

Department of History

HISTORY ESSAY STYLE GUIDE

MAY 2023

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Part 1: Writing History Essays

For the main text of your essay, use double spacing (not 1.5 or triple); however, the following items should be single spaced: block quotations (three or more lines of indented, quoted text), footnotes, and individual items within the bibliography. Indicate the start of a new paragraph by indenting from the left-hand margin. Do not add any extra lines between paragraphs, unless you need to alert the reader to a clear division or change of theme. An essay of 23,000 words should normally have no more than three or four such breaks (if it has any at all). If you want to use sub-headings, be sure to check with your instructor; some prefer that you avoid them.

Page and note numbering: Always number the pages beginning with the first page of the body of your essay (do not include the title page). Page numbers may be placed at the top or bottom of the page. Notes must be numbered consecutively throughout the essay; footnotes should not restart from 1 on each page.

Order of notes, appendices and bibliography If you use

- Use correct writing style for academic papers. Students often fall into trap here; on the one hand, it is important not to use clichés, slang terms, or contractions, as formal writing is not the same as everyday conversation. On the other hand, you should avoid academic jargon or the esoteric style you may read in published works. Express your ideas in as clear and concise a manner as possible.
- Be consistent in your use of verb tenses throughout your assignment. When writing about historic events, use the past tense; when bringing in scholarly arguments, use the present tense.
- Be where off spiel Czech; it is a falls fiend and wont ketch awl miss steaks. Always proofread your essay carefully; you might have a friend proofread it as well. Try reading your essay aloud, as well: this will alert you to repetiti-

- Some professors consider it generally advisable not to use the first person in your essay. You may want to check on this point with your instructor.
- Be direct, clear and strong in the enunciation of your argument. Avoid frequent use of phrases like “seemingly”, “could be seen to be”, etc.
- Include your name on your title page! Don't misspell the instructor's name (or your own).

Submitting your

Part 2: Evaluating Sources

Depending on the nature of your assignment you may be asked to use a variety of different sources. Finding and carefully evaluating these sources is one of the key tasks involved in writing any history research essay.

UVic's library website contains many pages designed to help you understand and evaluate sources. Go to the green "Research Help" link on the main library page. At "Research tips central" you will find "Primary vs. secondary sources" and "Scholarly vs. popular sources", among others. See

A. What is a primary source?

A primary source is a document or other artefact which (a) was created at the time of an event, (b) is authored by a person who directly experienced an event, or (c) is itself a primary object of your analysis, such as Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Primary sources may be first hand texts, such as diaries, books or letters; they may be government or other official documents, such as minutes of meetings or census data; and they may be objects, such as photographs, paintings, clothing, or buildings. Interviews and memoirs of people who lived through an event are also primary sources. Like witnesses at a trial, primary sources can be truthful or duplicitous, accurate or mistaken on various points.

Keep in mind that the nature of a primary source depends on the project. For example, you may be asked to write an essay on a topic which is historiographical (studying the history of the historical discipline). In that case, the works of a variety of historians writing in the 1970s might be your primary sources because you will be evaluating them for the way the authors approach the chosen research topic.

Please see part 4, section C for information on citing primary sources.

B. What is a secondary source?

Secondary sources are accounts or analyses written after the event or time period under study, by authors – often historians – who were not involved in the event. In secondary sources, historians use primary sources and the works of other authors to provide an account of or build an argument about a particular event or process. Scholarly journal articles, academic books and textbooks are three major forms of secondary sources.

NB: Normally textbooks are not valid sources for research essays. Check with your instructor about whether encyclopedia entries are acceptable, including Wikipedia.

C. Evaluating online sources

For research essays, we must be careful about what we find online. Some traditional secondary sources – scholarly books and journal articles can now be found in online format, using a library search engine. These sources remain scholarly (rather than popular) despite the way that we access them. And increasingly, scholars and institutions are publishing primary source material online, making it available to students and others.

