

## Research Step 1: Selecting a Primary Text and a Research Question

**There are three requirements to complete Step 1 due Wednesday March 24:**

- Select a primary literary text and bring a copy of this text to class on Wednesday. Your selected literary text may be a short story, a novel, a play, a nonfiction essay, selected poems, etc. I will verify that you have a physical copy of your selected literary text (either hard copy or full-length electronic text).
- Be prepared to discuss what particular aspect of cultural identity you plan to write about in your research essay.
- Bring to class a draft a research question that you plan to explore in your essay—see the blog post about “Cultural Identity and The Research Question” for general guidance on research questions—also, consult with the instructor if you have specific questions about this step.

*For example: If you choose Jane Austen’s novel Pride and Prejudice as your primary text, and you plan to explore the concept of feminine cultural identity in your project, possible research questions might be as follows:*

*In what specific ways have portrayals of feminine identity in popular culture of the twenty-first-century changed or remained the same from constructions of feminine identity in early nineteenth-century novels written by women?*

*or,*

*In what specific ways have the goals of feminist texts in the late twentieth-century changed or remained the same from the goals of feminist texts from the early nineteenth-century?*

**Note:** I will need to approve your response to Step 1 before you can receive feedback from me on later steps in the research essay project.

## Research Step 2: Reading/Describing Primary Sources

Before class on Friday, March 26, please write and bring to class some journaling in which you explore some preliminary ideas about how your literary text explores a specific aspect of cultural identity and/or your research question. If you are studying more than one primary literary text by a single writer, be sure to discuss all of your primary literary texts. *Note: do not summarize the plot or paraphrase meaning. Assume I've read your primary sources, and limit your discussion to ideas from the primary text about the cultural identity you plan to explore in your paper or your research question.* You may freewrite your paragraphs in journal style; spelling, grammar, etc. does not count. You should produce about 450 words.

**Example Cultural Identity:** *Married Women in America*

**Example Literary Writer:** *Harriet Beecher Stowe*

**Example Literary work:** *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

### Example One-Page Journal Entry:

Let's see. The novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is mostly about the injustice of slavery. But, it also places a lot of attention on marriage relationships—that's what I'm most interested in. But, how do marriage relationships relate to cultural identity? Well, the writer (Harriet Beecher Stowe) is a woman, and the novel's descriptions of marriage often focus on the woman's perspective. So, I might be able to write about the novel's portrayal of married women in America. Married women represent a specific cultural group, so they could be the cultural identity I can explore in my paper. So, who are the married women in the novel? Well, we have Mrs. Shelby (the slaveowner's wife), Mrs. Bird (the senator's wife), Chloe (Tom's wife), and Rachel Halliday (the Quaker who is married to Simeon). Mrs. Shelby finds a sense of purpose as a Christian moral teacher to the slaves who work on her property; however, Mr. Shelby dishonors his wife's work and her identity as a moral teacher by selling Tom, which shatters Tom's marriage to Chloe and reveals that Mrs. Shelby has no voice in the decisions made by her husband. Mr. Shelby's language about the importance of business above family responsibilities indicates he has no respect for his wife. Mrs. Bird seems to have progressive ideas about racial injustices and the voice of women in the political process, but Senator Bird refuses to listen to her, and his patronizing language toward his wife reveals his prejudice against women, whom he considers irrational. The novel seems to present these two marriages as examples of bad marriages based on a flawed hierarchical structure. Later, the novel focuses on alternative versions of marriage in which the spouses embrace egalitarian ideals. Again, the focus is on the woman's perspective when Chloe begins to work outside of her home to earn money to buy Tom's freedom—this reverses the typical hierarchy of the husband being in charge of the wife's circumstances and offers a new model for the role of the American wife. Later, Rachel Halliday brings this vision to fulfillment when she works alongside her husband as an equal partner and shares in the business decisions and leadership of her family. No hierarchy exists in the Halliday's Quaker marriage, and the two spouses truly respect each other as equal human beings. The novel champions Rachel Halliday as a glorified example of the married American woman at the top of her potential.

