

University of British Columbia
HISTORY 220
History of Europe
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FIRST TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT

In this assignment, you are asked to select one diary, autobiography, memoir or collection of letters written between 1500 and 1789 and to use this source to arrive at your own conclusions about social relations and the exercise of power in early modern Europe. Remember that “power” can be understood in the broadest possible terms: it could be the power of political leaders over their subordinates, of masters over servants, employers over employees, husbands over wives, parents over children, clergymen over their parishioners and so on. Generally the primary source you have read will reveal a variety of different power relationships.

Page 2 of this handout gives some guidance about how to structure your paper and how to use the material effectively.

Pages 3-5 of this handout provide descriptions of some published primary sources which are available in the UBC Library or in some cases easily available online. You can use any one of these. Or you can use a different diary, autobiography, collection of letters or comparable source from the same era, subject to the instructor’s approval. If your source was originally written in a language other than English and you can read that language, you may certainly use that version.

Page 6 of the handout provides some guidance about style and references.

Do not select a primary source by somebody whose life is covered by one of the assigned readings in this course (e.g. Albrecht Dürer) unless you have discussed this with your instructor in advance.

A topic statement is due in class on **October 25/26**. This statement should:

- (a) state which source you will use;
- (b) indicate which version, edition or volume(s) of that source you will use;
- (c) include a very brief statement, based on your preliminary reading of the source, about some of the power relationships that appear to be revealed in this source

Your tutorial instructor may give you further instructions about the format of this statement.

The paper itself is due in class on **Tuesday, November 20**. Except in the case of a demonstrable medical or family emergency, there will be a late penalty of 1 per cent per day.

The paper should be about 2,000 words in length. The paper should be word-processed with the main text double-spaced. Make sure to **number your pages**.

Guidelines for Writing This Paper

Pick your source carefully! Before you decide on a source, read enough of it to be sure you can use it effectively to deal with this topic.

In some cases, you would read the entire source. In other cases, the entire source might be too long to realistically analyze. You might select an appropriate portion to work on. Normally this portion would be *at least* 150-200 pages, but the exact amount might depend on the character of the source.

Your paper should do the following:

- Identify the author and describe the source
- If you are not using the entire source, be specific about what portions you have studied as a basis for your findings
- Discuss what information the source provides about the author's life and the society in which he or she lived
- Provide an overview of the power relationships evident in the source, answering such questions as:
 - Between whom?
 - What underpins the various forms of power shown in the source? (social status? money? patriarchy? etc.)
 - With what frequency do the various forms of power appear in the source?
 - How is power exercised in all its guises?
- If you focus on only one form of power, make sure to explain why.

The main purpose of your paper is to show what *you* have learned from reading the original words of the diary, autobiography or letters you have chosen. Sometimes you will find that the modern editor or translator has provided an introduction, running commentary or notes with useful background information about the source. Of course you should read this material, because it may give you some useful *information*. But do not let yourself be too influenced by the editor's *interpretation*. In many cases what is written by modern editors is highly opinionated. Trust your own ability to interpret the source for yourself.

In some cases there may also be a published article or even a whole book about your diarist, memoirist or letter-writer. You may read this if you wish, but you are not required or expected to do so. Remember that the main objective of this assignment is to formulate *your own conclusions* about power relationships based on your reading of the actual texts.

Of course if you *do* use any information, insights or ideas presented by a modern editor or by any other author, you must follow the universal rule of giving credit where credit is due! *Provide precise references that show the exact source of any ideas or observations that are not your own.*

Suggested Sources

The Diary of Samuel Pepys

Samuel Pepys (pronounced “Peeps,” 1633-1703) was an English government official who lived and worked in London. From 1660 to 1669 he kept an exceptionally detailed daily journal of his public and private activities. Originally written in Pepys’ secret shorthand, the diary was decoded in the early nineteenth century. By now the complete text of the diary has been published in numerous different editions.

Pepys’ diary is a valuable source of information about numerous aspects of life in seventeenth-century London. (Just about the only subject it does *not* cast much light on is relations between parents and children. Pepys and his wife had a number of young servants but no children of their own). If you use this source, you should select a portion of a *full-length* edition of the diary covering a period *of about one year*. The most complete and accurate version of Pepys’ diary is the full eleven-volume set edited by Robert Latham and William Matthews. The second-best edition is the one edited by Henry B. Wheatley, available in numerous versions. *Do not use any of the one-volume condensations of the diary* as these versions leave out too many informative details.

The complete text is also available online at <http://www.pepysdiary.com>. Like the printed versions, this version has some useful informational footnotes by the editors, but ignore the blog-type annotations by readers as they are of little value.

A short handout is available from the instructor to give you some background information about Pepys’ life as a whole.

Benvenuto Cellini

Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1571) was a celebrated artist of the Italian Renaissance. He wrote a very long autobiography which described not only his artistic activity but also his various personal escapades and conflicts with wealthy patrons and rival artists. There are many editions of this famous work. The text of the autobiography is also available online at the following website: <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext03/7c1ln10h.htm>

Elisabeth Charlotte, Duchess of Orleans

Elisabeth Charlotte (also known as Liselotte) (1652-1722) was a princess of the Palatinate in Germany who was required to marry the brother of King Louis XIV of France and spend the rest of her life at the Palace of Versailles. She wrote colorful letters to her relatives back at home in which she described her far from happy life at the court of the “Sun King.” There is a good selection of these letters edited by Elborg Forster.

