

Assignments

Assignments Appendix for Writing 20 *Sounds of the Field: Writing about Sound and Sport*

Unit I—Sports, Sound, and the Problem of “Society”

Wed 8 Sep QN 2-page fieldnote describing a “moment” (including sound) from Saturday’s football game

I may ask a few of you to take a picture or scan your “jottings” taken during Saturday’s game, and post them to the course WordPress site so we can talk about them in class Wed

Attend Saturday’s football game, taking part as a fan (or player!). During (or, if that’s impossible, immediately after) the game, note the following using short hand-written (or typed) “jottings”: who is doing what? How might you describe them? How might you describe the space (of the stands, or the field)? What things are in the space, and where do important activities happen in it? (You can sketch a map of the space, if that’s helpful to you. If you have a recording device, you may also take brief audio recordings of the game and write comments on them!) How might you describe the sounds of the game and the fans? And think about process: what discrete events or sounds happen during the game (for the fans or the players), and in what order? As soon as you can, after the event, use a selection of those jottings as the basis for writing a fieldnote that vividly describes and narrates a 5-10 minute segment of what happened during the game, for the fans or the players (or both!).

Wed 15 Sep QN identifying the “project” of one reading

Choose one of the readings assigned for today, and discuss its “project” in 250 words or less. Following Harris’s understanding of “coming to terms,” this means you’ll need to:

- note the “project” the writer sets out to accomplish in this excerpt, that is, what s/he wants the text to do, and in what context s/he wants the text to do it;
- explore how s/he uses a keyword in this excerpt (which will include quoting or paraphrasing a part of the text involving that keyword);
- and point to one use and one limit of this text

Fri 17-Sep QN identifying, and commenting on, a popular piece of writing OR video about fans as a group

Locate a piece of popular writing *OR* video that describes or depicts fans as a group. This piece may be in print, or online (video *should* be online). One of your Fri. 17 Sep / Wed 6 Oct. or Fri 8-Oct *must* be about a piece of writing in print.

In one paragraph: describe what happens in the writing or video. Reflect on the way the writer or film-maker depicts fans as a group—how do they accomplish this in writing or film-making? Do they draw on visual or audible cues to do so? How?

Post the paragraph, and a link or reference (in the case of print) to the article, to the course’s WordPress site.

Fri 24-Sep **First draft of Memo**—two pages (500 words) identifying the project of one of the scholarly writings, and forwarding it to a paragraph of your fieldnote

In two pages (500 words):

- Identify the project of one of the scholarly writings we've read in this course.
- Introduce your fieldnote, offering context locating it in time and place, and preparing the reader to "see" its relevance to the scholarly writing you've discussed.
- Quote a (preferably short, circa 3-5 line) section of your fieldnote.
- Offer a comment that highlights specific details in the fieldnote that help you interpret the fieldnote (in order to use it to comment on the scholarly writing).
- Noting the connection to your fieldnote, offer a new comment interpreting or observing a "use" or "limit" of the scholarly writing.
 - If you observe a "limit," you must *also* offer a sympathetic comment of what the writer sees him or herself "doing," before you point where the writer's text *could* have gone.

A Memo of this sort is not really written for an audience; it's a "pre-text"—a text you'll see that might be a source for a later piece of ethnographic writing (such as a journal article in *Ethnomusicology*) for a public audience.

Addendum: You may, if you prefer, draw on your writing on a text about fans (see Quick Note Friday 17th) rather than your fieldnote, in this Memo.

Wed 29-Sep Final draft of Memo due (midnight after class).

Unit II—"The Space Between Us": Sound, Momentum, and Participatory Discrepancies

Wed 6-Oct QN A commenting on a piece of popular sports writing on a momentum shift / sound
OR

Fri 8-Oct QN B commenting on a video of sport on a momentum shift / sound
(do A or B—whichever you signed up for in class!)

Locate a piece of popular writing *OR* video that describes or depicts a momentum shift on the field of play. This piece may be in print, or online (video *should* be online). One of your Fri. 17 Sep / Wed 6 Oct. or Fri 8-Oct *must* be about a piece of writing in print.

In one paragraph: describe what happens in the writing or video. Reflect on the way the writer or filmmaker depicts the momentum shift—how do they accomplish this in writing or film-making? Do they draw on visual or audible cues to do so? How?

Post the paragraph, and a link or reference (in the case of print) to the article, to the course's WordPress site.

Wed 20-Oct QN (tweeted, if possible) jottings of momentum / sound / game (realtime)

If possible, you'll use a portable internet-connected device (iPod Touch, iPhone, BlackBerry, iPad, etc.) and Twitter to make your jottings. We'll then use the WordPress site to compare your realtime jottings to someone else's.

