

**Final Paper and Annotated Bibliography Assignments, HST/WMS 389  
Fall 2009, Professor Lavender**

*I. Identifying a Topic*

For this course, you will be writing a final paper as well as a related annotated bibliography. This will be based on a topic identified through one of the three following options:

A) If your biographical subject is famous enough that many books and articles (at least ten total written by scholars) have been written about her, then you can write as your final paper a historiographical review of how historians have written about her (this option will not be that common). For instance, if you were working on Emily Dickinson, you could write about how biographers have looked at her either as a woman who lived within the proscriptions of Victorian American culture (she remained in the home, she was a devoted sister and daughter), or as a woman who rebelled against those proscriptions (she wrote and never married). More about how to do that below.

B) If your biographical subject has only a scant amount of historical scholarship about her, then you can use her as an entry point into a narrative research paper about a topic that interests you. If, for instance, you chose as your biographical topic a woman who became famous as a “lady wrestler,” then you could look at one of the following topics for the New Woman era: women in athletics, women in performing, women as businesswomen, assumptions about women’s physical abilities, etc. There are a nearly infinite variety of topics you could address growing out of this. Your historiographical bibliography will then trace how historians have written and disagreed about this topic.

C) Perhaps you’ve found something in our readings that particularly interests you and which has nothing to do with your chosen biographical subject. You may then elect to write either (in the case of broader topics) an historiographical review essay about what historians have written (and debated) over that topic or (in the case of narrower topics) a narrative research essay; in part the choice will be determined by the availability of sufficient scholarly debate. If your inspiration comes from one of the articles we have read for this course, then that article may be part of your bibliography, and it will also identify other books and articles you should draw on in its footnotes.

In order to understand more clearly the difference between a “historiographical review” paper and a “narrative research” paper, please consider the following examples, found in your course reader:

“historiographical review” paper:

Martha H. Patterson, "Beyond Empire: The New Woman at Home and Abroad,"  
*Journal of Women's History* 21/1 (2009): 180–84.

“narrative research” paper:

Cheryl M. Cassidy, “Bringing the ‘New Woman’ to the Mission Site: Louise Manning Hodgkins and *The Heathen Woman's Friend*,” *American Periodicals* 16/2 (2006): 172-99.

Whatever option you choose for identifying your topic and your approach for the final paper, you must have approval of that topic before you start your work. If you submit a paper on a topic that has not been approved, I will not accept it. Therefore, you will submit on 10/29 a

proposal listing your topic, the question to be discussed and answered and a draft bibliography on the topic. You should have identified at least ten sources at this stage. This will also include your email address, so I can let you know if your topic has been approved as soon as possible. You may also submit this *before* the 29<sup>th</sup>, in order to leave yourself more time to work on the final project. This can most efficiently be done by via email sent to lavender@mail.csi.cuny.edu.

## *II. The Annotated Bibliography:*

Once you identify your topic, then you will do a literature search to identify materials you may use to research your topic. This will mean that you will search in the following databases accessible via the CSI Library's website ([srms.library.csi.cuny.edu/resources/databases.jsp](http://srms.library.csi.cuny.edu/resources/databases.jsp)):

WorldCat

Academic Search Premier/Academic Search Complete

America History and Life

JSTOR

Project Muse

and, depending on the specific topic, the following specialized databases:

Black Thought and Culture

Film Literature Index

Humanities Full Text

MLA International Bibliography

Philosophers' Index

Social Sciences Full Text

Twayne's Author Series

Women and Social Movements

From what you find, you will create an annotated bibliography (see the example on the course website). In your annotations for each book or article, you will explain what the thesis of the author is (what they argue concerning the question you are researching), as well as a statement of what sorts of sources they use to reach this conclusion. This annotated bibliography will be due November 12.

To identify thesis and argument, you do not necessarily need to read the whole book or article, although ideally you should make every effort to get the resources, either through the library (CSI or NYPL) or through sites like Googlebooks, Questia.com, or other online access points. Generally, you may limit your search in the article databases listed above to "full-text" options. In addition, you can read the reviews of the books in scholarly journals and abstracts of articles in databases like America History and Life. The resources allow scholars to identify and quickly assimilate the debates in their field, and you should learn to use them!

More details will follow on the Research Paper.