I'm interested in whether this novel's ideas about marriage were being discussed by other creative writers in 19<sup>th</sup> century America, or whether this novel's ideas were unique at the time the novel was written. I wonder how 19<sup>th</sup> century readers reacted to this novel's ideas about marriage, or if no one noticed them because of the novel's primary focus on slavery.

## Research Step 3: Finding Secondary Sources

Now that you've decided on a primary literary text, chosen a specific issue related to cultural identity, and have a preliminary research question, you need to start looking for your secondary sources (works ABOUT the primary literary writer's work). On Wednesday, March 31, you must bring to class hard copies or complete electronic copies of at least 4 scholarly secondary sources you can use in your research paper.

You will need to cite a minimum of four secondary sources in your research paper. These sources can be scholarly books (but not biographies) or scholarly articles (not popular magazine articles and not reviews). You may **not** use as one of your core four sources: book reviews, dictionary or encyclopedia articles, world wide web sources, student-written papers on the internet, Cliff's Notes or any other kinds of notes, or *Explicator* articles (too short). *Note: as long as you have a core of four approved sources, you may use others on the above list as extra sources.*

The library is the place to look for books, obviously. **There may be collections of critical articles, as well (a book that contains numerous articles by different scholarly writers).** A book only counts as one secondary source, but a collection of articles may count as many sources. Books often include a Select Bibliography at the back, which will point you to some good secondary sources.

If you find a good book or articles, photocopy it, or print it out (you are required to turn in photocopies of all secondary source materials with your research paper). Obviously, you can't photocopy an entire book, but just photocopy the pages that seem to be talking about the subject you are interested in.

**One of the best ways of finding critical articles is using the Library's search database.**

How to Find Full-Text Articles On-Line:

- First, go to the library homepage ([www.acu.edu/academics/library/](http://www.acu.edu/academics/library/))
- Under "Find Articles, Journals, and Books," click the [Articles](#) link.
- Then select [Advanced Search](#).
- Then click the [Choose Databases](#) link and select the "MLA International Bibliography" box (and any other bibliographies you think may be relevant) and click save.
- Before entering search criteria, **click the box to limit your search to "Scholarly (peer reviewed) journals"** so that you don't get pop magazine articles, which wouldn't be appropriate source material. If you are researching a pretty famous literary writer, you might want to check the "full text" box as well. This will only find articles that you can print in their entirety from the on-line source.

- Next, type in the first and last name of your literary writer in the “find” field. Your search will pull up many sources (I got 180 full-text for Charlotte Bronte, for example; then I narrowed my search to *Jane Eyre* and got 41 articles). These will be listed by scholarly writer and title. An icon next to the article information will tell you if it is available “HTML full-text” or “PDF full text.” If it’s just “HTML,” it means that it has the text of the article, but the formatting has been changed. HTML will open in your browser. If it says “PDF,” it will appear exactly as it did in the original journal in which it first was published, and will save to your hard drive that way. PDF is better, if it’s available, because the original page numbers will be there, and that makes in-text documentation easier. But you may also use HTML articles if you need and want to. To print, email, or save an article or citation, click the folder icon and add it to your folder.

### **How to decide which texts to look at:**

- First, check the title. Since you are looking for anything pertaining to your cultural concept, the title will give you a clue as to the usefulness of a source. (For example, an article titled “Ghosts in the Mirror: Colonialism and Creole Indeterminacy in Bronte and Sand” may not sound like it would be very helpful to my project; but one titled “Jane’s Crown of Thorns: Feminism and Christianity in *Jane Eyre*” may sound better: one may relate better to my particular issue related to cultural identity.)
- Also check the description offered; it will tell you what journal it came from (remember that you cannot use encyclopedia articles, Web sources, or anything from the journal called *The Explicator* for one of your four core sources, although you can use them for extra sources).

Once you’ve found some articles that look promising, you can either print them out or email them to yourself. Skim over them to see if they look useful, but don’t get bogged down reading them carefully at this point. Try to get more than your minimum required number, so that if some turn out to be useless to you, you still have others.