With at least two classmates, attend an area game, taking part as a fan (or player!). Either take short handwritten notes, or use your internet device to Tweet (relatively frequently) about the movement and activities of the players, coaches, and officials on the field. Note especially:

- moments where a player or coach appears to hear a sound and reacts to it
- moments where the momentum of the game shifts
 - and *how* it shifts (who does what?)

If you're a player, tweet your thoughts about these things after the game—10-20 tweets at least.

As soon as you can, after the event, use a selection of your tweeted jottings as the basis for writing a fieldnote that vividly describes and narrates a 5-10 minute segment in which the momentum on the field shifts.

Fri 22-Oct **First draft of W1**—4-5 page (1000-1250 word) field narrative with comments using literature, on sound / momentum game

Main goal: Write a 4-5 (1000-1250 word) field narrative, which offers a chronologically or thematically ordered set of excerpts from your fieldnotes, and a comment interpreting each of those excerpts. Some of your comments should use your fieldnotes to comment on literature we've read during this Unit, or vice versa.

Process: Print out and re-read the fieldnote from your Oct 20 Quick Note. What is most striking in it? What seems particularly rich in meaning, or sensory detail? What patterns or observations are repeated in it? Do you have thoughts on why these details strike you, or what they might suggest about the meaning of the social action or social organization in the event you attended? Does any of your fieldnote seem connected, in your view, to the literature on “participatory discrepancies” we've been reading? Note these in the margins of your fieldnote.

Now, use these marginal notes to construct a 4-5 page (1000-1250 word) ethnographic narrative: start by re-organizing your fieldnote narrative as a set of excerpt-commentary units (you may wish to consult our Emerson, Fretz and Shaw reading, or your class notes on the structure of such units).

When you do this, you'll need to decide whether to organize your excerpt-commentary units *chronologically*, so that you're constructing an ethnographic story; or *thematically*, so that you're constructing a set of ethnographic “examples” that describe the scene.

Some of your comments must refer to the literature we've read this Unit, either using the literature to comment on what you found in the field, or vice versa.

Once you've drafted and put in order a set of excerpt-commentary units, add a short introduction that contextualizes your ethnographic observations in a place and time by noting the journalistic details of the scene (who, what, when, where), and that very briefly notes the project of the relevant literature you'll cite in your comments; and a short conclusion that restates what, in your view, are the most important observations you made concerning the scene and the literature.

Audience: Imagine your audience as the readers of the ethnomusicological articles / chapters on “participatory discrepancies” that we've read. While a “field narrative” of this sort is not really a full-scale journal article or chapter (like Feld's or Keil's), it might form a central part of such an article or chapter.

Fri 29-Oct **Final draft of W1**

Unit III—Our Town, Our Team: Sound, Symbols, Conflicts, and Communities in Sport

Wed 10-Nov QN noting next step from library

After today's library visit, write down one sentence noting the very next thing you'll need to do to in your research for Writing Project 2. Today's quick note is due at 11:59pm after class, not at the midnight before class as usual!

Wed 17-Nov QN fieldnote on (fan / mediated) music / chants at a game. (Bring fieldnote and all research notes to class!)

I may ask a few of you to scan or take a picture of your "jottings" at the game, and post them to the course WordPress site so that we can discuss them together in class.

With at least two classmates, attend an area game, taking part as a fan (or player!). During (or, if that's impossible, immediately after) the game, describe the fan's activities during the game using short hand-written (or typed) "jottings." Again, you can sketch a map of the space, if that's helpful to you. If you have a recording device, you may also take brief audio recordings of the game and write comments on them!

Focus especially on:

- chants
- songs
- cheers
- "piped-in" music (music over loudspeakers)

You might also wish to note the ways these sounds connect to fan behavior (jumping, shouting, etc.) or to the behavior of players (responding to or, apparently, inspiring shifts in play, et cetera). You might also wish to note symbolic meanings you'd guess for these songs, chants, and so on—does a song or chant refer to a specific player (team, et cetera), and if so, how does it help us "read" or understand that player or her / his behavior?

As soon as you can, after the event, use a selection of those jottings as the basis for writing a fieldnote that vividly describes and narrates a 5-10 minute segment of the sounds the fans make or hear during the game.

Thu 18-Nov / Fri 19-Nov "Sketchy" **first draft of W2** (10 page / 2500 word essay)

On Thurs 18 / Fri 19, you should bring a "sketchy" first draft of your W2 paper along to the individual conference (with me) that you've signed up for. This first draft of your paper does not need to be complete, nor does it need to be 10 pages long. It should, however, include some text for each part of the essay below that helps make it clear what you're planning to do in that part—or identifies things you'll need to do to figure out what to write in that part.