For example, the *Jesuit Relations*

B. What is meant by “plagiarism”

According to the University of Victoria Calendar plagiarism is “a form of cheating by means of the unacknowledged, literal reproduction of ideas and material of other persons in the guise of new and original work. You must familiarize yourself with the various descriptions of academic misconduct described in the Calendar. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense that will result in a grade of 0 for the assignment and, possibly, for the course. After two cases of confirmed plagiarism, a permanent notation is added to your record.

Plagiarism includes blatant acts of dishonesty, such as copying a text out word-for-word, purchasing a ready-made essay online, or using ChatGP or other AI text generator. However, most plagiarism cases result from inadequate or falsified citation information. When taking notes on your sources, mark with quotation marks material that you copy verbatim and note the page number. Even if you paraphrase in your notes, you should still note the page numbers. The book may not be available when you write the essay; get it right the first time.

By way of illustration, consider the following passage taken from Peter Waites' *The Life and Times of Confederation*:

“In British North America the problems were material as well as political, and the materialism of the raw North American environment had plenty of force. The Grand Trunk Railway was an instructive example of the effects, good and bad, of this vital communication between material wants and their realization through politics. But politics had its own *élan vital*, expressed in the powerful, tenacious loyalties and prejudices that disposed parties and inspired men. Had the argument for British North American union been only a material one, there would probably have been no union at all. Confederation defied not a few material and geographic considerations; its creation was a political achievement. In that sense it was thoroughly characteristic of its age.”

You might make use of this text, either by quoting directly or by paraphrasing, in the following ways:

"Confederation defied not a few material and geographic considerations!"

British North American politicians had "tenacious loyalties."¹²

However, an essay which reads as follows, with no citation, would be

D. Basics on formatting foot-/endnotes

For the formatting of notes – and new 0 f

Do be careful in using Ibid., however, as footnotes can

surnames and should not be numbered or have bullet points.

Bibliographical entries are formatted differently than notes. See Part 4 for detailed examples. Three key points: (a) in notes the author's given name precedes the surname, whereas bibliographies place surnames first; (b) the elements of the entry are generally separated by commas or parentheses in notes, but by periods in the bibliography; (c) notes must give the specific page number(s) of each passage quoted or paraphrased. The bibliography provides only the beginning and end pages of articles and chapters in edited volumes.

For most undergraduate term essays subdivision of the bibliography is unnecessary; a list arranged in alphabetical order by the surname of the author will suffice. If the essay uses both primary and secondary sources (see 8-9), then they should be listed in separate sections. For Honours theses or other essays using a variety of sources, consult your instructor or supervisor.

Part 4:

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

It will also help if you observe and learn the basic structure of note and bibliography entries. Often, you can construct a consistent style for an unusual source by making analogies with the examples below. Remember always to look for the author, title, and publication information. The place of publication must indicate the city, not the country (unless the state, province or country is required for clarity). The titles of books, journals and films are *italicized*. The titles of component parts of a source (such as journal articles or edited book chapters) and of unpublished works such as theses are not italicized but are set off by quotation marks."

Remember, too, that some sources you encounter will incorporate more than one of the categories described below. In such cases (1) pay attention to the requirements of each category and (2) try to remain consistent. As an example, if the following source – the Clark and Kaiser volume shown on p.20 – were also a 2nd edition (p.18) and had a translator (p.19), the resulting note would look like:

Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser, eds.,

from another location, such as the library catalogue put the information in square brackets, e.g. [John Doe] *How to Be Anonymous Without Really Trying* ([New York]: Lost Press, 1984).

The following examples cover most of the types of sources you are likely to encounter in writing a history essay; for other types please consult the full CMS online. As the format varies slightly between bibliography (B) and long form for notes (N), these have been presented together. The shortened form for notes (SN), to be used for subsequent references, is already covered in the previous section.

r o

N: John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Present*, 3rd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 125.

