

## Research Statement

In Week 3 (R Sept. 11), you should write and turn in a one-page, single-spaced statement on your research approach.

### Basic Format:

#### 1. Genre

Identify the genre, band, album, or song you think you want to focus on. At this stage it can still be fairly general. State briefly why you want to investigate this genre: what personal connection or disciplinary connection you have to it, etc.

#### 2. Research Question

State what is interesting, strange, different, difficult, problematic about this genre that you might want to investigate. Try phrasing it as a research question: Why does the music do \_\_\_\_? How does the music do \_\_\_\_? Why do fans respond to the music in this way? What influences the musicians or fans to do \_\_\_\_? Why is this genre significant historically or politically and for whom? Etc.

#### 3. Critical Approaches

The course is set up to survey various approaches to writing and thinking about music. We've only hit a few so far, so at this point you'll have to make a best guess. Roughly, we're covering musicology, rhetoric, worlding, documentary, reader response, sub/fan culture, gender, race, economics (music industry), technology, geography (local/global), and mediation (visual/textual).

Since we are only surveying these approaches, we can only achieve a minimal level of depth for each one. You'll want to ask yourself which of these can help you investigate and potentially answer your research question or which ones might illuminate your chosen genre, and then do some more research not only on your genre but also on the approach or approaches.

So for this assignment, identify which approaches you think you might use and say something brief about why you think it/they will be useful for looking at your genre and answering the question you have. (Of course, your question or approaches will likely evolve over the semester; the point here is to begin this thinking process.)

#### 4. Research Approach

Again, ask yourself, which research approach will potentially help you find the kind of information you'll need to answer the above question on your chosen genre:

- Bibliography: You might choose this option if you need mostly academic or disciplinary experts, or more background or historical information on something you know little about.
- Blog: You might choose this option if you think a lot of the material you will need is online in various forms (websites, blogs, youtube clips, etc.) and you need a place to list and organize the links, or if you want a place to reflect on the material, collect and organize notes, or make personal connections.
- Myspace: You might choose this option if you want to examine and track fan culture, find musicians in the genre that you could potentially interview online, or gather up band pages so you can listen to more songs in a genre you are less familiar with.

Again, identify which option you have chosen and why (what you hope to accomplish with this approach, what you want to track, etc.). If you are doing a blog or Myspace page, set it up and include the url. (With your permission I might post these to the class blog.)

## 5. Schedule

For most of you, this could be an important issue. You're working, taking 18 hours, English isn't your primary discipline, you need to go to live shows as part of your research, and maybe you even have a life. In the hopes that you won't get too behind and will then have to throw something together at the end of the semester, set a research schedule for yourself—dates for gathering articles and books, target numbers of entries for each date, a list of shows that you'll want to go to, dates for having certain about of entries on your blog, or friends on your page, days to go to the library or search databases, people you want to interview and dates to track them down by, whatever. Think specifically about your big assignments in other classes and try to organize this stuff around those other classes so you're not stuck with 10 things to do at once.

### Notes:

It is important to understand this assignment as an "inventional" document. It is meant as a moment for you to collect your thoughts about where you *\*may\** go with your research and to think about how the above 5 things fit together logically. You won't be held to anything you write here, because it is understood that this is an early moment in your process, accept for the research approach. Once you start that, it is tougher to undo it and start over. You might be able to repurpose that approach for new ideas later, but once you start it you'll probably want to stick with it.

### Grading:

This document will count as 5 participation points, not as a major grade. The important thing, again, is to simply do it and move your thinking process one step further.