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# Agriculture Level in Modern World

## WP1: The Assignment

Currently in the United States lies an issue between whether people ought to exploit the resources we have now for maximum profit, or whether we should attempt to properly preserve and maintain the invaluable assets that we have. The two sources by Alma Mann and David Debertin are: "Global Activism in Food Politics: Power Shift" and, "Applied Microeconomics: Consumption, Production and Markets; and Economics of Food and Agriculture". These books address the complex issue that is associated with the all-encompassing topic of agriculture and its sustainability. Although both Alma Mann and David Debertin address a similar overarching topic of agriculture and resource sustainability, they have differing arguments regarding whether natural resources should be exploited, and they defend their perspectives with varying approaches. Alma Mann discusses this topic through an environmental scientist's perspective while as David Debertin approaches this topic using an economic perspective.

For this project, the two sources that I chose both approach the similar overarching topic of agriculture and sustainability in similar ways, however they yield drastically varying results. Within both books, each author explicitly states their general argument and provides a corresponding piece of text that supports the initial claim. For instance, Alma Mann states that "Agriculture is not crop production as popular belief holds-it's the production of food and fiber from the worlds lands and waters. Without agriculture it is not possible to have a stock market, banks, universities, church, or an army. Agriculture is the foundation of civilization and a stable economy (Mann, 2014)." She then goes on to provide more support to her claim by informing her readers that agriculture is actually the back bone of America's economy. In contrast, David Debertin argues that since "Natural resources are so vast that no single individual or business is going to protect them; they do not have an incentive to, thus there is no point in trying (2015)." He then flows into the claim that there are enough natural resources and that there is no need to allocate resources. David Debertin argues that people should use whatever resources they have available to them at the moment and that no real harm takes place through the exploitation of resources. However, Alma Mann argues that nature is of the utmost importance and society should do everything within its power to preserve it. These arguments frame what the focus of their content will be.

Though, there are many differences in terms of content within each of the books, there are similarities in terms of writing style, intended audience, and presentation. Also, in both sources that I have decided to use, neither of the scholars presented their sources and findings in any "annoying ways". They both seem to use standard practices in regards with how they present their information to the audience. David Debertin, presents his information in a manner that is more easily understood by the reader. There is context and background information that leads up to the source or quotation, and then afterwards he offers his audience with some analysis and explains what the previous information meant and what people should take away from it. He does this in order to convey his arguments in a way in which he feels would appeal to the reader. While as, Alma Mann approached how to include her sources in a different manner. She includes dense texts full of information. While the text is not too difficult to understand, at times it is not as smooth or linear as it could be. It seems she spent the majority of her time and focus

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on the content, that she did not make organization one of her focal points. Thus, more thinking is asked of the reader with Alma Mann than with David Debertin.

The intended audience for both of these resources are people with basic background knowledge on the topic, however it appears through the tone of the writings that even people with no previous knowledge are still capable of having a general coherency of what is being said. It does not appear that any specific group, sector, or cohort is being purposefully excluded from being considered a part of the intended audience because the information should be useful for everyone. The books provide a solid background on the topic, thus allowing everyone who reads it the opportunity to be informed quickly and accurately. It can be deduced that the intended audience is the public because of the author's writing style. The authors both write in an educated yet casual manner. The text is easy to understand, however it does so without losing any information. Overall, the author's writing style is simple enough to understand.

Taking a more specific look at each author's writing style you can begin to observe all of the patterns and trends in the way each individual approaches writing. For instance, Alma Mann tends to include more images as a support for her text while as David Debertin rarely ever includes any images within his book. It appears he believes his words can present his intended message without any support while Alma Mann decides to take the opportunity to display the reality of the situation with supporting images. David Debertin primarily resorts to using headings and sub headings to organize and argue his thoughts. It is with this that he actually ends up being more linear in the manner in which his thoughts are presented to his intended audience. Alma Mann's book does not have as much of a linear flow as David Debertin's primarily because the images at times lead to tangents, taking away from the main argument or idea at hand.

The tone of each book seems to border on the more educational side, however Alma Mann's at times is more conversational than David Debertin's. She also tries to lure the audience in through amusing anecdotes as well. It could be seen that she is trying too hard to gain the audience's attention while as David Debertin more or less just seems to rely on hard hitting facts and statistical data. It could be that he does not include as much statistical data as Alma Mann because he does not have strong enough data to support his argument. Either way, both texts appear to be purely educational at the end of the day and contain a sizable amount of external resources to back their claims and overarching arguments.

Alma Mann argues that "the over exploitation of land coupled with detrimental impacts such as gas emissions from specific farming practices will lead to a situation where people in the future will live in a polluted and insecure world (2014)." However, David Debertin argues that "since the population is exponentially increasing, it is necessary for food production to increase in order to support the demands of a booming population (2015)." It is with this quote that Debertin sets the frame for several chapters of the book. He argues that more land must be exploited in order to feed the masses. They continue on to have many other sub-arguments however, they have some similarities in terms of how they approach and guide the readers into their arguments even though they will ultimately yield quite contradicting results. Also, each of the texts are associated with a similar overarching topic, however both of the books are classified under different sub genres. Alma Mann's book would be classified under an ecological or agricultural book section of the library. David Debertin's book would be classified under an economic discipline and thus would be classified under a sub-genre of economics in association with agriculture.

