

E110-091 Research Project

The major project for E-110 is the research project which will occupy us during the remaining portion of the semester. The basic parameters of the research project require an 8-10 page researched argument in MLA format. You should include a minimum of eight outside sources of which at least five should be derived from University library resources.

I would like to leave the subject matter for your papers fairly open within the rather broad scope of “outlaw studies.” That said, it seems to me that most work will fall within one of three categories:

- Archaic. Some of you have already done some work in the old legendary material—the early Robin Hood ballads, source material like *Eustache the Monk*, or early non-Robin Hood outlaw ballads like *The Tale of Gamelyn*. You might consider deepening your study of the origins of the outlaw archetype. (And remember, the outlaw legend is universal in its range, extending to China, for example, with the medieval classical (and extremely long) novel, *The Outlaws of the Marsh*).
- Modern historical. This area includes anything covered by newspapers—outlaws of the American West, or of the Depression era.
- Current. You might want to consider how the outlaw mythos is expressed and incorporated in current cultural productions—rap or hip hop music, or films like the Dark Knight series or the *Hunger Games*, for example.

Whatever topic you choose, your project should include an argumentative thesis, research that incorporates both primary and secondary sources, and a theoretical perspective that enables you to engage in some speculation about the significance of a particular instance of the outlaw mythos in a broader cultural or social context. Your acquaintance with Graham Seal’s idea of the “outlaw hero” or Eric Hobsbawm’s “social bandit” provides models of theoretical perspective. You need not limit yourself to outlaws we have considered, or will consider, in class. The world, and, indeed, all space and time, are your oysters in this regard.

Some important dates:

Friday, 4/10: A 1-2 page paper describing a tentative research project is due in class. Please bring a hard copy to class and send an electronic copy to Tom Melvin in the Library (tmel@udel.edu).

Monday, 4/13: Meeting with Tom Melvin in Morris Library for discussion of research strategies.

Friday, 4/17: Session in Memorial Hall Computer Lab to continue (or begin) research.

Friday, 4/24: Prospectus of Research Assignment due in hard copy in class. Prospectus should include a statement of tentative thesis; an annotated bibliography of at least 5 of your sources; and a bullet point outline showing the major points you plan to cover in your essay.

Friday, 5/1: Peer Review of full drafts of research essay in class.

Week of 5/4: Conferences on drafts of papers. No class meetings.

Monday, 5/18: Last Day of Class: Paper Due.