

PAPER #2: INFORMATIVE RESEARCH (15%)

Due Friday 11/6

Stereotypes are generalizations or assumptions that people make about the characteristics of all members of a group, based on an image (often wrong) about what people in that group are like. Although many stereotypes might contain some elements of truth in them, for the most part they do not accurately represent the actual individuals within the stereotyped group.

For your second paper, you will write a 1000 word (minimum) research essay about a stereotype of your choice, examining where it originated from and explaining why it is inaccurate.

The first thing you need to do is choose a stereotype to write about. The stereotype you choose can be a very serious and hateful one, or a more silly & seemingly harmless one. Some examples might be:

- All terrorists are Muslim
- Black men are usually criminals
- Women can't control their emotions
- All cops are racist
- Religious people are unintelligent
- Atheists are immoral
- Asians are good at math
- Women are bad drivers
- People from the American South are racist
- Canadian people are super polite
- Mexican people are lazy
- Etc., etc.

The stereotype you choose can be one about a certain race, gender, age, economic class, sexual orientation, sexual identity, physical health or abilities, religious belief, political party, job occupation, or even certain fandoms and hobbies. It also does not necessarily have to be a stereotype that's unique to American culture; you could talk about Indian stereotypes of Chinese people, or about European stereotypes of Americans, or something like that.

The only requirement is that it should be something *you* personally believe to be untrue. Do not write about a stereotype you actually believe in!

Once you have chosen your stereotype, then you need to start gathering sources about it. There are two important aspects that you will need to research:

1. **The Origin/Evolution of the Stereotype:** Where did this stereotype first get started, and why? How did it continue to spread through the culture? How has it changed over time? Is it still commonly believed today, or is it dying out?
2. **Reasons Why the Stereotype is False or Misleading:** Use information from multiple authoritative sources to prove the stereotype false. This does not have to be a purely black & white argument – you could take a more nuanced position that maybe there's *some* truth to the stereotype, or maybe it *used* to be more true, but as a whole it is still misleading or inaccurate. No matter what, though, you should not argue that the stereotype is completely true!

This is a research essay, so the focus here is mainly on gathering good resources, understanding what they tell you, and then conveying all the most important information to me in your own unique way. Look for things like official statistics, news reports, scientific studies, and articles from academic journals. Make sure the sources you use are professional, authoritative and trustworthy.

Essentially, for this paper, you are going to be the teacher, and I'll be the student: educate yourself about the subject, and then teach it to me. If you end up teaching me something new, I will be very happy! ☺

NOTE: You are not allowed to do the same stereotype as someone else in the class. This is a "first come, first serve" deal. As soon as you know which stereotype you'd like to research, you need to let me know. I will make a list of all the taken topics and post it on Canvas. If you come to me and find someone else has already taken your idea, then you'll have to pick a new one.

REFUTING YOUR STEREOTYPE

You may not rely only on personal anecdotes to refute your stereotype.

For example, say your stereotype is "Women are bad drivers"---you cannot refute that stereotype by simply saying, "Well, my mother's a woman, and she's a great driver! Case closed!"

While it's okay to include *some* personal anecdotes, especially in the introduction or conclusion, you cannot rely on personal experience alone to make your argument. You must research broad social trends and official studies or statistics. A single individual's personal experience, while valid, is nevertheless not enough on its own to disprove a widespread stereotype.

GATHERING SOURCES

For this paper you will be required to have a total of **6 sources (minimum)**.

While your sources may come from anywhere, I would strongly encourage you to use the HCC Library's extensive online databases to find at least some of your resources: <https://library.hccs.edu/home>

The HCC Library online database is actually a collection of several external databases (accessible from most university libraries), which store thousands of academic journal articles, ebooks, and newspaper excerpts. Many of the databases can be searched by subject, so if you are looking for sources specifically focused on "Medicine," for instance, you can narrow down the scope of your search to databases that only focus on publishing medical journals and books.

There are several benefits to using the HCC online databases to find your sources. For one thing, they are more likely to be credible, authoritative sources that have been well researched and peer reviewed by professionals. For another thing, the HCC library conveniently provides you with all the citation information you'll need to make your **Works Cited Page**, which is an important element of this paper. (More on that later.)

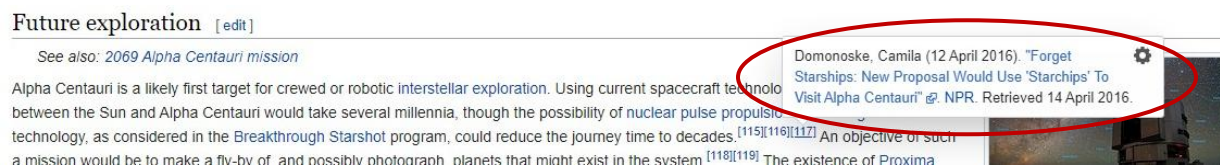
However, not all of your 6 sources necessarily have to come from the HCC Library Database. You may find very useful sources just by searching on Google, although you should be careful: make sure any

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sources you use are **credible** and **professional**. Don't use some random person's blog as a source! Examples of good credible sources may be things that have been published by government organizations or by reputable news outlets (the keyword here being "reputable"). You may also interview someone and use them as a source, if you want!

