

This summer I was an academic intern working with Dr. Kelly Malone in Sewanee's Department of English. Before the summer, Dr. Malone approached me with a research idea in Gothic Literature to create easy-to-use research resources for students and future classes, as well as for me to gain research experience and possibly use my findings for a future academic paper. My responsibilities included working twenty hours a week (for eight weeks) researching influences on Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and creating an annotated bibliography of about fifteen sources for use by future students as a starting point for research on the novel. I also read additional texts from the same time period and genre in order to assess connections between texts. Additional texts included *The Monk* by Matthew Lewis and other works by Stoker. This project also allowed me, under the direction of Dr. Malone, to accomplish some personal research on Stoker and his novel for the purpose of gathering material for a future academic paper.

This internship gave me experience in undertaking an amount of research beyond that of a standard research paper, which had been the extent of my research experience prior to this internship. Prolonging the research over a period of eight weeks and being limited to one specific subject helped me in gaining longevity in my research, as well as learning techniques and resources for exploring deeper areas of the subject. For instance, I gained a greater knowledge of working with the University's journal collections while looking for articles for my annotated bibliography. During my internship, I increased my skill at skimming articles for quality, making it easier to sift through weak or poorly-written sources. I was also able to familiarize myself more with

the Modern Language Association format for an annotated bibliography, which additionally was good practice for future use in research. As well as compiling a research starting point for potential student projects on Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, I had the added benefit of finding sources for a future academic paper exploring gender and sexuality in *Dracula*. With the annotated bibliography, students working on *Dracula* will have a solid starting point, since the sources I compiled provide a variety of information, such as biographical information on Bram Stoker, basic knowledge of Eastern European and Slavic folklore, and historical information on the major events in the life of Vlad the Impaler, the real-life *Dracula*. *Dracula* is a fascinating novel, but finding a starting point for research can be daunting, and this annotated bibliography will be an extremely useful resource for students delving into Nineteenth Century Gothic Literature.

This internship really helped to put long-term research into perspective for me. Even though eight weeks may not seem like a long time, spending eight weeks researching one very specific thing can be tedious and frustrating at times. Some sources are poorly written, some are difficult to read through, and some are simply irrelevant. But by sorting through all these sources, I was able to compile an annotated bibliography of useful sources to help students avoid spending time on sources that are not helpful to them in the future. And while some of the research was unenjoyable, much of it was interesting. I learned a lot about various literary theories about the novel, especially in the subject area of gender and sexuality. I especially enjoyed reading Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*, which is a fascinating early gothic novel, and it contained many parallels to Stoker's novel, especially in terms of gender and sexuality. I gained a

lot of experience in working independently and being largely self-directed. There were times when the research was going slowly, and when I did not seem to be finding anything useful, but most of the time the research was very enjoyable.

Because I am considering a career of an academic nature, it is always beneficial to gain more experience in research. It also gave me an idea of what my life might be like for the next few years when I will begin pursuing this career. Apart from that, I also gained a lot of useful experience in working on my skills in organization and as a writer. Research can be a daunting task, so having more practice in finding a starting point, laying out a plan of action, and working at a steady are all skills that I can use in a variety of work-related tasks, not just in research. I discovered that I enjoy doing this sort of work, since it is both productive and a learning opportunity for me. I know I will utilize the skills and experience that I have gained during this internship in my future career, and it is my hope and my goal that they will help then as they have helped me now.