

Tyra O'Bryan's WRT 205

Project 2 Assignment Sheet

With your partner, choose 1 of the following:

Option 1: Closely examine Kennedy's research—his sources, types of evidence, and search procedures (as best you can reconstruct them)—and his decisions for representing that research in *Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word*. Then choose a "troublesome word" of your own—the how you decide your word is "troublesome" is up to you, as is explaining the "trouble" to your audience—to research and write about in a similar way. Obviously your project will not be nearly as thorough in scope as Kennedy's, but you will have to make similar decisions to his about what kinds of information to gather, how much to include, how to handle discrepant material, how to organize what you decide to present, and what tone to use when writing. **You will need to argue for identifying your word as "troublesome," explore the contexts in which this trouble is most pronounced or relevant, make its controversial nature clear** (such that multiple views on its use and the inevitable discrepancies between such views are presented with equal validity), **review both historical and current events involving your word, and make some type of argumentative claim**, which will help determine what information you include and how you present it.

Option 2: Identify a historical event, legal case, or particular issue Kennedy includes in his exploration of the "career" of *nigger*, and find out more about it. As you gather information about the event, case, or issue, closely examine its inclusion in his text. *What information (or kinds of information) about the event, case, or issue has he chosen to include? What information (or kinds of information) has he chosen to exclude? From which sources (or types of sources) did he take his information? From which sources (or types of sources) are you finding additional information that doesn't appear in his text?* Your task in this paper is threefold: **1) to report your findings about the event, case, or issue to your audience, 2) to analyze Kennedy's presentation of the event, case, or issue to his audience, and 3) to make an argumentative claim about his presentation based on your new expertise about the topic.** Keep in mind that in "reporting" your findings about the event, case, or issue, you'll have to make the same types of decisions Kennedy made—you will not be able to include everything, and your sources will not all agree. Your own struggles to handle these challenges responsibly will help you to evaluate the decisions he made.

Whichever option you choose, your final **co-written paper** (we'll talk about what that means in class), should be a **thoroughly researched work, 8-10 pages in length, that adheres to standard English grammatical & textual standards. It should make a coherent argument, present evidence in support of its claims, and speak with a unified voice.** It should also demonstrate ethical researching and reporting practices—all work must be your own unless **clearly attributed** to other sources. A preliminary **bibliography**, with annotations, is due **Monday, February 21st**. A **complete draft** of the paper is due **Friday, February 25th**. An electronic copy of the **final paper** is due before class begins on **Wednesday, March 2nd**.