**US HISTORY RESEARCH PROJECT (HRP)**

Since the beginning of the school year, we have studied American History, often focusing on controversies—in our discussions and written essays. Now, as we close the year, you will choose your own **controversial topic** and offer an **opinion** on it, using **specific footnoted evidence**—**from a variety of primary/secondary sources--and well-reasoned logic** to back up your position. **You will be writing an essay AND producing/delivering an oral Power Point presentation. The HRP Essay will be due for everyone—completed/uploaded after submitting your draft to turnitin.com—by the end of class on Thursday, June 6. You will be delivering your Power Point presentation during the regularly scheduled exam blocks on Friday/Monday, June 7/10.**

**Topic Selection**

* Select a controversial American historical event, person, or policy from 1900-2000. To help you choose one, you should review your notes, my power points/notes, and the texts we consulted.
* To begin your research, check Wikipedia. This website offers a wealth of general information that may help you choose and shape your topic. Remember, this site should only be used for preliminary information gathering and will not be counted as one of your sources, **though you must cite it!** *It’s a great place to start your research, but a bad place to end.*

**Length of Paper**

* Your Honors paper should be 8 (min) to 10 pages double-spaced of text—i.e. not including title page, foot/endnotes, and bibliography. 6 (min) to 8 pages for Standard History students.

**Components of paper**

When turned in, your paper must contain the following at a minimum:

* a title page with original title—*use some graphics!*
* body (text): 8 pages (Honors); 6 pages (Standard)
* footnotes/endnotes, Chicago format: **averaging** **one per body paragraph from a variety of sources.**
* a bibliography: 10+ quality sources (8+ for Standard), proper Chicago format with all assistance cited.
* a “clean” submission (blue or green similarity code) to turnitin.com
* **Note:** There will be automatic point deductions for not meeting any of these requirements/minimums

**Sources**

* **You will have a total of at least 10 QUALITY (8 for Standard) sources**
* You must use at least two books.
* You must use at least three database/scholarly journals/etc. *You won’t find these if you merely “Google” your topic. Use the SAAS Library Databases.*
* You must use at least two primary sources.
* You will need at least one-to-three additional quality sources. *These are minimums. If you want to earn a top grade, you should go beyond the minimums.*
* Keep track on NoodleTools of each **source** you use in your paper for your bibliography. **Note publication, author, publisher, city, year.**
* **You should cite Wikipedia or *Making America*  or *American Spirit* if you consulted them—but they don’t count towards your 8/10+. You should also cite ANY source you consult—even if you don’t use any material from that source in your essay—AND any help received from someone else. This is IMPORTANT.**

**Notecards**: You will take **ALL** of your notes on NoodeTools note cards. You must generate **70+ notecards. 50+ for Standard.**

Notecards must include **1.) a specific piece of information—a quote (in quotes), idea, unique statistic, paraphrased information, etc—that can be used as evidence in your essay; 2.) source information (including speaker, author, text, etc;) 3.) page number(s) or URL that identifies the exact location of this specific piece of information. 4.) Your own ideas, thoughts about this piece of evidence.**

**Grading**

This research paper/presentation will constitute **a significant percentage** of your US History grade for the spring trimester. There will be grades on nearly every component of the HRP: from notecard production to preliminary thesis to outline to draft to… *Just because you did well on one stage of the HRP does not necessarily mean you will do well on subsequent stages. Pay close attention to my comments and make appropriate revisions.* ***Late work will be downgraded out of fairness to those who completed their work on time.***

**Strong papers will include:**

* A compelling BT-style thesis—don’t go B/W!-- on a legitimate historical controversy.
* A BT-style argument that is sustained and proven throughout the paper so as to avoid a mere summary of what happened. Remember, this is **NOT** a report. Nor should it be an editorial about a generalized topic.
* A diversity of quality source material in your footnotes and your bibliography.
* **Quotes/specific evidence/stats/ paraphrased ideas from others that is/are integrated into the text: averaging one footnote per body paragraph.**
* Appropriate paragraph structure that includes: topic sentences, evidence/examples, commentary/analysis, and transitions.
* Clear, concise, grammatical writing.

**Power Point presentations:**

**This should be a summary of your paper—the thesis (spelled out word-for-word), main points, and key evidence—in a visually interesting and easy to follow power point. Don’t forget a bib here, too. *A reader should be able to follow your argument just by looking at your power point: not too much text, but not too little either.* Your oral presentation should likewise be clear, articulate, and entertaining. THE PRESENTATION SHOULD NOT EXCEED 7 MINUTES.**