

# Research and Writing Your Capstone Dissertation

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- Writing as conversation
- The Imagined Readers

# Examples

李華倫,《出土文獻與古史人物同名現象考辨——以「伯夷」、「容成氏」為例》

黃慕晴,《王梵志詩以俗語入詩文化考察》

馮雅,《宋話本《碾玉觀音》中的「觀音」隱喻研究》

陳美濤,《比較四大名著中與身份相關的罵語》

關詩霖,《論蕭紅弱勢女性文學——以《棄兒》為中心》

羅銳潛,《從陳冠中《金都茶餐廳》看香港草根「雜種」文化》

張慧妍,《論嚴歌苓移民小說的性別書寫》

林嘉希,《粵語助詞「添」的運用特點》

# From an interest to a topic to a research question

- Turn a vague interest into a problem
- From a broad topic to a focused topic to questions
- You'll also discover how new knowledge depends on what questions you ask—and how the way you present your research shapes the questions you can ask and how you answer them.

# Formulate research questions

- “So the best way to begin working on your specific topic is not to find all the data you can on your general topic, but to formulate questions that point you to just those data that you need to answer them.” (Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 2008, p. 41)
- “Once you have a few promising questions, try to combine them into larger ones.” (Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, p. 44)

# Step-by-Step

1. What you are writing about: I am working on the topic of ....
2. What you don't know about it: because I want to find out.....
3. Why you want your readers to know and care about it: in order to help my reader understand better .....

1. Topic: I am studying\_\_\_\_\_
2. Question: because I want to find out what/why/how\_\_\_\_\_
3. Significance: in order to help my reader understand\_\_\_\_\_

Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 2008, 45-47

「本文試圖從《劉三姐》版權糾紛所帶來的一系列歷史問題出發,重新思考民間文學,官方文學,市民文學,大眾視聽媒體,少數民族文化等概念以及實踐之間的斷裂、衝突與歷史聯繫,因為這些斷裂、衝突與歷史聯繫,可能有助於我們對本世界中國現代文學和各派理論論爭的理論前提獲得一個新的瞭解。」

劉禾《一件難斷的山歌案:民俗學與現代通俗文藝》

# Examples

今天,酒店已經在某種意義上成為我們這個城市的標識物,..... 酒店還在引領著這個城市的時尚,甚至引領著一種建築美學——摩天大廈正是這種美學的建築載體。 .....而在所謂的「離地美學」中,高度正是其突出的美學標記。 ..... 可是,我們仍然需要討論的是,為什麼,在那個時代,「高度」開始成為一種美學象徵或者一種美學炫耀,而另一個問題則是,在那個時代,我們還有沒有其它的美學選擇?

蔡翔:《酒店、高度美學或者現代性》



# Example: Research Problem

小說《生死場》是蕭紅的成名作。它描寫的是"九·一八"事變前後東北鄉村的生活,其中女性的命運構成了這些富有鄉土色彩的生活圖畫中的一個主色調。小說發表後,關於這部作品的解釋和評價一直受著民族國家話語的宰製。.....蕭紅的小說最初就是在國家民族主義的標準下得到認可的。大多數評論者將它視為一部"民族寓言",一部充滿愛國主義精神的反帝國主義作品。這種批評傳統限制並決定著對小說意義的理解,以至今天人們仍很難繞開它去評價蕭紅的創作。然而,文學批評中的這種民族國家話語迄今尚未引起那些依然身陷其中的文學史家的注意。我在此對蕭紅作品的解讀不僅試圖為研究這位作家提出的新的角度,同時更是為討論和質疑民族國家話語和文學批評實踐的複雜關聯這一問題。因此,我關注的是有關蕭紅本文的兩個層次的話語:生產層面與接受層面。前者涉及蕭紅在小說的空間裡與民族國家話語的交鋒,後者則指向力圖將她的寫作納入民族國家文學名下的文學批評。

劉禾《文本、批評與民族國家文學》

# From Problem to Questions to Sources

近年來學術界對於「公民社會」(civil society)的討論頗為激烈,中國是否出現「公民社會」遂成為爭論的問題。然而,哈貝馬斯對於「公共空間」的論述,似乎較少引人注目,甚或與「公民社會」混為一談。……我對哈貝馬斯學說的故意誤讀,目的是在探討中國近代史上的一個重要文化問題,自晚清已降,知識份子如何開創各種新的文化和政治批評的「公共空間」?……這種新的「公共」的聲音,是如何形成?用什麼形式表現?這是最關心的問題,而它表現的園地,也因之成為一種新的空間。在淺顯的說,我覺得報紙的副刊是值得深入研究的……且先從晚清一個眾所周知的報紙副刊說起。

李歐梵《批評空間的開創——從《申報·自由談》談起》

# From Problems to Sources

- Locating sources through a library
- Evaluating sources for relevance and reliability
- Primary sources
- Secondary sources

Reading secondary sources for models of argument and analysis

Reading secondary sources to define your problem

Reading Secondary sources for arguments to respond to

## Deal with secondary source

Make a difference between these three categories

- 1) what you quote
- 2) what you paraphrase and summarize
- 3) your own thoughts

- The Art of Summarizing

Writing a good summary means not just representing an author's view accurately, but doing so in a way that fits your own composition's larger agenda.

- The Art of Quoting

1) quote relevant passages; 2) frame every quotation

Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. *They say / I say: the moves that matter in academic writing*, 2010. 30-55

# Avoid Inadvertent plagiarism

- quote, paraphrase, or summarize a source but fail to cite it.
- use ideas or methods from a source but fail to cite it.
- use the exact words of a source and cite it, but fail to put those words in quotation marks or in a block quotation.
- paraphrase a source and cite it, but use words so similar to those of the source that anyone can see that as you paraphrased and followed the source word by word.

Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 2008,

# Conceptualize

- Distinguishing practical and research problems
- Practical questions (what should we do)
- Academic research questions (what should we think)

# Example: Finance

Practical question: How should we invest? What financial products should we purchase?

Academic research question:

“Volatility in Finance, Culture, and Politics”

Masterclass with Prof. Ackbar Abbas (University of California, Irvine)

**Volatility is arguably the chief characteristic of our time, the one aspect that contemporary finance, culture, and politics have in common. .... We cannot think of volatility then as simply speed of movement, or quickness of change, or the flouting of rules; nor can volatility be captured by Futurist images of bullet trains devouring space. This talk will try to suggest some of its paradoxical features by placing volatility in Finance, Cultural Practices (cinema, critical theory, dance), and Politics (Hong Kong’s ‘Umbrella Movement’) side by side with one another.**



“We solve a conceptual problem not by doing something to change the world but by answering a question that helps us understand it better.”  
(Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 2008, p. 53)

Conceptualize (See Wang Fan-sen’s lecture)

# Examples

可是,我們仍然需要這樣的高度美學,一種相異于我們真實的  
日常生活的建築景觀,或者說,需要一種類似于宗教般的美學寄託。  
在某種意義上,現代性已經成為我們這個時代最突出的政治,可是,如  
果它企圖凝聚整整一個時代,那麼,它就必須兼有宗教的功能,其中便  
包括神聖化的功能。這種功能的最合適也是最重要的直觀體現者,  
正是建築,高度美學所構成的,正是一個外在於人的符號世界。

蔡翔:《酒店、高度美學或者現代性》

# Build an Argument

- Argument as conversations with readers and colleagues

“They say \_\_\_\_\_; I say \_\_\_\_\_”

- Three ways to respond:

1) Agreeing, 2) disagreeing, or 3) some combination of both

Agree--- but with a difference

Disagree --- and explain why

Agree and disagree simultaneously (favorite way of responding)

- Not simplistic or one-dimensional, and these ways will not sacrifice the complexity, subtlety, and originality of an argument

Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. *They say / I say: the moves that matter in academic writing*, 2010, 55-67

晚清小說也受到人文主義批評家的訶責,指其受到當時社會/政治動力的驅動,忽略了「人文」經驗更大的脈絡,而社會/政治的變動只不過其中的一部份而已。與這個觀點略有出入的馬克思主義批評家,則責難晚清小說家雖然逐漸看出寫作與國家命運之間的關聯性,卻缺少足夠的眼光及勇氣,去強調社會/政治的亂局,以導向自由與革命。不論是太政治或不夠政治,總之晚清小說病在其對社會現實的膚淺認知,從而影響到了它的藝術成績。……

儘管這些批評看似多元,其實,它們全指向同一個觀點,亦即文學的發展必然是從一個階段到另一個階段,尤其是從非現代的時期到現代的時期。……

我主張晚清小說並不只是中國「現代」文學的前奏,它其實是之前最為活躍的一個階段。如果不是眼高於頂的「現代」中國作家一口斥之為「前現代」(pre-modern),它可能早已為中國之現代造成了一個極不相同的畫面。

王德威《被壓抑的現代性——晚清小說的重新評價》

# Examples

本文通過深入閱讀陳學昭《延安訪問記》中所記錄的體驗與觀察,並且通過與張愛玲《談音樂》進行比較,對1930年代後期延安的聲音文化與聽覺經驗進行了描述和分析,指出有「歌詠城」之稱的延安為一代追求革命理想的青年提供了強有力的聽覺訓練,喚起了他們崇高的聽覺想像。延安激越的聲音文化,與以現代都市為背景的視覺文化大相逕庭,可以說是對貧乏的視覺環境的補償和超越。更重要的是,延安產生的以交響樂為最高形式的聲音文化是戰爭與革命時期所必需的激情文化的重要部分,是催生新的情感方式和主體經驗的文化實踐,因而也是中國現代文化史上的重要一環。我們應該充分認識併發掘聽覺在激發身份認同和民族共同體的想像中所起到的巨大作用。

唐小兵《聆聽延安:一段聽覺經驗的啟示》

# Write Your Conclusion

- Start with Your Main Point
- Add a New Significance or Application
- Call for More Research

Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 2008, 244-245

# Example 《聆聽延安:一段聽覺經驗的啟示》唐小兵

## 結語:激情文化與聽覺想像

延安的聽覺環境和聲音文化的產生,自然和艱苦的抗日戰爭密切相關,但一個更全面、也更有說明力的大背景,其實是在延安彙集成形,同時也在延安得到宣導的激情文化。這個聲情並茂的激情文化彙集了戰時文化、革命文化和我們上面提及的青春文化,這些不同的文化形態有各自的邏輯和緣由,但在當時的延安匯合成了強有力的催生新的情感方式和主體經驗的文化實踐。.....

對延安激情文化的研究,我覺得還應該放在中國文化傳統中「情」的概念及其現代表現方式這個框架裡來展開。.....

延安的聽覺經驗和聲音文化給予我們的另一個啟示,則是我們應該充分認識到聽覺在激發民族共同體的想像中所起到的巨大作用。.....

我們需要對聽覺經驗及想像的歷史形態做多層次的進一步考察,而20世紀有聲的中國為我們的研究提供了極其豐富的資源和材料。

- Academic Writing Style: Clarity



# Citation Style

- Be Consistent!

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## Some suggestions

- Find and follow a good example
- Create a writing group
- Write a research journal
- Manage moments of normal anxiety
- No perfectionism

# Reference

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. 2008. *The craft of research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. 2010. *They say / I say: the moves that matter in academic writing*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

王汎森, 「如果讓我重做一次研究生」