

I. The Goal of a One-Sheet

SOPHIA One-Sheets are intended to serve as tools for inspiring and anchoring group dialogue regarding a philosophical topic, argument, theme, thought experiment, or perspective. Limited to one piece of paper, a one-sheet should, above all else, be accessible and thought provoking.

II. The Structure of a One-Sheet

In most cases, a one-sheet will have three parts:

- 1) **Part I, Representation of a Philosophical Topic.** This part introduces a group to a philosophical topic. The content could present as a picture, poem, paragraph, quotation, or argument outline. Consider and obtain copyright permission as needed. *Part I* is used to introduce and anchor the group's discussion and should generally be about half a page long.
- 2) **Part II, Questions for Interrogating the Topic.** This part provides the group with a short list of discussion questions related to the topic introduced in *Part I*. *Part II* is used to suggest avenues for analyzing and interrogating philosophically the content and consequences of the topic at hand and should generally be about half a page long.
- 3) **Part III, Mini-Prompts for Divergent Thinking about the Topic.** This part lists two to three short prompts related to the topic introduced in *Part I* or inspired by the questions raised in *Part II*. Each mini-topic is accompanied by two or three probing questions. This section is used to further inspire group dialogue and is usually one full page in length. Groups should not feel required to draw on it, but may if they wish.

III. The Format of a 1-Sheet

Part I Representation

A Slice of Philosophically Baked Bread
A Companion One-Sheet to the "Philosophy Bakes Bread" Podcast
Author: James William Lincoln

Episode 53 – Kneeling and Civil Protest
Guest: Dr. Arnold Farr, The University of Kentucky

As professional players in the NFL, Colin Kaepernick's protest began in 2016 when he started kneeling during the national anthem at games. His protests were a response to the police brutality and racial injustice faced by black subjects in the United States. Kaepernick's actions are credited with encouraging a larger social conversation about civil protest, freedom of speech, and social justice. Today, no team in the NFL will hire him.

Dr. Arnold Farr: "One of the things that is most problematic is that at this moment, it seems the smart people have forgotten what the initial protest is about, and they made it about something else. They have shifted the narrative away from the real issue, to make it about disrespecting the flag or disrespecting the military, or the country. It has nothing to do with that. They are protesting the way in which a particular group of people, let's say black people, are grossly discriminated in the United States. Disrespected in terms of, I could give you a long list, but basically the protest began as a protest against police brutality... The protest itself is being silenced. In a lot of my work on race I talk about ways in which the black voice is always put under erasure. As soon as a black voice begins to speak, there are mechanisms in place to put it under erasure. What has happened in the protest began as an attempt to draw attention to unnecessary suffering that black endure. You get that particular narrative about black suffering. Then it gets covered over, put under erasure or silenced by another narrative—all of this disrespecting the flag or disrespecting the troops."

Part II Questions

I. Read Asking Questions:

- (1) What makes something a protest? If someone was kneeling to tie their shoe while Kaepernick was protesting, what makes the latter a protest and the former not?
- (2) What is an unactioned to the consequences Kaepernick's faced for his protest (i.e., losing his job and becoming an undrafted free agent in the NFL)? Does protesting necessarily require being identified as an unnamed person or killer? Is that a problem?
- (3) What do you think it means to put a narrative under erasure? What effect, psychological or otherwise, does covering one narrative with another have on our sense of history and reality in situations like Kaepernick's protest? What are some ways erasure is accomplished?
- (4) What do you think prompts people to interpret Kaepernick's protest in the way they do? Why do you think there has been such a strong reaction to these protests?
- (5) What kind of reasons justify disobeying a social custom or expectation like standing for the anthem? What is the difference between a just custom and an unjust custom? How does one determine whether a custom is just or unjust?

