

ENGLISH 331: AMERICAN DRAMA

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Guidelines

Topic: Select a topic (suggested below), or suggest one yourself. E-mail me on or before November 30 to let me know which topic you will be working on AND include a fully articulated thesis statement for your paper. The thesis statement can naturally be modified later when you are working on your paper, but I want you to have a solid starting point for this project in order to focus your research. The paper should be written in persuasive, elegant, and academically appropriate English.

Format: The finished paper should be double-spaced, ca 10 pages, and citing at least 3 secondary sources (no more than one may be an online source) in addition to your primary source(s). Naturally, you can have as many sources as you like above and beyond the three required.

Documentation: Either MLA or APA documentation styles are acceptable. Hybrids or mixtures of the two are not. For more information on MLA and APA, please visit <http://www.asu.edu/duas/wcenter/handouts.html>

Research: I strongly recommend using the Hayden Library catalog as a starting point. Find at least one book that gives you a general introduction to your subject matter. However, since your paper is relatively short you will need to get to the point quickly, and you will need sources that deal with your topic specifically. Scholarly articles are perfect for this, and they are significantly shorter than books (usually 15-40 pages). Use the library online indexes to search the MLA Bibliography, The Humanities Full text Abstract, and other indexes that focus on humanist research.

I suggest you use the online resources available to you from the ASU library. Another place to find many excellent articles in full text is <http://www.jstor.org> which is only accessible on campus. JSTOR articles have been previously published in hardcopy elsewhere and are therefore considered off-line sources.

Assistance:

The Hayden Library research librarians are very helpful and can assist you with tips on how to use the various indexes.

If you need assistance and advice on how to formulate a workable thesis statement, feedback on your research and ideas for this paper, or any other project for this course, please contact me by email or talk to me during office hours.

Submission: The paper is due **November 30 at midnight**.

The preferred method of submission is to email the paper to me as an attachment. The file should be in MS Word, Word Perfect, or Rich Text format. If you submit the paper to me electronically I will return it to you with comments embedded in the paper using MS Word's comment feature.

ORAL PRESENTATION

Guidelines

An oral presentation of the research you have conducted for your final paper.

Components

The presentation should include:

- A description/explanation of your thesis
- Summary of research performed to prove thesis
- Problems/issues complicating research (if any)
- Relevant illustrations and/or visual aid (1 minimum).
- Preliminary conclusion (at the time of the presentation. Since you probably will not have finished your Final paper you may not have had time yet to conclude your research.)

Duration

5-10 min. This corresponds to approximately about 3-4 double spaced written pages.

Visual aids

You should use at least one visual aid. Since our technical resources are limited, I suggest using Powerpoint, overhead plastic transparencies, photo-copied handouts, VHS or DVD, or any suitable, portable object. Please let me know in advance if you have specific technological requirements.

Possible topics: These topics are suggestions, and you may rewrite or modify them to your heart's content, or come up with one of your own. In fact, I urge you to do so! **Suggested/Possible Research Paper Topics**

1. A study of political methods used in *Androboros*, using references to other relevant dramas and present-day events.
2. *The Tragedy of Superstition*: A Study of the Development of an American Concept of Duty and Virtue
3. A discussion of Anna Cora Mowatt's *Fashion, Or Life in New York*, as a comic dramatization of how to define a distinctly American character. Who/what, exactly is an American, as defined in this play?
4. Race and language in Anna Cora Mowatt's *Fashion, Or Life in New York*.
5. A discussion of *The Iceman Cometh* as an exploration of painful and abusive family relationships.
6. *The Iceman Cometh*: Hickey and His Twelve Disciples
7. Mad, Bad and Dangerous to Know: Transgressing Characters in American Drama
8. Empowered Female Characters in *The Crucible*
9. Class and Culture in *A Streetcar Named Desire*
10. Southern Gothic: Sexuality and Insanity in *A Streetcar Named Desire*
11. A Queer Reading of Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple*
12. Name your own topic!

If you want feedback on your thesis, email your thesis statement to me and I will comment on it.