

Assignment: Writing Option Two: Paper Proposal (10% of your grade)**Due: Monday, November 17***Mechanics: minimum 1 1/2 pages, double-spaced, 12 point, 1" margins, MLA format*

An academic **paper proposal**, or **abstract**, is a formal genre of writing that one uses to describe one's projects for grad school, conferences, or publication. For this paper, you must describe what you *will be arguing* in your Final Paper by introducing the main claim you *propose* to discuss in your paper.

Follow the guidelines below closely. There are three steps and each should be a separate paragraph. You must do some research, reading, and thinking about each step; so you need to start thinking about your topic before Week 8. Your topic or critical questions can change as you research your claim (in fact, they probably will). If you have questions about potential claims ask them in class (others probably do to) or see me. Note: This will be graded on content (development of a claim and discussion of your texts) as well as on how well you followed the format.

The Claim

In this first paragraph, you introduce what you will argue in your paper. Take the time to **introduce your main claim *comprehensively*** by **introducing the critical text(s) and cultural text(s) you will be using.** Discuss how your claim evolved from a line of inquiry emerging from your engagement with the cultural text in conjunction with your readings of our critical essays and/or your own research. Use this paragraph to situate your claim and discuss how your choice of critical text begins your argument and places it within certain ways of thinking. Use the Handouts on critical questions, close reading, and claims to produce a complex claim that is specific enough to argue in 8 pages. Be sure to state your claim *explicitly*. This should end with a sentence that makes a claim about how your critical lens and your cultural text interact; that is, what your critical lens reveals about your cultural text and/or vice versa. If you need to end with "My claim is..."

The Critical Lens

In this section you unpack your critical lens/framework of your paper and discuss its implications and how you will apply these ideas to your claim. In this section, discuss your critical lens and then, *briefly*, any outside sources that you use to discuss this. **Introduce the author(s), synopsise the main claims,** and then **analyze the specific ideas** from the critical essay(s) you will use to stake your own claims. Discuss the **implications** of your critical lens, **why** you are using it and **how** these ways of thinking are going to be used in your paper. Then **describe how you are using your outside sources** in a few sentences each. End this section by beginning to answer your critical question using the ideas of your critical lens. What specific points from your critical texts are you using and how? What can the critical lens help to investigate? How are your outside sources being used as evidence? To help explain what?

The Stakes of your Cultural Text

In this section, discuss how *your* claims about your cultural text are interventions into ways of thinking about larger issues such as how sex/uality and race intersect or how stereotypes work in culture. Answer the question: why am I writing this paper? Discuss what your investigation of this cultural text reveals about your critical lens or how your critical lens provides a new way of thinking about your cultural text. What are the implications for using your chosen cultural text to think about the social world? What does my cultural text reveal about sexuality and racialization? About the way culture shapes the intersections of race/gender/sexuality? About how stereotypes work? For whom is the production of my knowledge going to be useful – who is my audience? What new ways of thinking about the text am I offering with my close readings? What ways of thinking am I offering about race, gender, etc. in America? Or about how we think about and use stereotypes? Or about any combination of these? In this section you must be able to explain how your claim about your cultural text is necessary, important, or relevant for thinking about America's racial, gender, and/or sexual formations. Introduce and describe your cultural text here *very briefly* and focus mostly on discussing the how's and why's of your usage of the text. Discuss any outside secondary sources that discuss your cultural text.