

ASSIGNMENT FOR
COMPARISON AND CONTRAST ESSAY

Re: Paper #1, a comparison/contrast

Fall 1992

This paper is to be written in formal academic style for a general, college educated reader. Consider the portfolio readers.

In your paper, compare and contrast the essays by two of these four writers in the Miller text: Wetzsteon, Martin, Nelson and Duke. Use only two sources.

In length, the paper must be at least 500 words (2 typewritten pages) and no more than 1,000 words (4 typewritten pages).

For the first draft that you submit for evaluation, the thesis statement, development, coherence, sentence structure, and conformity to the nature of the assignment will be evaluated, but not the mechanics. Therefore, concentrate on content.

The planning, shaping and drafting of the comparison/contrast paper is the subject of lecture and discussion in the second and third meetings (3 and 8 Sept.). You may also refer to Troyka on the use of comparison/contrast in paragraphs (114-5).

Although concerns about spelling, capitalization, punctuation, usage, diction and such should be subordinate to content on the first draft and will not be graded, the instructor's evaluation is likely to be more useful on a draft he can understand than on one that confuses him. In addition, typing this draft also makes possible a more valid estimate of the length the second draft will be. Therefore, the first draft must meet these requirements:

- typed on plain paper (see Troyka 772)
- formatted according to Troyka (56-82), various drafts and (171-73), two sample arguments.

Format refers to arrangement of title, name, date and such and to margins, spaces, type and size of paper, etc. So use the samples for these formal elements, not as examples of content or rhetoric.

Do not do anything to the first draft to hold the sheets together. Do not place the draft in a binder or folder. Do not staple. Do not attach a clip of any kind. Do not subject the corners to amateur origami. It may be advisable to carry the paper to class in a manila folder or in a notebook for protection. You will be shown how to fold the draft before submission.

The second draft is to be revised, edited and proofread. The second draft is graded for mechanics as well as for content, so it should conform to standards of formal English suitable for the audience and also conform to the MLA format as presented in Troyka's Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers (775-6).

Do not fold the second draft. Only fold the first draft. Do not put the second draft on top of the first and be sure to include the grade report that is stapled to the first draft. If there are any further drafts, they will be placed on top so that the reader will encounter, in this order, the first page of the most recent draft, the succeeding pages, the grading sheet of the previous draft, page one of the previous draft, etc. Again, do not use a folder or other cumbersome device for holding the papers together; use a paper clip.

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

Susan Dougher
CPN 101, Section 13
5 October 1991

BELIEFS ON THE EFFECTS OF COMPETITION

In the essays, "The Winning Instinct" by Ross Wetzsteon and "Who Wins?, Who Cares?" by Mariah Burton Nelson, both authors write about winning, competition, and the sexes; however, they have opposing view points and ideas on the sexes and the effects of competition.

Ross Wetzsteon feels that competitiveness is good, but realizes that winning is not all that important. Wetzsteon thinks that tough competition not only brings men closer together, but it also gives them a feeling of friendship and satisfaction when they share moments of pride. Wetzsteon says, "I now argue that there is much more going on, that men just as often use competition as a means of expressing acceptance or respect of sharing" (372).

From a woman's perspective, Nelson basically feels the same as Wetzsteon in that she believes winning is not all that important, as long as the play is challenging, "We take competition seriously, but we don't take winning and losing seriously" (377). She also states that many women remain close while striving for victory and that losing at times may be disappointing. However, she states that losing does not constitute failures. Nelson and Wetzsteon both believe that the playing of the game has to do with friendship, respect for their opponent, and the challenge.

Nelson's views on competitiveness differ from Wetzsteon's because they both feel that competition can result in different things. Nelson believes that competition can damage self-esteem, create tension, and produce enemies. Nelson is no longer an active participant in activities where losers are eliminated. Nelson states, "If playing is the point of the game, then exclusion never makes sense" (378). Nelson wants people to understand that the spirit of the game is not believing that winning and losing are not that important, but to notice that they are not.

Wetzsteon, on the other hand, feels the element of competition is healthy and productive. He feels stiff competition not only brings men closer together, but also encourages them to give their best effort. Wetzsteon believes that competition pushes individuals to the limits of their abilities and it is a great experience. He believes that male competitiveness is often a way to show mutual respect. Wetzsteon feels that men enjoy any sort of competition whether in sports, business, or personal affairs,

because competition keeps men on their toes. Wetzsteon explains, "Far more often men also experience rivalry as a spur to achievement, as a means of being drawn to perform at the top of our abilities" (371).

Since society views competitiveness in a brutal, "Winning is everything," way, many women tend to shy away from competition. Men have always been taught that competition and winning is the key to masculinity. Men feel that the more they compete and win, the more superior they will be. They also feel that winning will help them to be accepted and respected by individuals, especially women. This is why most likely that Nelson, a woman, and Wetzsteon, a man, have differing standpoints on the effects of competition. Nelson and Wetzsteon both believe that it is not whether you win or lose, but the effort you put into an activity. However, Nelson believes that competition is damaging and creates tension, while Wetzsteon feels competition is healthy and productive. Also, Nelson feels that the effort you put into something is enough, whereas Wetzsteon feels that competition is still more important.

Works Cited

- Miller, Robert K. The Informed Argument. New York: Harcourt., 1992.
- Nelson, Mariah Burton. "Who Wins?, Who Cares?" Miller 377-379.
- Wetzsteon, Ross. "The Winning Instinct." Miller 370-372.