Note: the bibliographic information for critical articles found on-line should appear somewhere on your printed version of the article; you need to have the ORIGINAL publishing information (where the article actually appeared in a literary journal like *Atlantic Monthly* or *Midwest Quarterly*). The bibliographic information also appears on the Ebsco page, so be sure to write it down if you can’t find it on your printout. You’ll need it to write your Works Cited page.

This is also important with actual books and articles you photocopy in the library. Be sure to write down the scholarly writer, title, publisher, name of press and city of publication, date of publication, and page numbers.

## Step 4: Reading/Annotating Your Secondary Sources

Now that you've located some promising secondary (scholarly) sources and finished reading your primary literary text, it's time to work on de-coding and using your secondary sources to come up with your thesis and supporting evidence for that thesis. **Step 4 constitutes 10% of your grade for the course.**

Remember that your thesis is going to be a statement of what your primary literary text is saying about your selected issue of cultural identity. So, you'll want to look for anything in your secondary sources that seems to discuss issues related to your selected cultural identity or anything related to it. **Note: most secondary sources won't make that easy; remember that those scholars are busy trying to prove their own theses, not trying to write an article that will answer your thesis questions, so you have to read carefully.**

First, you may want to re-read your own journaling about your primary literary text(s). That will help you recognize those ideas when you run across them discussed in your secondary sources.

As you read, consider underlining anything that seems useful and make notes in the margin indicating why you think it might be useful. You may want to have a summary sheet of certain items that documents the page number and source it came from. Be sure to indicate whether you are paraphrasing or quoting directly.

Be careful not to read your secondary sources too narrowly. For example, if you're working on the concept of "married women" in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, you may find one source that discusses feminism in the novel. While that focus may not relate directly with marriage, the source may discuss expectations for women in marriage, which might be useful to your subject.

### **For Monday, April 5, your assignment is:**

Read your four selected scholarly secondary sources and write notes in the margins or make notecards. Write an "annotated paragraph" no longer than half a page, single spaced (typed or word processed) for each work, describing what the source says about your literary writer, and particularly describing how that source might be helpful in shedding some light on your thesis (See examples on back). **The most important aspect of writing an annotation is audience. Be aware that your audience when writing annotations consists of people doing their own research, who probably do not care about your particular paper or your assignment. So, you should have no references to your own paper, your assignment, or your thesis.**

**Other expectations:** Write in third person (avoid "I" and avoid "you"). Write in present tense (no past tense verbs!). Refer to the writer by last name. If quotes are used, include quotation marks and cite them properly. Describe the source accurately (the essay, the article, the book).

**Sample MLA citations and annotated paragraphs follow below:**

**Notice: to receive full credit, you must do what these examples do: provide scholarly writer's name, title, and publication information, and each annotation must show how the source might be useful and demonstrates that you have read and understood the source. Advice: Write in third person; the subject of each sentence should be the secondary source.**

Dessner, Lawrence Jay. "Jane Eyre and the Impossibility of Happiness." Modern Language Quarterly 25 (1998): 315-17.

This article discusses the obstacles Jane faces to being happy. The essay identifies those obstacles as her orphan status, her bad luck (being raised by people who don't love her), and her own strong sense of right and wrong, which forbid her from marrying Mr. Rochester, even though she loves him. Because of her morals, Dessner claims Jane would be miserable if she married him, but she is also miserable when she decides not to. However, Dessner explains that Jane is ultimately rewarded with happiness because she does what she knows is right, no matter what. This article may be useful to researchers who study Jane Eyre's religious identity and how she realizes that that aspect of her character must be a priority.

Hunt, Elizabeth W. "'On my Honor': Moral Certainty in *Villette*." Critical Essays on Charlotte Bronte. Ed. William R. Macnaughton. Boston: Hall, 1982. 207-16.

