

**Michelle Rowley**

**1. The initial HISTORICAL TOPIC I wanted to explore early in the course was . . .**

I originally wanted to explore the similarities in racial discrimination which incited the Draft Riots led by the Irish during the Civil War and the Zoot-Suit Riots led by Mexicans during WWII.

**2. I narrowed down by topic — and made the project more manageable -- by deciding to focus on . . .**

I decided to focus only on the Zoot-Suit Riots because it was history I had very little knowledge of, and wanted to learn more about. Also, comparing the similarities between two well documented events was just too much for how short my paper was supposed to be. My original topic could have been used for a doctor's dissertation rather than a capstone paper. It seemed much easier for me to pick a single event in history and explore the detailed factors surrounding that event, than for those who tried to focus on things spanning a great deal of time.

**3. I developed a sound interpretive approach to the topic by analyzing the subject from a particular perspective — which was. . .**

I originally assumed the Zoot-Suit Riots were incited only by racism. However, my professor helped me to see there were probably a lot more factors involved than just racism in the riots. History is never cut-and-dry, and I think the capstone paper really helped me to see how many different aspects can contribute to a certain event in history.

**4. The final THESIS presented in my paper argues that . . .**

My final thesis argued that both war-time nationalism on the part of the white community along with years of mounting racism against Mexicans were the leading factors in the Zoot-Suit Riots.