

Outlines

LART602

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The overall logical structure of your essay is its most important feature. This amounts simply and purely to what at bottom you are saying to your reader: your thesis and the main line or lines of thought in support of that thesis.

You should at this point have a well-defined topic or issue along with a body of research. As you approach writing your essay, or as you continue this process, it is important that you develop and maintain a clear sense of the logic of your essay. As a means of doing so, I recommend the use of an outline, where I have in mind certain specific requirements of a useful outline.

Please prepare **for Tuesday, Nov. 5** an outline to include the following:

- Topic/Issue: State the topic or issue that your essay is intended to address.
- Thesis: State what you take at this point to be your thesis for your essay.
- Support: For each main element of your essay – which may be each figure to whom your essay pays significant attention – state the relationship between that element and the thesis of your essay. Typically, these will fall into three classes:
 - o Terminology/background information
 - o Support for thesis
 - o Concessions/objections considered

Indicate, in any case, the significance for your thesis of each main component of your essay. Include your source information, annotated to indicate its role. Include a bibliography of works cited.

I strongly recommend that you attempt to put each point of your outline in the form of a single sentence. To the extent that you are able, refrain from elaborating on these single statements. Your goal is to state at a single go the idea in question, whether it be your thesis or one of your supporting claims.

Ideally, what we will see in your outline is a series of sentences that clearly indicate the overall structure of your essay. If this is not the result of your outline, you should consider revision to the outline.

Here's an example in brief:

- Topic: The attitude of indigenous peoples' rights advocates towards academia
- Issue: Hostility towards the methods and goals of academic scholars is widespread among advocates of indigenous peoples' rights: to what extent is this attitude beneficial to this movement?
- Thesis: Hostility on the part of indigenous people's rights advocates towards academia is detrimental to their cause.
- Support:
 - o The logic of an oppressed indigenous people is often inexact.
 - In their struggle against oppression, indigenous peoples tend to idealize themselves and their past.
 - In their struggle against oppression, indigenous peoples tend to homogenize and demonize their oppressor.
 - It is true that the academy has in the past contributed to the oppression of indigenous peoples. (Concession)

- A correct and accurate representation of one's people and of one's oppressor aids that people's release from oppression.
 - The inaccuracies tend to perpetuate oppression.
 - Current and past academics avoid oppressive attitudes towards the indigenous.
 - Correction of these inaccuracies helps to relieve a people of the terms of its oppression.
- The academic can provide the objective tools by means of which to correct the logic of oppression.

Here's the example with sources, annotated:

- Topic: The attitude of indigenous peoples' rights advocates towards academia
- Issue: Hostility towards the methods and goals of academic scholars is widespread among advocates of indigenous peoples' rights: to what extent is this attitude beneficial to this movement?
- Thesis: Hostility on the part of indigenous people's rights advocates towards academia is detrimental to their cause.
- Support:
 - The logic of an oppressed indigenous people is often inexact.
 - In their struggle against oppression, indigenous peoples tend to idealize themselves and their past.
 - Goduka 2006, xi, 143, 155: Goduka eulogizes the harmonious time before colonization.
 - Pere 2006, 150: in fact, slavery was common among the Maori.
 - In their struggle against oppression, indigenous peoples tend to homogenize and demonize their oppressor.
 - Kunnie 2006, 259: Kunnie rails against the Western Academy.
 - Goduka 2006, xi, xiii: Goduka rails against the Western Academy.
 - Torres 2006, 23: oppression will persist until the us/them dichotomy is overcome.
 - It is true that the academy has in the past contributed to the oppression of indigenous peoples.
 - Said 1979, 172 (Chateaubriand) ... ETC.
 - A correct and accurate representation of one's people and of one's oppressor is beneficial to that people's escape from oppression.
 - The inaccuracies tend to perpetuate oppression.
 - Wilson 2002, 94-97
 - Plato 2005, 129
 - Current and past academics avoid oppressive attitudes towards the indigenous.
 - Jefferson, Las Casas 1971
 - Roosevelt, 1945
 - Halberstam 1969, 81
 - Correction of these inaccuracies helps to relieve a people of the terms of its oppression.
 - Plato 1992, 41
 - Spinoza 1992, 201
 - Schiller 2005
 - Aristotle 1977, 9-11
 - The academic can provide the objective tools by means of which to correct the logic of oppression.
 - Aristotle 2005, 694, Cottingham 1988, 5, Sider 2001 xvi
 - Mill 1967, 990-1, 984-5