You are NOT allowed to use Wikipedia as a source. I personally don't have any problem with Wikipedia for general use, but it's not typically considered a "professional" source in academic contexts. However, you *can* use Wikipedia to find other sources.

This is a neat trick that I have done myself for years. Say you were writing about some stereotype about space aliens, for example, and you wandered onto the Wikipedia page for "Alpha Centauri." You might find some interesting information on that page that you think could use in your paper. Hover over the **footnotes**, and Wikipedia will show you which source that information originally came from. In a lot of cases it will provide you with a nice convenient link to the source.



In the above picture, you can see that the footnote leads to an article published by NPR. NPR is generally considered a credible news source, so that would be a perfectly acceptable article for you to use yourself. Just follow that link to the original NPR article, and there you go!

After you have gathered at least 6 sources, you are required to do two things with them:

1. You must use *all* of your sources at least once, somewhere in your paper. This can be either direct quotes taken from the source, or information that you paraphrased into your own words. Anything you use from a source, whether quoted or paraphrased, should be properly cited in MLA format.
2. You must list *all* of the sources you used in an MLA style Works Cited page, which should come at the end of your paper.

MLA CITATIONS & WORKS CITED PAGE

It's important to cite your sources for several reasons. First, of course, it's your way of giving credit to the original author and saying, "This isn't my original idea or information; I'm borrowing it from someone else." Second, citing source is helpful to the reader, especially in a research paper. Say I'm reading your paper and feel like I want to learn more about a certain topic; I can go track down the sources you used and read more about it on my own.

With these two purposes in mind, there are 2 steps to citing your sources in a paper:

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1. Include an **in-text citation** (or “parenthetical citation”) in the paper anytime you use something from one of your sources in your paper. This applies to both *direct quotes* as well as *paraphrased information* (i.e. information that you took from a source but rewrote in your own words).
 - a. In MLA, the in-text citation is the parentheses you put at the end of your quote or paraphrase, which has the author’s last name and page number (if available), as well as any other information it might be necessary to include to make it clear which source you’re referring to.

According to NASA scientists, aliens from Alpha Centauri are actually not rude or judgmental at all, contrary to popular belief (Green 23).

2. Include a **Works Cited Page** at the end of your paper. The Works Cited page is exactly what it sounds like: it’s a list of *works* that you *cited* in your paper. Anything that was mentioned anywhere in the paper needs to be on this list; likewise, anything that was *not* mentioned in the paper should *not* be included on the list.
 - a. The Works Cited page includes all the information a reader might need to track down your original source for themselves. This includes: the author’s full name, the full title of the original source, the place where the original source was found, and the publisher and date of publication (if available). Depending on what kind of source it is, you may also need to include other information as well.

Green, Jasmine H. “Alien A-holes or Awesome Space Friends?” *National Geographic*, National Geographic Society, July 2017.

All of your in-text citations in the paper should point to one of the sources listed on the Works Cited page, and all of the sources on your Works Cited page should have enough information that I could go find the original source myself. This way, if I read an interesting quote in your paper, I know exactly where it came from *and* I could go look it up on my own if I wanted to.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Your essay should be well-planned out and organized.
- Include an interesting introduction paragraph. Your introduction should include both a **hook** (i.e. something to catch the reader’s attention with, like a shocking statement or an interesting story), and also a clear **thesis statement** which tells me what your main topic is.
- Use both **direct quotes** as well as **paraphrased information** in your essay. Paraphrased information should be written in your own words (otherwise it’s plagiarism), and should still be followed by an *in-text citation* so that I know where you got the information from.
- Include a **conclusion** that wraps everything up at the end. There’s no strict form you have to follow for the conclusion; it can be either long or short. Wrap things up, but try not to be too repetitive.

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- You are not limited to how many body paragraphs you include or what order you put them in. All that matters is that your points are *thorough, organized* and *easy to follow*. Just like in Paper 1, each paragraph should build on the one before it in a logical progression.
- Use of first-person “I” is totally fine for this paper, but try not to go overboard. Keep your focus on the texts, not on yourself.

USING QUOTES

- You should have at least a few direct quotes in your paper as well as paraphrased info. There’s not a magic number for how many quotes to include, but at least one / no more than three quotes per page is a good general guideline.
- All quotes should be woven into your sentences & paragraphs, not simply plopped in there.

BAD: The origin of the dumb blonde stereotype goes back many decades. “The ‘dumb blonde’ is a stereotype that is much older than you think” (Jackson 34).

