), publication date, title, place of publication: publisher, edition (if applicable), page #s used.

If you are using a chapter out of an edited volume (like your reader), the author's name should be listed first with the title of the chapter. You should also list the editors at the end of the citation.

author's name(s) of chapter, publication date, "title of chapter", title of book, editors (if applicable). place of publication: publisher, edition (if applicable), page #s of chapter.

Journal Articles

author's name(s), publication date, "title of article", name or title of journal, volume # (if applicable- sometimes only the month that the volume was published is given), page #s of the article.

Internet Sources

provide the FULL web site address

Other Sources (i.e. newspapers, reports...)

As indicated above, you should list the authors, title of article, title of newspaper..., publisher, volume, page numbers... if this information is available.

*If you're unsure about how to document or cite a source, you may refer to the bibliography in your text for a plethora of examples. Or of course, you may ask me.

PLAGIARISM (for your general information)

To cite a source within the text of your paper, include the following after your presentation of the material: (author's last name, year of publication: page number(s) if relevant).

1. citing an original idea

If you use an original idea but do not quote the author directly, you still need to cite the source. For example:

Silberman argues that violence and crime have always been a prominent part of American culture (Silberman, 1988).

2. citing quotations

If you quote an author directly (using someone else's words), place quotation marks around the material. For example:

"Physical attractiveness is an important motivating factor in bringing couples together in the first place. However, marriage and commitment do not free couples from the tyranny of beauty" (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983: 246).

*Indent and single space the quotation if it is more than one sentence of text.

3. plagiarism: "the act of stealing and passing off the ideas or words of another as one's own; the act of using a created production without crediting the source" (Webster's Dictionary, 1980)

examples of plagiarism:

- having someone else write your paper for you
- copying or closely paraphrasing from another work without crediting the author
- re-stating or paraphrasing someone else's original idea without crediting them

*University policy recommends that instructors award students a zero for papers or exams which are plagiarized. There is a formal disciplinary procedure which may accompany this situation. Please make sure that your research and writing represents original work, and please provide proper citations for your work.