Although this article addresses only the novel *Villette*, its discussion of "moral certainty" could be applied to other works by Charlotte Bronte. Hunt discusses the main character in the novel *Villette* loses her sense of moral certainty and falls into depression. The essay notes Jane is unsure what the right thing for her to do is, so she becomes almost suicidal. This article may be useful to any researcher interested in what Bronte thinks of the concept of moral responsibility. Jane Eyre, Hunt argues, is different from the girl in *Villette*. She notes that Jane Eyre never loses her moral certainty, which means she never is confused about right and wrong or about what her duty is. She never becomes suicidal or depressed, although she is sad a lot of the time. Hunt questions whether this means that Charlotte Bronte believes that knowing and doing your duty are the keys to staying sane and healthy, even though it hurts to do your duty sometimes. She also explores whether the novel claims that pursuing moral responsibility in spite of the consequences is its own reward.

Uphaus, Suzanne Henning. Charlotte Bronte's World. New York: Ungar, 1980.

This book has a useful chapter that deals with feminism in Bronte's works. Uphaus discusses how, in most of Charlotte Bronte's novels, she has a heroine who is very strong willed, and who ultimately must decide between doing what is right and doing what others expect her to do. She points out that sometimes those two things are the same (for example, women are supposed to be kind, and Jane Eyre is kind), but sometimes they are different (for example, women are supposed to be submissive to men, but Jane is only submissive when her conscience tells her it's okay to be). Uphaus claims *Jane Eyre* is a feminist novel because, even though most of the time Jane does what she is expected to do, her own conscience always has the final say, not the opinion of a man or even of society in general. This source is useful to writers interested in exploring the personal nature of moral responsibility in which Bronte believes.

## Step 5: Writing Your Thesis and Outline

Now that you've read four scholarly secondary sources (plus others, if you desire), it's time to come up with an arguable thesis and a plan for proving that thesis **(this is due Friday April 9)**.

**The thesis:** this is the backbone of your paper; it's what you will try to prove about your primary literary text(s). Remember that your job is to make a claim about what your literary text(s) is/are saying about cultural identity.

Be sure the elements of your thesis are ideas you can argue, not just something you'll be listing examples for. A thesis always needs to be specific, and it must be arguable/debatable, not obvious.

**Example Thesis:** "*Uncle Tom's Cabin* encourages American women to reject traditional models of marriage that subordinate women based on a static, gender-based hierarchy."

Or: "*Uncle Tom's Cabin* suggests that egalitarian marriage is the only acceptable model for the American woman."

(A bad thesis would be: "*Uncle Tom's Cabin* has a lot of married characters in it," or "Harriet Beecher Stowe likes to write about women characters.")

**The Research Outline:** this is the blueprint of how you will set up and argue your thesis. It should show how you plan to illustrate and support each element of your thesis, both with primary and secondary sources.

See an example outline on the Research Requirements Step-by-Step document on the class blog.

### Your Outline Should:

- Be detailed and specific, giving every argument and example you plan to use to prove your thesis
- Tell which sources (both primary and secondary) you will use to support your points, including page numbers
- Cover all aspects of your thesis
- Cite at least four acceptable secondary sources
- IF you have more than one primary text (short stories or poems), the outline should address all of your primary sources; address as many as possible in each section

### Alternative Format:

- As an alternative to the traditional outline format, you may write an abstract of your paper in a proposal format, as discussed and displayed in class
- If you choose the abstract proposal format, you still need to describe your thesis, cover the major aspects of how you will argue your thesis in your paper, and include quotes from at least 4 scholarly sources that you plan to use in supporting your thesis.

## Example Outline:

Thesis: The juxtaposition of certain marriages within *Uncle Tom's Cabin* subverts the traditionally male-dominated hierarchy within marriage and claims egalitarianism is the only model that is acceptable for an American woman.

- I. Historical context
  - A. Discussion of Stowe's marriage in relation to traditional models. Concerning Harriet Beecher's marriage to Calvin Stowe, Joan D. Hedrick writes that "unlike the male-dominated marriages of the eighteenth century, Calvin and Harriet's union was a 'companionate marriage'" in which "Calvin Stowe assumed that women were individuals with their own unique destinies to discover" (122-23).
  - B. "Companionate marriage" is a concept that was "strongly enforced by the teaching of Sarah Pierce at the Litchfield School" where Stowe had studied in her youth (Hedrick 121).
  