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Part III Mini-Prompts

II. Read Asking Questions:

- 1) **Solidarity and Transformation – Becoming Something Different**
– "I believe that the term 'solidarity' is literally chosen that for us to have a new managerial society, we must become different people. For us to be in solidarity with people who suffer, whatever social group, means I can't be the same person that I was prior to entering solidarity with them. That is painful for a lot of people. This unraveling of the self, to put oneself in the place of solidarity with those who suffer. Some people stand to lose something. You stand to lose perhaps family. You put yourself in a position to be ridiculed by members of your family who will hold onto certain prejudices or whatever."
– Dr. Arnold Farr, University of Kentucky
Question: Why is self-transformation a so difficult? Do you believe such a practice is required to stand in solidarity with those who suffer because of oppression? What kind of experiences facilitate solidarity producing transformation? Do you think we obligated to seek out transformative experiences of these kinds?
- 2) **Histories, Narrative, and Reality – Unheard Cases**
– "There are cases we have heard about, but there are many incidents that we don't hear about. If you live in the black community, especially in larger cities like Chicago or New York, Detroit, Philadelphia, where I lived for 12 years, you know that there are only a few cases of many that we ever hear about. This practice has been around ever since blacks have been in this country. It never stopped. If you are my age and you are from the south, you know stories you have heard from your grandparents and parents about a relative who went to the grocery store one day and ended up missing... There's an experience of black that or dark that being a mark of disrespect. This is when a protest began."
– Dr. Arnold Farr, University of Kentucky
Question: What role does narrative play in shaping our understanding of history and reality? Why might having one's experience ignored, erased, unmentioned, or marginalized paralyze the need for protest? What obligations do people have to educate themselves about the kinds of unmentioned experiences described above?
- 3) **Political Participation and Protest – NFL Anthem Policies**
– "1. All team and league personnel on the field shall stand and show respect for the flag and the Anthem... 2. Personnel who choose not to stand for the Anthem may stay in the locker room or in a similar location off the field until after the Anthem has been performed. 4. A club will be fined by the League if its personnel are on the field and do not stand and show respect for the flag and the Anthem... 6. The Commissioner will impose appropriate discipline on league personnel who do not stand and show respect for the flag and the Anthem."
– NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell
Question: Given the anthem policies endorsed by NFL leadership cited above, what kind of limitations do you think can be placed on protesting? What role does visibility and open play in protesting? What role does protesting have to play in political participation and the democratic process? Dr. Arnold Farr's question: What is democracy and how do we achieve it?

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IV. Tips for Making Effective One-Sheets

- 1) When everyday language can convey the relevant philosophical matters, it is ideal to use it instead of technical terms or jargon.
- 2) If any technical words do come up, define them immediately, clearly, succinctly, and simply.
- 3) Strive for the topic chosen, style and manner of expression used, and questions raised to be accessible and easy to relate to the interests and experiences of general audiences, wherever possible.
- 4) Whenever addressing historical matters, concepts, or figures, aim to connect the subject matters or questions to continuing or contemporary themes.
- 5) When matters are particularly timely, consider how the relevant principles at issue might be of continuing interest for future applications, conflicts, or questions.
- 6) Succinctness of expression should be a goal and ideal, while offering enough substance to enable conversation. White space on a page is not a bad thing at all, and can be used to direct the eye to what is key. In other words, make the document easy to read and inviting. Bullets or numbered questions make referencing the same passage easier and more accessible.
- 7) In general, keep references to a minimum, so that the document is as self-sufficient as is feasible. When necessary, instead of including long references, note a source with a name, title, or organization that could easily be searched for online to find the story, fact, or source quickly without much work. When links can make that easier, include them in the text of abbreviated references so that digital users of the one-sheets could click the link to see the source and origin for themselves.
- 8) Avoid “yes” or “no” questions or other question forms that merely involve the assent or denial of a particular position, in favor of probing questions that seek understanding and analysis of reasoning, beliefs, or motivations for thinking in different ways about the subject matter.
- 9) Consider audiences from kids and teenagers to scholars, adults beyond the academy, or retired community members. The aim of such documents should not be merely to convey information to these community members, but instead to enable and empower people to think together about questions rendered live, accessible, and digestible for the sake of offering one’s thoughts about the relevant subject matter.
- 10) Keep in mind the aim of making these documents gripping, touching on people’s interests, as well as enjoyable. Be sure to show how philosophy can be about deeply practical matters and often a lot of fun.