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The specific discipline of agriculture that both of the books appear to fall under is that of agricultural economics and agricultural philosophy. Agricultural economics is an applied field of economics concerned with the application of economic theory in optimizing the production and distribution of food. Agricultural philosophy (or philosophy of agriculture) is, roughly and approximately, a discipline devoted to the systematic critique of the philosophical frameworks (or ethical world views) that are the foundation for decisions regarding agriculture. Alma Mann's text impacts her specific discipline by providing them with information and research to help support their case for increased sustainability. David Debertin's text impacts his specific discipline through how he provides them with knowledge and statistical data on how resources are meant to be used. These texts reflect how the discipline of environmental science supports sustainability as well as preservation while as the discipline of economics seems to value profit over sustainability.

Regarding the citation standards, it seems that both authors are using in text citations and have a large reference page at the back of the book. They use these citation standards so that they can properly give credit to who deserves it. Both Alma Mann as well as David Debertin both appear to be using the American Psychological Association's style to cite their sources and studies. Additionally, the authors both seem to use credible sources and peer review journals. This shows that the type of evidence that they are using is both credible and accurate. It is with this implementation of ethos that the audience can believe what the author's saying without too much doubt.

The authors both have academic backgrounds in the fields that they discuss which also provides readers with an extra sense of credibility in their writings. This coerces readers into thinking that since they have some previous background in what they are discussing, the information must be true. Specifically, David Debertin, author of "Applied Microeconomics: Consumption, Production and Markets; and Economics of Food and Agriculture, (Third Edition)", "is a professor at the University of Kentucky who teaches Agricultural Economics (2015)." David L. Debertin currently works at the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Kentucky. David does research in Human Resources, Resource Economics and Public Economics. "Dr Alana Mann has a substantially different background; however, she is as knowledgeable on this subject. Dr Alma Mann joined the University of Sydney in 2007 after a professional career in the media and non-profit sectors. Her teaching and research focus on how ordinary citizens get voice in policy debates regarding problems such as food security and climate change (2014)." After doing more research on her academic background it appears her studies also primarily focus on agrarianism which is a social philosophy or political philosophy which values rural society as superior to urban society, the independent farmer as superior to the paid worker, and sees farming as a way of life that can shape the ideal social values. It stresses the superiority of a simpler rural life as opposed to the complexity of city life.

The more recent a book is published, the more accurate information will be when it is in a field that requires data and information that is somewhat time sensitive. Alma Mann's book, "Global activism in food politics: power shift", was published in 2014. David Debertin's book, "Applied Microeconomics: Consumption, Production and Markets; and Economics of Food and Agriculture, (Third Edition)", was published in 2015. These books were published fairly recently, therefore the arguments and at times logic are more up to date than with the readings that were published previously the past. Due to how they were published more recently, the general readers can be positive that the information presented by the authors are fairly up to date.

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The manner in which each author attempts to defend their perspective and stance on the overarching topic varies greatly. For instance, Alma Mann attempts to defend her topic primarily through the inclusion of statistical data, photographs, quotation excerpts and interviews primarily from other environmental science professors, and mathematical projections created from an environmental scientist's perspective. It is with this that she is trying to convince her audience that what she is saying is true and what others such as David Debertin are trying to argue is not factual and is in fact false. However, David Debertin does the same, it is just the manner in which he includes evidence that is the primary difference between the two authors. David Debertin also includes statistical data, quotation excerpts and interviews, and mathematical projections. The main difference being that his evidence is gathered primarily from other people whose studies appear to solely focus on economics. It is this bias between the two authors that causes such a sharp difference in beliefs.

Now regarding my perspective on whether or not I believe these texts are effective or not is primarily associated with the manner in which each of the individual authors write for their audience. Regarding Alma Mann's book, "Global activism in food politics: power shift", I believe that she really attempts to make the readers understand what she is trying to argue in a simple manner, however because she also tries to make the audience think for themselves about the information that she presents to them, she might not receive the proper response that she desires. By not telling the audience what to think and letting them think for themselves she risks having people not see the information as it was meant to be presented, thus her purpose in writing this book may not be as effective as it could have been. David Debertin on the other hand approaches the way he caters to his audience differently. He actually writes out everything so that the audience does not have to exert themselves in thinking. By doing this, Debertin also makes sure that the intended purpose for writing his book is properly received by the audience. Due to this, I believe that David Debertin is actually more effective in presenting his information to his intended audience.

Although both Alma Mann and David Debertin address a similar overarching topic of agriculture and resource sustainability, they have differing arguments regarding whether natural resources should be exploited, and they defend their perspectives with varying approaches. It is with these diverse approaches and immensely varying perspectives that to a moderate extent, leads to a balanced settlement and conclusion with how agricultural suitability should be handled in real time