

Paper #1

Purpose: The purpose of this assignment is for you to create your own argument and enter into a critical conversation with other scholars. This paper asks you to engage with two kinds of sources, **exhibit sources** and **argument sources**.

-Exhibit Sources: Exhibit sources are the texts (novels, poems, films) that you will be analyzing in your papers. All of your major papers will focus on exhibit sources.

-Argument Sources: Argument sources are articles or books by other scholars that will make arguments about exhibit sources. You will find yourself agreeing or disagreeing with argument sources and assessing whether those argument sources are useful for analyzing your exhibit sources. Your own papers will be argument sources.

This first paper assignment asks you to analyze an **exhibit source** (*Trilby*) in relation to an **argument source** (an article by a literary critic) and to develop your *own* claim about the exhibit source. Here, in other words, you are producing your own argument source.

Assignment:

In his discussion of George Du Maurier's *Trilby* (1894), literary critic Jonathan Freedman writes,

As the novel opens, we encounter three young British artists who have sought to make their fortunes in Paris... The milieu in which these three move is a version of the world portrayed by Henri Murger earlier in the century in *Scènes de la Vie Bohème* and by Puccini in *La Bohème*: a world of would-be artists, writers, grisettes, and grifters, facing poverty with bohemian gaiety, wild parties, and passionate affairs. But Du Maurier's Paris is thoroughly benign: while poverty, prostitution, and drunkenness are hinted at, his characters remain untainted by its worst aspects... Du Maurier's novel made *la vie bohème* widely available, but with a sense of safety. (Freedman 98-9)¹

In a paper of 3-4 pages, evaluate Freedman's thesis and make your own argument about Du Maurier's treatment of bohemianism in *Trilby*. Is Du Maurier celebrating the bohemian world, critiquing it, or some combination of both? (Times New Roman, double-spaced, 12-pt. font, 1" margins)

In this paper, you will need to:

-Make an argument about the novel's attitudes towards bohemianism. Make sure your claim is clear, identifiable, and well-supported.

-Incorporate specific examples from your exhibit text (*Trilby*). Close reading and careful analysis of passages from the novel will help you to support your argument.

¹ Freedman, Jonathan. *The Temple of Culture: Assimilation and Anti-Semitism in Literary Anglo-America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Print.

-Summarize and respond to Freedman's thesis. In order to respond to Freedman's argument, you will first need to summarize it briefly to the reader. Show that you understand his central claim. Then, you will be able to answer the following questions: do you agree or disagree with his argument about the portrayal of bohemianism in the novel? Why or why not?

-Document your sources according to MLA guidelines.

Due Date(s):

-First Draft: Friday, September 23, **5 pm** by email (sdraucke@bu.edu)

-Final Draft: Friday, September 30, **before class** by email (sdraucke@bu.edu)