- II. Discussion of the Shelby's marriage
  - A. Mr. Shelby's patriarchal power threatens the entire cultural identity of his wife. Mrs. Shelby has no voice in the decisions made by her husband. Mr. Shelby's language about the importance of business above family responsibilities indicates he has no respect for his wife.
  - B. Mrs. Shelby finds her voice rejected in marriage even though Stowe reveals she has "a clear, energetic, practical mind, and a force of character every way superior to that of her husband" (332).
  - C. Mr. Shelby's decision to sell Tom effectively destroys Mrs. Shelby's identity "as a Christian woman" which consists of her work in "teaching her slaves the 'duties of the family'" and their responsibilities as Christians; her work and her identity are "canceled by one bill of sale" (Roberson 133).
  
- III. Discussion of the Bird's Marriage
  - A. The novel reveals that Mrs. Bird's world is limited to "looking the very picture of delight" and "superintending the arrangements" of a home designed to meet the needs of her husband (133).
  - B. Mrs. Bird's activities mirror the images of ideal women that appeared in advice manuals for American women and men printed between 1820 and 1870 (Roberson 118).
  - C. The debate between the spouses about the Fugitive Slave Act reveals Senator Bird's condescending bias against his perception of Mrs. Bird's sentimentality (135-36)
  
- IV. Discussion of Tom and Chloe's Marriage
  - A. After Mr. Shelby sells Tom to the St. Clares, Chloe requests permission from Mrs. Shelby to work outside her home in a Louisville confectionery to earn enough money to redeem Tom (336).
  - B. Chloe's action subverts the traditional model of marriage in which the husband is the provider and sometimes rescuer of the helpless wife.

V. The Halliday's Marriage

- A. Stowe's chapter titled "The Quaker Settlement," offers a picture of a truly egalitarian marriage by presenting Rachel and Simeon Halliday. Individuals in the Quaker Settlement appear to live in such a way that no separate spheres of influence exist for anyone in the community (203).
- B. "Rachel Halliday's kitchen is not simply a Christian dream of communitarian cooperation and harmony; it is a reflection of the real communitarian practices of village life, practices that depend on cooperation, trust, and a spirit of mutual supportiveness" (Tompkins, 99). Hierarchy based on gender has no place in such a community based on mutuality.
- C. The anti-patriarchal nature of the family is further evident when Stowe reveals that Rachel Halliday "never looked so truly and benignly happy as at the head of her table" (204).
- D. The Halliday's are also abolitionists - Typical abolitionists in mid-nineteenth-century America did not limit their activism to the opposition of slavery: "Many abolitionists were themselves affiliated with other movements, crusades, or loose theoretical associations: Fourierism, female suffrage, evangelical Christianity, and Transcendentalism (to name just a few)" (Wolff 597)
- E. Each spouse's role in the Halliday family appears fluid and interchangeable, rather than each rigidly adhering to traditional ideas about gender roles.
- F. Stowe's decision to use a Quaker community in which to create the family culture of the Hallidays is crucial to examining marriages within the novel. As early as the colonial period in America, Quaker wives and husbands agree to "live together as helpsmeet, with 'no rule but love between them,' according to the advice of the London Yearly Meeting" (Bacon 56).

## Step 6: Drafting – 1<sup>st</sup> Half

Now that you've finished your outline and know basically what you're going to say about your literary writer's opinion of your selected issue about cultural identity, it's time to start drafting your essay.

### **Goal of the First Half:**

This step will require you to draft the introduction and thesis of your essay and the first several body paragraphs in which you discuss your primary literary text(s) and any supporting secondary sources you plan to use in discussing your primary literary text(s). Try to answer the question: “what does my literary text say about cultural identity?” and “what do scholarly writers say about my primary literary text(s) in the context of cultural identity?” This stage of drafting is intended to solidify your thesis about your literary text.