GOOD: The origin of the dumb blonde stereotype is “much older than you think,” going back several decades (Jackson 34).

- If you want to alter a quote slightly to make it flow better in your sentence, you may do so using [brackets] or ellipses (...). Brackets are used if you slightly change the wording, and ellipses are used to indicate that you omitted part of the quote.
- BLOCK QUOTES: in MLA, if a quote is longer than 4 lines, you must put it in a **block quote**. Start the quote on a new line and indent *the entire quote* once from the left side. Omit the quotation marks. The whole quote should still be double-spaced, and the citation should be in parentheses at the end. Please only include 1-2 block quotes maximum in your paper.

PURPOSES OF THIS ASSIGNMENT

- **Research:** This paper will require you to learn how to seek out strong, authoritative sources on your own, to read & understand those sources, to be able to put the information you learned from those sources into your own words & narrow down the most important points, to clearly explain that information in a structured, easy-to-follow essay, and to properly cite & document all of your sources in MLA format.
- **Critical Thinking:** Don’t just read your sources, but examine them thoughtfully. Think about how your research compares (or doesn’t compare) with the stereotype. Think about what facts best disprove your stereotype. *You* are the teacher now. You have to try to teach *me* something. Go out there and inform yourself a little more about the world, so that you can then inform me.
- **Communication:** Since you are trying to teach me something in this paper, you have to put your communication skills to the test. It’s not just about explaining the information, but about

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presenting it in a way that is clear and easy to understand, even for someone who is unfamiliar with the topic. Just like Paper #1, you will have to think about your audience!

FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

- 1000 words minimum (note: I don't mind if you go over the word count, but don't go under it)
- Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt.
- Double-spaced; indented paragraphs; no extra spaces between paragraphs, please.
- MLA style heading and page numbers

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:

- **Proposal** = due Fri 10/16
 - In academia, a proposal is sort of like a preview or “teaser trailer” for your paper. In one paragraph (about half a page), you will tell me what stereotype you plan to research and how you plan to argue against it.
- **Collect & Summarize Sources** = due Fri 10/23
 - Find at least 6 sources you think you can use for your paper. It's okay if you end up adding new ones later, or not using one of these in your final paper. But this is meant to help get you started on your research. Make a list of all six sources, including the author's name, the title, and the place where you found it (e.g. website, journal, book). If you do an interview, then tell me the person's name and say it was an interview. In addition to listing the sources, you must also include a **brief summary** (3-5 sentences) for each one, telling me what they're about and how you think you'll use them.
- **Outline & Thesis** = due Mon 10/26
 - Before writing your rough draft, you must create a formal outline where you plan out all the major points you intend to cover, in the order you intend to cover them. This is basically like the blueprints for your essay. At the beginning of your outline, you must also include a *thesis statement* which establishes the main idea of the essay
- **Rough Draft** = due Fri 10/30
 - Submit your rough draft version of Paper #2 by no later than midnight on Friday night. It should be at least 600 words, though it doesn't have to have an ending yet.
- **Peer Review** = due Mon 11/2
 - You will be randomly assigned someone else's rough draft to peer review. Look over it and leave feedback for how they might improve. I will provide a rubric for you to fill out.
 - Someone else will also be looking over your own rough draft, so keep an eye out for it and use their feedback when you are typing up your final draft!
- **Final Draft** = due Fri 11/6
 - Submit the final 1000-word (minimum) version of Paper #2 by no later than midnight on Thursday. Make sure you look over the Paper #2 checklist beforehand to be sure you have met all the requirements! Remember, I do not accept late work when it comes to the

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three big papers. Once midnight hits, if I don't have your paper, it's a zero—no exceptions.

- **Revision** (optional) = due anytime before Sunday, Dec. 13
 - After I have graded your paper and given you feedback, you have the option to revise the paper again and turn in a new version in order to raise your grade. How much your grade changes depends on how much work you put into it and how much you take my feedback into consideration. You may submit a revision anytime throughout the semester. All revisions should be sent to me either through Canvas inbox or email, with the subject line clearly stating what it is.
 - **NOTE:** You may not actually see an improvement in your grade for a while, especially if you turn in a revision early, since I often don't get around to grading them till close to the end of the semester.

OTHER OPTIONAL HELP:

- I will be giving everyone basic feedback on your rough drafts, but if you'd like me to give you more detailed feedback (helping with grammar, organization, etc.), then you can email your rough drafts to me early and I will look over them when I have time. However, I will not look over any rough drafts sent to me less than 24 hours before the final draft is due, so make sure you send it before then—the earlier, the better!
- You may also have an HCC tutor look over your rough draft ahead of time. You can contact an online tutor by going to <https://hccs.upswing.io/>. Provide me with evidence that a tutor looked at your paper, and I will give you extra credit points. ☺