Main Goal: Write a 10-page (2500 word) paper that offers *your* statement on how sound in sport "works," and presents and reflects on both your own fieldnotes and on literature we've read in order to build that statement. You may re-use any text you've written in this class

(during this term) as a constituent part of this paper, but it must be well-integrated into the narrative you present.

Structure: Your draft must include an introduction that signals the interpretive statement you'll make, and provides us with a road map through it; a logical sequence of paragraphs presenting your narrative, clearly presenting your ideas and your reading of your fieldnotes and of relevant literature on (ethnomusicology of) sound and (sociology and anthropology of) sport.

In structuring your essay, consider these three suggestions:

- First, consider placing the primary (longest) discussion of a concept or text where you actually use that concept or text (where you counter or forward it, or where you use it analytically—most likely, near the end of the paper).
- Second, consider including a very short note on any central concept (concepts that you plan to revise or extend in your paper are “central”) in the introductory section of the paper. This note could take the form of a brief definition of the concept, in the author’s words, and a sentence or so on the author's broader project.
- Third, your analysis of your case study is your most important tool for engaging with (and extending) other writers’ ideas, so consider placing the descriptive portion of your case study in the middle of your paper, followed by your analysis of the case study, and then your revisions of the concepts you noted briefly at the outset.

Audience: You may imagine your readers to be ethnomusicologists of sound, like Steve Feld or Louise Meintjes (who is here at Duke!). They will be familiar with fieldnotes and commentary as a form of writing, and most likely will have read the academic sources you cite. They will expect a high level of language and an explicit, formal structure, probably using headings. They will expect you to offer descriptions of what you found in the field, and brief, clear descriptions of and comments on academic sources. They will expect you to culminate in a new statement on how sound “works” in sport.

Process: Because this is a rather complex paper to write, I’m going to offer one “workflow” that I might choose myself, if presented with this task. You’re welcome to use it, or to choose another strategy—and please don’t hesitate to consult with me if you need help.

First, I’d review my Memo and Writing Project 1. I’d highlight the sections of the text that are most relevant to the requirements of this project. I’d make a list of very brief (3-5 word) notes on the bits I’ve highlighted (let’s call this our “brainstorming” list).

Then, I’d do the same thing with the fieldnotes and the notes I have on the literature of this course—adding more notes to my “brainstorming” list.

I’d take the “brainstorming” list and review it as a whole; then I’d add each term to a mind-map, that is, I’d write them all out on one page and draw lines connecting ideas that I see as related. (For details on mind-mapping, see the Handouts PDF on mind-mapping.)

I’d sit back and review the mind-mapped page. Then I’d draft a paragraph summarizing what I see on the page. That paragraph would identify what the most interesting things I’ve noted sound and sport—that’s the beginning of my analysis of it.

Then, I'd paste the paragraph I'd just written at the top of my word-processing document. I'd draft a road-map statement, noting the order in which I planned to address these ideas in my paper. I'd then draft new materials or copy in existing materials that I highlighted for each of the elements of my road map. I'd re-paste the paragraph I'd drafted on the basis of the mind-map at the end.

I'd reskim the whole document, and then expand any element of the closing paragraph that I could, remembering details from the essay. I'd then read it one more time, making sure there were transition statements and headings between sections.

Thu 18-Nov / Fri 19-Nov QN prepping for conferences (epigraph-like)

After you've drafted the project, write a Quick Note in preparation for the conference of 3 sentences. Write a 1-sentence road map of your project as it stands. Write a sentence pointing out what works best in your draft, and what needs the most work in it. Bring both the note and 2 printouts of your project along to your meeting with me, as well as submitting the note online (you will have submitted the first draft of the project already).

Wed 1-Dec **Second draft of W2 (first "full" draft)**

Fri 3-Dec / Wed 8-Dec / Fri 10-Dec QNs responding

You'll have been placed in one of four Workgroups (WGs) in class (WG 1 presents on Dec 1, WG 2 on Dec 3, WG 3 on Dec 8, and WG 4 on Dec 10). Write a brief response to the papers, presented in class, of the group that follows yours numerically, modulo 4; in other words, members of WG 1 will write about WG 2's papers, members of WG 2 will write about WG 3's papers, members of WG 3 will write about WG 4's papers, and members of WG 4 will write about WG 1's papers. Write down two sentences for each paper you hear: a strength of the paper, and a question you'd like to ask the writer concerning the paper. After class, type your sentences up, and post your Quick Note to the course's WordPress site.

Fri 10-Dec **Final draft of W2 (midnight after class)**