

EXERCISE THIRTEEN

ART

Key Terms

Arts: _____

Deep play: _____

World art: _____

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: THE ART OF THE RIVALRY



Note: This activity can be assigned as a classroom discussion in a small class or in groups in a larger class. It may also be administered by assigning students to complete and reflect.

Read: Deep play is the idea that participants and spectators of an event are joined together in an important cultural process. Deep play events manipulate important cultural themes such as social stratification, masculinity and femininity, power and authority, and processes of production. Often, these are sporting events or cultural events. Some examples are sumo wrestling in Japan, cock fighting in Bali, or cricket in Britain (and in places like India that were formerly part of the British Empire).

What are some American cultural events or artistic endeavors that could be considered example of deep play? Some signs that an event may be deep play are that the event attracts a relatively large number of people,

people care passionately about the outcome of the event, the event is in some way connected to critical cultural and social issues (often this connection is symbolic or metaphoric), and that ultimately, the event does not change society.

Football is a classic American example of deep play. It speaks to the violence and sexuality underlying competition between men, the social role of women, the relationship of the individual to the group, structured labor, rules and their infringement, gaining and surrendering territory, and racial character. However, not all football games are equally deep or important. Some involve great passions among fans, others not so much. In many cases, in college football, there are famous rivalries. Some of the greatest college football rivalries include Army/Navy, Alabama/Auburn, Michigan/Ohio State, and Texas/Oklahoma. Games between these teams seem far deeper than most other games.

Activity: Get into groups. Consider, does your university have a sports rivalry (if you go to a smaller school and are not a sports fan, you may need to research this)? What sport is it in?

Are games played against your rival school deep? Why or why not? What is really being communicated in these games?

If your school does not have a rivalry like this, consider a professional sports league rivalry for this exercise. Do you know of or participate in a rivalry for the National Football League, National Basketball

Association, National Hockey League, Major League Baseball, or Major League Soccer?

Do not copy, post, or distribute

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY: MAKE YOUR MARK



Note: This can be a reflection assignment students write and turn in or a forum quiz/post in their Learning Management Strategy.

Read: Art, and what is considered art, changes based on where you are in the world and who you are. Children make a lot of “art”! Historically, in Western culture, only painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry were included in the fine arts. Only recently has the idea of art grown to include a wide variety of things. Now, it is widely accepted in American culture that art can be carved, burned, and inserted into and on your skin with tattoos, piercings, and branding. Tattoos especially have long been

identified with everything from military service to prison, gangs, and criminals, and over time they became a form of artistic expression for both those who tattoo and those who get tattoos. There is even an art form that requires immense physical skill and mental energy called suspension where people use strategically placed piercing holes in their bodies along with hooks, straps, and wires to suspend themselves from in private spaces and also in public exhibitions. Suspension is becoming more mainstream art, having left performance artists and moved to the general public. Look at the image below and if you are intrigued, search images for suspension online, but avert your eyes if they are sensitive. It can look pretty terrifying and painful.



©Stockphoto.com/urhazon

Activity: Tattoos, piercing, branding, and suspension are seen as mainstream forms of artistic display. Much of this skin-deep artistic expression no longer generally disqualifies you from a career in teaching children or working at a bank, as they would have even 10 years ago. There are some exceptions, such as hand and face tattoos and excessive piercings or gauged ears, that may still be problematic for someone in America today.

Question 1: Do you have tattoos or piercings?

Question 2: What do you think changed the view on tattoos and piercings in American culture?

Question 3: Do you think of these as forms of art?

Question 4: Do these add to, take away from, or help create identity for people who have them?

Question 5: Tattoos and other forms of body modification are common around the world. Why do you think this is so?

Do not copy, post, or distribute