

**Assignment #13**

*\* This assignment has 3 parts, with different due dates*

**1) First, READ Dirk Beck's essay, "Playing to His Potential."**

Note: This essay is particularly well written. It also demonstrates how you can "push the envelope" of a typical research-based paper. In this case, the writer was inspired by Malcolm Gladwell's use of his own running experience in Gladwell's profile of runner Alberto Salazar.

Why read this essay?

- To get a feel for scope and range—i.e., how much can a writer cover in 8-10 pages?
- And a corollary, what kind of questions lend themselves to essays of this length?
- To see what kinds of sources the writer consults, and how he uses his source material.
- In addition, to see how the writer engages readers

**2) Second, WRITE your Proposal for Essay 3, the Investigative Essay**

Essay 3 is a research-based humanities essay for which you aim to answer a question on an issue related to sports and culture.

- The essay should be 8-10 pages double-spaced.
- It is to be structured as an answer to an inquiry question, which you will ask in your introduction.
- Your inquiry question should not be a "what is" or "who is" question—it should be a question that requires interpretation and the forming of a thesis.
- **Your inquiry question should be a genuine one—that is, something you want to figure out and that matters—something is at stake.**

**What goes in the PROPOSAL for Essay 3**

- What is your topic? Describe it in a sentence or two.
- What is your main Inquiry Question—the question you want to answer for yourself, and which you expect to shape your research and your paper? You may also list 2-3 subsidiary questions.
- What do you hope to learn by researching your topic? –tell me in a couple of sentences.
- Write 1 concise paragraph stating why this question matters to you.
- The proposal must be complete! I will look over your proposal, comment, and return it to you in class.

NOTES:

- Several broad topics are listed in the "Topics for Essay 3" handout. You are not limited to these topics, but they should be helpful to get you started thinking.
- You may also want to look over the supplemental readings for further ideas.

➤ ***Your proposal is due by Session 14.***

**3) WRITE a longer comment to your workshop partners**

➤ *Due by Session 15*

Guidelines for responding online to group members:

Give each partner 2 solid paragraphs of response. Remember that comments can be positive, or they can ask for clarification, as well as pointing to things that you don't think are working. *You may have new thoughts after workshopping*, which is fine. It's good practice to include some comments that address elements of idea and structure first, and then more particular elements such as voice, use of sources, sentence structure, transitions, etc.

Some things your response might focus on:

- The way the essay develops its idea: is the idea clear? Is it powerful?
- Does the introduction do a good job of both pulling readers into the essay, and setting out what the essay will concern itself with?
- What's especially interesting? Where does the writing come most alive?
- What do you want to hear more about?
- Does the writer's voice sound natural, conversational?
- What are some of the strong images or descriptions? Do they suggest additional possibilities?
- Does the title do a good job of describing the essay?
- Do the title, introduction, and conclusion work together?
- Could some of the transitions, or sequences of ideas, be improved

And, of course, concerns that the writer raised when you discussed the drafts in class.

I will read these comments, but they should be addressed to the writer, not to me.

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