

Essay 2: Prompt

Essay 2: Researching Representations (8-10pgs):

Broadly Speaking:

This assignment is our first big **research paper**. As such, the expectations and standards will be considerably higher for this project than for the previous writing you've been asked to do in this class. You will be expected to demonstrate considerable initiative and self-motivation in order to achieve a superior grade on this project.

And simultaneously, with this great responsibility comes a great amount of personal agency. Contrary to the previous assignments that have had you focusing on a text from a limited pool of options, this is **your** project to do with as you see fit (so long as it conforms to certain pre-established conditions).

You are being asked to:

1. Select a racial/ethnic identifier from a pre-approved list (white or Black American, Ainu, Chinese, Indian, Ryukyuan/Okinawan, Chicano/Latino),
2. Find an anime/manga that foregrounds that particular identifier or cultural elements thereof (the instructor may provide some assistance in this regard),
3. Explore, historicise, and critique (through close reading) the extant signifiers of difference within this particular anime/manga, and...
4. Formulate a position, claim, or argument about this particular series' sort of representational methodology.

Definition of Terms:

In this context, a **research paper** is an essay written in an academic voice that demonstrates a familiarity with a body of scholarship surrounding a single, well-defined topic.

You will be expected to craft a meaningful **thesis statement** that is both comprehensive and concise and frames the central argument or claim that your project is making.

Finally, you will be expected to craft an MLA-formatted **Works Cited** page, that will clearly identify the five sources that you will need for the present assignment.

Specific Instructions:

This assignment will use the given anime as a jumping off point for broader discussions about race and representation in a Japanese context. Nevertheless, the project will necessitate a plot **synopsis and production information** for the series itself.

The project will also need to provide information regarding your own reading of the functions of race within the series. Is it an overt narrative issue (like in *Fullmetal Alchemist* and *Code Geass*)? Or is it a cultural subtext loosely associated with or dissociated from overt markers of phenotypic identifiers (like in *Samurai Champloo*)?

Importantly, the essay will have **at least five sources**.

- Two must be from the list of assigned readings on the Course Library (this, of course, excludes Oe's novella).
- One must be from the holdings at Strozier, Coleman, or Leon County Libraries (or be from a book not assigned on the syllabus' reading list); another viable option is Interlibrary Loan.
- One must be a scholarly journal article accessed from JSTOR, ProQuest, or another library database.
- One may be a source of your choice (this may include an additional text from the syllabus' list, an additional article or book, or a website).

The assignment may have *more* than five sources, but it *must* have representatives from the above categories.

As with the previous assignment, this is *not* just a curated tour of the episode/series, pointing out wherever there is a Black, white, Japanese, or racially Otherized character. This is an investigation, compounded by substantiated and educated theorizing on questions of "*why*" and "*what is at stake*". **Here, though, the investigation is backed up by thorough and extensive background information accrued through evident research.**

Students may run preliminary concerns or questions by the instructor for clarification.

Students are also encouraged to visit the Course Website's filmography (listed under "Supplemental Readings" under the "More" tab in the navigation bar) for some suggestions of works to consider. <<http://raceandanime.weebly.com/supplemental-readings.html>>