**Advice:** Present *a reading* of your literary text. *Be textual*—keep the focus on your primary text, and present ample evidence (quotes) from your literary text to support your reading. Use MLA style and formatting, just like you would if you were submitting your essay for publication in a scholarly journal. Include quotes from your secondary sources. Proofread and edit your work.

**Due April 12:** Turn in a draft of the first half of your research essay including your introduction and journal about your non-traditional cultural “text” and what you think it is saying about cultural identity. You should produce between 600-700 words.

## Step 6: Drafting – 2<sup>nd</sup> Half and Conclusion

Now that you've drafted your introduction and at least half of your essay (covering a discussion about your primary literary text), it's time to start drafting the last half of your essay and providing closure to your argument.

**Additional Primary Texts (Optional):** Some of you may be planning to write the second half of your essay about how a non-traditional text (a popular novel, a movie, a tv show, a song, or other performance) explores the same issue related to cultural identity that you found in your primary literary text. If you choose this option, you may want to have two sections of your paper and essentially create a “dialogue” between your primary literary text in Section I and your additional primary text in Section II. In Section II, you would show how the non-traditional primary text supports, rejects, or comments on the view your Section I literary text approaches cultural identity. Try to answer the questions: “what does my non-traditional primary text say about cultural identity, and how does that view compare to what my Section I literary text says?”

Note: If you choose to write about a contemporary (recently published) text in Section II, be careful not to let Section II of your paper turn into a sermon on how modern society has lost all its moral values! When using more than one primary text, your job is to compare, contrast, and analyze (not to preach).

### Writing Conclusions:

Remember that the conclusion of an essay must provide closure to the entire essay, not just a particular point addressed in your paper. Good conclusions address the “so what?” question and remind readers about the purpose of your essay and what you have learned during your research.

*Virgil*, The Writing Center at the University of Texas, provides helpful advice on several types of conclusion at <http://projects.uwc.utexas.edu/virgil/?q=node/256>.

**Due Friday, April 16:** Turn in a draft of your entire paper, including the introduction, body, and conclusion. We will complete a peer review workshop on Friday, April 16, so please bring a hard copy of your draft to class.

## **Step 7: Writing the Works Cited Page**

### **Due April 19**

You should already be familiar with works cited entries using MLA Style at this point, so the Works Cited Page of your essay should not be difficult. However, below are some tips to remember:

- 1) The title “Works Cited” should be centered at the top of your works cited entries (see formatting of a Works Cited Page on page 443 of *The Little, Brown Compact Handbook*).
- 2) The entire Works Cited Page should be double-spaced.
- 3) There should be no additional (blank) lines in-between the centered “Works Cited” title and the first entry for your sources.
- 4) Use the hanging indent feature to indent all rows after the first row of each entry.
- 5) Be careful to use the exact format prescribed by MLA Style for each type of source you are citing.
- 6) MLA Style – 2009 Updates: Pearson’s (MyCompLab) guidance on the 2009 updates to MLA Style are available on a single page on the pages sidebar of the Class Blog. Please consult this guide (or another authoritative source on MLA Style) for each of your sources.
- 7) Have an entry for every one of your primary and secondary sources on the Works Cited Page (list each source only once!).

**Due Monday, April 19:** Please submit a draft of your Works Cited Page to the Files Dropbox on Monday, April 19. I will review it and provide comments as necessary.

### **Putting it all together:**

Your final research paper should be a minimum of 2,500 words and have the following parts:

- A. A general introduction to the entire project
- B. A complete discussion (body) of how your primary literary text(s) explores an issue related to cultural identity
- C. Incorporate integrated quotes from at least 4 scholarly sources into your argument
- D. Optional: You may choose to also discuss how a non-literary text explores the same issue related to cultural identity
- E. A general conclusion to the entire project—answer the “so what?” question
- F. A works cited page, including all primary and secondary sources discussed throughout the paper

**The Final Paper is Due Friday, April 23.**

**Don’t forget to have the ACU Writing Center or MyCompLab’s Smarthinking reviewers read your draft.**