NB: If a book is part of a series including the series title is optional.

Two or three authors.

Note that in the bibliography format, only the first author's name is reversed.

B: Randall, Stephen J. and John Herd Thompson *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1994.

N: Stephen J. Randall and John Herd Thompson *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies* (Athens, GA: University of

SN: Ludden, "Subalterns and Others," 221.

Preface, foreword, introduction or similar parts of a book by a different author

B: Heiden, Konrad. Introduction to *Mein Kampf*, by Adolf Hitler. Translated by Ralph Manheim. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971.

N: Konrad Heiden, introduction to *Mein Kampf*, by Adolf Hitler, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), xix.

SN: Konrad Heiden, introduction to *Mein Kampf*, xv.

NB: if the author is the same for the whole book, simply add "Introduction to" (as above) before the title. If the contribution has its own nongeneric title, enclose it in quotation marks before the generic title:

N: John Spagnolo, "Albert Hourani: An Appreciation," introduction to *Problems of the Modern Middle East in Historical Perspective: Essays in Honour of Albert Hourani*, ed. John Spagnolo (Reading, UK: Ithaca Press, 1992), 3.

Books published electronically

B: Blanning, T.C.W. *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660-1789*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

b. Journal articles

Journal articles, consulted in print format

- B: Gaddis, John Lewis. "Intelligence, Espionage and Cold War Origins." *Diplomatic History* 13, no. 2 (April 1989): 191-212.
- N: John Lewis Gaddis, "Intelligence, Espionage and Cold War Origins," *Diplomatic History* 13, no. 2 (April 1989): 194.
- SN: Gaddis, "Intelligence, Espionage and Cold War Origins," 195.

Journal articles, consulted in online format

NB:

- x the URL that is required here is the permalink to the article. Be careful not to copy the URL from your library database session or from your article search; these tend to be cumbersome and will not lead your reader back to the article in question. If you cannot locate a relatively short permalink, indicate simply the online journal collection, eg., (stor).
 - x No access or date is required for most history essays
 - x If the version accessed is HTML and does not give page numbers, it is acceptable not to indicate any, but always indicate them when they are available.
- B: McCaa, Robert. "Spanish and Nahuatl Views on Smallpox and Demographic Catastrophe in Mexico." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 25, no. 3 (Winter 1995): 397-431, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/205693>.
- N: Robert McCaa, "Spanish and Nahuatl Views on Smallpox and Demographic Catastrophe in Mexico," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 25, no. 3 (Winter 1995): 411, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/205693>.
- SN: McCaa, "Spanish and Nahuatl Views on Smallpox," 412.

N: William S. Niederkorn, "A Scholar Recants on His 'Shakespeare' Discovery," *New York Times*, June 20, 2002, Arts section, Midwest edition, E4.

SN: Niederkorn, "A Scholar Recants on His 'Shakespeare' Discovery," E4.

Popular magazine articles

B: "Welcome to China, Mr. Clinton." *The Economist* 347, no. 8074 (June 27, 1998): 17-18.

N: "Welcome to China, Mr. Clinton," *The Economist* 347, no. 8074 (June 27, 1998), 17.

SN: "Welcome to China, Mr. Clinton."

d. Theses or dissertations

NB: for other degrees simply replace 'MA thesis' in the examples below with the appropriate phrase ('PhD diss', 'DPhil thesis' etc.)

B: Hustwick, Christophe. "The Amateur Solicitor in Eighteenth Century England: John Cannon of West Lydford and Glastonbury, 1684-743." MA thesis, University of Victoria, 1998.

N: Christophe. Hustwick, "The Amateur Solicitor in Eighteenth Century England: John Cannon of West Lydford and Glastonbury, 1684-743," (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 1998), 17.

SN: Hustwick, "The Amateur Solicitor," 4.

e. Films

B: *Hotel Rwanda*. DVD. Directed by Terry George. Fox Video, 2005.

