

Op-ed assignment

Due date: December 7 in class (i.e., 11am; **bring two printed copies**)

20% percent of your grade

Requirements:

- Takes a position on (makes an argument for) a position regarding a social, political, educational, cultural issue that relates to gender! Op-eds are not reportage or literature reviews. Please review <http://www.theopedproject.org/>, the lecture slides, and read a few newspaper op-ed sections for examples and more background.
- Cites at least one psychology study on the topic of gender, using a description-plus-link (e.g., “As Tyler Okimoto and Victoria Brescoll showed in a recent study, women who were seeking power were less likely to receive votes...” (You can make the “showed” word a hyperlink to their study). The description of the study will be brief (you don’t have much space!) and used to support your point.
- Approximately 600 words; you can go longer if you show us that you are aiming for a publication that allows or encourages a longer op-ed!
- Follows general guidelines of writing op-eds: from lecture in class and from the op-ed project. The format does not have to rigidly follow the structure covered in class (see class lecture slides on Blackboard); that is more of a helpful formula for you to use.

Do’s

- Think of a topic based on what interests you. You can form a thesis based on 1) a topic this class has covered, or 2) your previous interests, on which theories from the class can shed light (e.g., gender bias in the theater world, or in student athletics).
- Ground your opinion in social science, i.e., back it up! You do not need to describe and cite studies from the syllabus or lecture. You need to back up your argument with at least one study from psychological science. (Professor Paluck will circulate a few examples of op-eds written this way). Your assignment is not to write a pure opinion piece. Your thesis needs to be backed up.
- Hook your piece to something that has happened in the world recently (The best hook is not necessarily a personal experience like “I was harassed on the street”, but rather something that your reader can also relate to personally, like “on Black Friday, US residents will hit the streets in large numbers in search of sales. How will they treat one another there?” Or more traditionally, your hook will be news on the global, national, or local level, or from within academia. So you could say “Last week in a small town in North Dakota...”, or you could say “Princeton students yesterday received a public safety email that said...” or finally “Last week, the Center for Women in

Politics published a report showing that street harassment is a growing problem in the U.S.”). The point is that your hook should be very recent. Given all these suggestions for how to use a hook, it should not be too difficult to find one if you expand your standards to include news events all over the globe, relatively more local and more national in nature.

- **If you have questions about the op-ed thesis you are considering, or the article or articles you want to mention in the op-ed, email us! Include in your email your one or two-sentence thesis, and one or two articles you will use to support. We can give you feedback on your idea based on these two things.**

Some recent examples of op-eds (some are longer than others, and some do better at describing studies than others; I am including an op-ed that I recently wrote):

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/23/opinion/sunday/sheryl-sandberg-on-the-myth-of-the-catty-woman.html>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/23/opinion/sunday/richard-a-friedman-how-changeable-is-gender.html>

<http://time.com/4583843/stop-hate-influencers/>

Extra credit:

Forward us an email showing that you sent your op-ed to an online or print publication, seeking to have it published! Actual publication is cause for whole-class celebration.