Harlon Dalton finds many objections to Horatio Alger’s three merits to success formula with regards to race, socio-economics, and background. Harlon Dalton’s answer to Horatio Alger’s “each of us are judged solely on his or her own merits” by concluding that the principle that everyone is evaluated on our own personal virtues without looking at from a sociological aspect is a fantasy. Dalton’s tone throughout his essay seems to more condescending and frustrated with Alger’s claim. The statements Dalton makes are highly intelligent and articulated very well as when Dalton is talking about race, “Black Folk certainly know what it is like to be favored, disfavored, scrutinized, and ignored all on the basis of our race” (Horatio Alger). Dalton main beef with Alger’s fantasy is that it continues to build upon a racial class system by surpassing the profile of race and the social understanding of race in our country. Now to understand Dalton’s argument you have to understand the role of race in the past 10 years to understand how the United States is socially to truly understand the argument presented by Dalton to see his point. As Dalton states, “the Alger myth encourages people to blink at the many barriers to racial equality (historical, structural, and institutional) that litter the social landscape” (Horatio Alger). The United States runs a system in a way that economic mobility is no longer what it used to be to paraphrase Dalton. Overall Dalton’s tone though out his essay helps the reader click into what he is saying and understand his essay, as long as you understand race in America and what both authors mean when they refer to merit. The frustrated tone Harlon Dalton uses builds up to his climax points about the Alger fantasy and furthermore adds empathize when needs be as the reader interprets the text.
Work Cited