N: *Hotel Rwanda*, DVD, directed by Terry George (Fox Video, 2005).

SN: *Hotel Rwanda*, DVD.

B = for bibliography; N = for notes; SN = shortened note format

NB: If you want to cite a particular scene (individually accessible on DVDs), treat it like a chapter title (in quotation marks) and place it before the film title.

f. Online sources

Please note that books published electronically and journal articles consulted online are not considered “online sources”, but rather, online formats of print sources. Please see sections B (a) and B (b) above for these two types of sources.

Remember too, that not all online sources are considered appropriate for history essays. See page 10, above, for evaluating online sources.

Websites of (or) JMCIDC/TDEM/VA/((10021)04 0.5 s) 5]-he # (dl) III

B = for bibliography; N = for notes; SN =

of EditedBook (for print format) and Website (for online format). The following examples demonstrate a few possible situations, giving the note format only:

Published primary source – print format

- N: T.A. Stone to L.B. Pearson, 13 August 1948, in Hector Mackenzie, ed., *Documents on Canadian External Relations, 1948* (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 1994), 572.
- N: Catherine II, "Decree on Deportation of Serfs to Hard Labor, January 17, 1765," in Basil Dmytryshyn, ed., *Imperial Russia: A Sourcebook, 1700-1917* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), 118.

Published primary source – online format

- N: Anonymous, "A White Heiress Elopes With a Negro," *Valley Spirit* (19 January 1859), Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War. <http://valley.lib.virginia.edu/news/vs1859/pa.fr.vs.1859.01.19.xml#01>

Canada House of Commons *Debates*, 23 September 1997, 3.

N.B. If you are going to be citing this more than once in your essay, you may shorten it:

House of Commons *Debates* (hereafter HCD), 27 July 1953,

British Columbia Archives (hereafter BCA), British Columbia Attorney-General, GR 419, File 1869/20, Information sworn by John Norton before J. Morely, J.P., 2 April 1869.

BCA, Powell Collection, A/E/P87.9, Testimonial letter from Dr. Covernton, 17 December 1861.

University of British Columbia Special Collections (hereafter UBC-SC), J.H. Todd and Sons Business Records Box 2, Annual Report of the Empire Cannery, 1908.

BCA, Vertical Files, Emily Carr, "Carr House Full of Memories," unidentified newspaper clipping.

National Archives of Canada (hereafter NAC), Remeza Family Collection, MG18 H54, vol. 4, p. 1708, Mflm-05684, Commission as commander of troops, 28 May 1699.

N.B. When citing microfilm copies of originals in another archive, use the following format:

National Archives of the United Kingdom, Colonial Office Records CO 305/147740p. 325, BCA, Mflm B-1307, James Douglas to Colonial Secretary, 13 May 1854.

d. Interviews

Ideally, reference to an interview should contain: the names of both the person interviewed and the interviewer; brief identifying information; the place and date of the interview, if known; and, if a transcript or tape is available, its location.

Andrew Macmillan (principal adviser, Investment Center Division, FAO), in discussion with the author, September 1998.

Benjamin Spock, interview by Milton J. E. Senn, November 20, 1974, interview 67A, transcript, Senn Oral History Collection, National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, MD.

Edith Ross, interview by Jordar Stanger Ross, October 13, 2004, Toronto.

NB: Citing material from interviews you have done may require special permission from the Human Research Ethics Board. Check with your instructor on this.

e. Visual and material artefacts

NB: In each case, examples are given both for artefacts viewed

Museum displays and individual material artefacts

Include: Originator's name if known, item display title in quotation marks, location, date, and source of reproduction if relevant.

- N: "Woman's nightdress," c. 1780, Personal collection of Jennifer Miller, Victoria, British Columbia.
- N: Martin Behaim, "Terrestrial globe, Nuremberg, Germany," 1492, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg,

SampleTitle Page(2)

Title of the Essay:
Subtitle if desired

Your name
Your student number
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