Final Research Project

Assignment: 10-page research paper, due via e-mail on the day of the final exam: December 19

Timetable

Mon 11/18 Finalize general research topic: hand in brief description

Thurs 11/21 Meet in library instructional room for guided research.
If you have not yet created a Refworks account, I suggest you do so at this point: it will make it easy to store information about your sources, and then create a Works Cited list in MLA style.

Mon 11/25 Workshop: preparing final presentations
Research proposal due (1 page)

Mon 12/2 Annotated bibliography due
Project presentations

Thurs 12/5 Project presentations

* At any point along the way, make an appointment with me for discussion

Project Description

This research project requires students to develop an individualized topic that moves beyond the texts we have read in class. However, the project should also be clearly linked to topics and themes we have discussed throughout the semester.

You may wish to select a broad topic, such as transgender literature and history, or representations of female sexuality in popular media. These are all easily linked to things we have read and discussed. You may wish to dig more deeply into a particular author, or into a particular work or set of works. Be creative, and discuss your ideas with me.

Project requirements

• You need a minimum of 8 scholarly (peer-reviewed) sources. You may have as many other sources as you need. Vary your sources among books and journal articles; you may also use reference works and online sources (one you have checked to make sure they are trustworthy), but these will not count as part of your 8 scholarly sources.
• The sources must be presented in an Annotated Bibliography before the presentations.
• You will present a draft of your project in class, in a 15-minute oral presentation (10 minutes for presentation, 5 for discussion). Do not read a paper – you should present and discuss your main ideas, explaining what your argument is and why it is significant. You may use Powerpoint or other media for your presentation. You will also present your sources. Other students will offer feedback: this question/answer period is crucial to the development of your project.

**How to Write an Annotated Bibliography**

The annotated bibliography assignment is designed to get you started on your research paper. In order to prepare the bibliography, you must locate sources that you plan to use in your paper; you must read them, and comment on them. These are the requirements for the comments (annotations):

• You must have at least 8 sources in the annotated bibliography (you may have as many as you wish in the final draft of the paper itself)
• All the sources must be secondary material, not primary.
• The sources must be spread among various types: you must have at least 3 sources that are books; you must have at least 5 sources that are scholarly articles from peer-reviewed journals; the rest of your sources may be websites, encyclopedias, etc., once you have checked to make sure they are trustworthy.
• You must write comments of between 100 and 150 words for each source.
• The comments must include three things: (1) a brief description of the material in the source, including the argument it makes; (2) an evaluation of the reliability of the source; (3) what will the source add to the argument you wish to make in your paper?
• Present the publication date for the source in MLA style.

The following two links offer extensive information on how to prepare the annotated bibliography (the links are on the assignments page of the WebCT site, so that you can easily get access to them):

Cornell University website:  
[http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm#what](http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm#what)

University of Wisconsin website:  

For your final research paper, you will have to go through the process of finding and evaluating sources; preparing the annotated bibliography simply helps you to get started on your research, and to focus your work carefully.