Madame de Sévigné

Madame de Sévigné (1626-1696) was a noblewoman who lived in Paris during the age of Louis XIV. She wrote a large number of letters to her daughter, who lived in southern France. These letters are available in numerous modern translations, such as the *Selected Letters* edited by Leonard Tancock. You should use this or any other edition which is sufficiently long to give you enough material to write about. If you wish you may use an edition in the original French. An edition of the letters is also available online at <http://archive.org/details/selectionsfromra00raberich>

Alice Thornton

Alice Thornton (1627-1707) was a well-to-do woman in northern England. Her autobiography describes her early years, her marriage, her many pregnancies, her children's illnesses and other aspects of her life. The memoir also provides much information about her religious values. The text of this memoir was published in England in 1875 as *The Autobiography of Mrs. Alice Thornton*. UBC has a copy of this book on microfilm. In addition, the entire book is available in various formats at the following site: <http://www.archive.org/details/autobiographyofm00thorrich>

John Evelyn

John Evelyn (1620-1706) was a well-travelled and well-connected Englishman of the seventeenth century who kept a diary for most of his adult life. Evelyn was mostly interested in public affairs, but his diary also describes what he saw on his travels and gives information about his friends, his family and the lifestyle of the social elite. The text of this diary is available online at: <http://archive.org/details/diaryofjohnevelly01eveliala>

Anne, Lady Halkett or Ann, Lady Fanshawe

Anne, Lady Halkett (1623-1699) and Ann, Lady Fanshawe (1625-1680) were women of high social status in seventeenth-century England. Both of them experienced adventurous lives that were impacted by the tumultuous events of the English Civil War. Both women wrote short autobiographies that have been published together in a single volume edited by John Loftis. You could use either memoir as your source.

The Knyvett Letters

These letters were sent by Thomas Knyvett to his wife Katherine between the years 1620 and 1644. The Knyvetts were a wealthy gentry family in the English county of Norfolk. Most of the letters concern the complicated legal disputes in which the family was involved as well as political issues related to the English Civil War which broke out in the early 1640s. The letters were edited and published by Bertram Schofield in 1949.

Lady Anne Clifford

Lady Anne Clifford (1590-1676), a wealthy and independent-minded member of the English aristocracy, wrote diaries at various points during her life. The diaries have been published more than once, but the older versions are hard to use. Use the edition edited by D.J.H. Clifford in 1991.

Edmund Harrold

Edmund Harrold (1678-1721) was a wigmaker in the English town of Manchester. The detailed diary which he kept during the period 1712-1715 gives insights into his work, his family life, his personal anxieties, his marital relations, his drinking habits and his religious ideas. There is a recent edition edited by Craig Horner.

Dudley Ryder

Dudley Ryder (1691-1756) kept a detailed diary of his daily life in 1715 and 1716 when he was a law student in London. The diary records his everyday activities, his personal ambitions, his feelings about his friends and relatives, his ideas about the women to whom he was attracted, and his anxieties about the impression he was making on people. Altogether the diary gives an unusually frank description of a young man's life. An edition of the diary was published by William Matthews in 1939.

The Platter Brothers

Felix Platter (1536-1614) and his half-brother Thomas Platter (1574-1628), who were the sons of Thomas Platter senior, were from Basel in Switzerland. Both of them went to Montpellier in southern France to study medicine and both of them kept journals of their lives during their student days. The journals have been edited by S. Jennett and published under the titles *Beloved Son Felix* and *Journal of a Younger Brother*. You could use either one.

Structure and Style

Most well-written history papers have an introduction, a body and a conclusion. The *introduction* explains why the topic of the paper is of interest and then either indicates what questions the paper will examine or formulates the paper's thesis. The *body* of the paper presents the evidence in an orderly and systematic fashion. The *conclusion* summarizes the findings of the paper and may also include some generalizations about the broader significance of these findings.

Correctness of grammar, spelling and punctuation as well as overall clarity of expression are essential ingredients of all historical writing. Grammar, spelling and style will therefore count significantly in the instructor's evaluation of your paper. Be especially careful to avoid misplaced modifiers, sentence fragments and non-parallel structure. Make sure to *proofread* your paper!

References

Your paper must provide correct **references** for any quotations, paraphrases or specific incidents, examples or information derived from the source you are using or any other materials you have consulted. If you are using an online version of the source in which specific page numbers are not visible, then cite by chapter, section, or date of entry as appropriate.

Your paper must also have a correct **bibliographical reference** showing exactly which edition of your source you have used (and, if it is a multi-volume edition, which volume you used). If you have consulted any additional books or articles, make sure to give the full bibliographical reference(s) for that material as well.

For full information about the correct use of footnotes and bibliographical references, consult the **Footnote Guide** on the instructor's course website.

For quick reference, here are some examples of the correct form for **bibliographical references**:

Harrold, Edmund. *The Diary of Edmund Harrold, Wigmaker of Manchester, 1712-15*, trans. by Craig Horner (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008).

Ryder, Dudley. *The Diary of Dudley Ryder, 1715-1716*, ed. by William Matthews (London: Methuen, 1939).

Elisabeth Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orleans. *A Woman's Life at the Court of the Sun King: Letters of Liselotte of the Pfalz, 1652-1722: Elisabeth Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orleans*, trans. by Elborg Forster (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984).