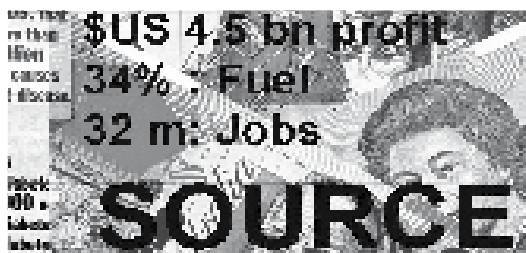


7.

The evidence



Facts and figures

Statistics, surveys, expert opinion and quotes, peer reviews and research (from reputable institutions)

Trust and credibility

It is important that the author is well-informed on a subject as this knowledge helps to build trust with readers. Typically, authors rely on a variety of evidence such as:

- ◆ current statistics, reputable and balanced surveys and research reports;
- ◆ references to expert opinion; and
- ◆ logical and informed reasons.

“People” stories

Anecdotes
Human-interest stories
Personal/first-hand experiences and observations
Eye-witness accounts
Case studies and
Quotes

Personal connections and descriptions of people

A human interest story is a news story that presents people, their experiences and problems in a way that reaches out to others and arouses emotions.

An anecdote is a story usually told in a few sentences. It is always based on real life, is often humorous and may include some dialogue:

A case study involves extensive research and evaluation of a person, small group, or specific “case” to show the consequences or impact of a particular situation or scenario.

Personal experience: “I’m talking opinions. Which are basically just ‘I reckon’. Opinions are a mix of what we know, what we feel, what we’ve experienced and gut instinct.” (Catherine Deveney)

Editorial

Samoa Air recently became the world's first airline to introduce a "pay-by-weight" system, where the weight of a passenger and their luggage corresponds exactly to their fare. Is this the fairest way to travel? Yes, according to the Editor of the Daily News.



Sharing the fat load?

THESE DAYS airlines in the US are spending an extra \$5 billion per year on jet fuel. Australia is no different. One reason is because of the extra weight of passengers. The average weight of both women and men has increased by up to 11 kilos from the 1920s. **(1)** Who is paying for this increase? Everyone! You and me.

Former Qantas chief economist Tony Webber states that the weight of an aircraft determines how much fuel it burns. Therefore obese jetsetters are pushing up the cost of airline travel. "If the passengers on the aircraft weigh more, the aircraft consumes more fuel and the airline's costs go up," he said. **(2)**

In light of these worrying trends, we believe that airlines must introduce policies to ensure that overweight passengers contribute appropriately towards the cost of their flight. For some airlines this is also already a reality.

(3)

Samoa Air now weighs its passengers to ensure that the combined weight of its nine passengers does not exceed 270 pounds each which would prohibit take-off.

Also in the United States, Southwest Airlines has a "customers of size" policy which requires passengers who do not fit between the armrests to purchase another seat.

Whilst this may work for some airlines, many commentators say that a fat tax would amount to discrimination and would not be tolerated by members of the community.

What a load of bunkum! A user-pay principle exists in many other industries. For example, the insurance industry has different rates depending upon the location — rural or urban — of a house. Likewise, disabled people have to pay more to get a proper maxi-cab. **(4)**

So in the interests of passenger comfort and fairness, overweight passengers must pay the proper price.

1. Explain how the statistics support the editor's views.

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2. What is common sense and logical to Mr Webber?

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3. What comparisons are used to support the editor's views. What is their likely impact?

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4. What comparisons are used to defend the policy and reassure the public?

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Yes! Big Brother is watching you.

Exercise 37

The roll out of CCTV cameras

In the wake of a spate of muggings, the Smiggledon Council has decided to install CCTV cameras at every major intersection in the CBD.

At a cost of \$100,000 the Careton Council also wants to install CCTV cameras at charity bins in its shire because people are dumping rubbish in the dead of night. No wonder our rates are increasing at an alarming rate!

Everywhere we go these days, someone is watching us. We must seriously consider whether the community is receiving the benefits from such extra surveillance, or whether it is just a convenient cop-out for police, many of whom are now sitting in their offices sifting through video footage.

Surely there are other measures that could be more friendly and just as effective.

What about improved lighting at intersections?

What about reduced access to alcohol after 2 pm?

Whilst all these schemes may have some merit — perhaps to catch a terrorist here, a rapist there and an odd rubbish dumper at night, we must wonder at what cost?

Jan Johnson, Black Rock, 15/10/13

Why you should be worried.

Ms Banter believes that the lonely and addictive nature of computer games is rapidly changing the way young children think and interact.

Who talks these days? Gone are the days when everyone sat down and enjoyed a meal and talked about the highlights of their day — or their problems.

These days children are obsessed with the screen. Too many at a young age are falling for the excitement of bling and blitz — shooting enemies that drop dead and who wake up to take up the fight again. Games like Counter Strike, Kill Joy and Shoot Them Twice are changing the way children think and feel.

Children are becoming more isolated and addicted to the instant shock and thrill of fake shooting games. There is much less family interaction. Also, parents participate less in a child's creative playworld. Computer games are addictive and compulsive and experts believe that it's leading to a new type of "brain-dead" syndrome.

Parents beware. This is a form of child abuse.

Hetty Banter, The Daily, 13/1/13

1. How does Ms Johnson attempt to scare people?

2. How and why does Ms Johnson appeal to the hip-pocket nerve?

3. Why does Ms Johnson reject these measures?



1. What is Ms Banter's opinion about computer games?

2. How does Ms Banter seek to scare parents?

3. What does the author mean by "this is a form of child abuse"?

The "Nanny State"

Mark Webber, the two-time grand prix winner who left Australia to live in England in the late 1990s, said during his stay in Australia: "I think we've got to read an instruction book when we get out of bed — what we can do and what we can't do ... put a yellow vest on and all that sort of stuff. It's certainly changed since I left here. It pisses me off coming back here, to be honest. It's a great country but we've got to be responsible for our actions and it's certainly a bloody nanny state when it comes to what we can do."



Appeal to law and order

As society changes at a rapid rate, governments are called upon to introduce or amend laws that protect our rights and ensure that we continue to live in a safe and secure community. For example, the government is considering restricting junk food advertising to protect people's health. It is considering filtering the internet to protect society from child pornography and other undesirable products. The Victorian Government's knife legislation introduced in March 2010 provides the "toughest anti-knife" laws in Australia in a bid to make the community safer.

Appeal to civil liberties

Civil liberties refers to the rights an individual has as a citizen of a democratic society. People believe that rights should not be restricted in unreasonable ways in a free and democratic country.

Those who believe in individual freedoms criticise the government for bringing about a "nanny state" if they introduce some restrictions. It is a put-down, or negative term, used to criticise the government's tendency to "mother" citizens or rule people's lives. Such critics state that many rules and regulations restrict our individual freedom. For example, Mark Webber's comments show his anger that he believes the government has introduced too many laws.

Appeal to leadership, authority and/or responsibility

Mark Webber also highlights the fact that people should be free to make their own mistakes, but that they should also have to take responsibility for their own actions.

Similarly, as we live in a community, councils, businesses and governments have a responsibility to ensure a secure and safe environment. Also, parents have a duty of care to children and teenagers.

Appeal to human rights, equality and justice

To support their case, authors often remind us of an individual's basic human rights, which, in civilised societies, are protected by law. Furthermore, it is commonly accepted that everyone has the right to live in freedom and to be treated equally and in a just and respectful manner. For this reason, authors often remind us of the need to show tolerance towards others.