

HISTORY 436
(European Social History)
2009-2010

Prof. C.R. Friedrichs

FIRST TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT

In this assignment, you are asked to select one diary, autobiography, memoir or collection of letters written between 1500 and 1750 and to use this source to arrive at your own conclusions about some aspect of social life in early modern Europe. You should write a paper showing what the primary source you have chosen reveals or suggests about how people experienced, felt about or dealt with some dimension of human experience in early modern times. Some suggested topics are as follows:

Married life	Work	Education
Marriage formation	Leisure	Friendship
Family relationships	Travel	Servants
Childhood or child-rearing	Illness and health	Religion
Adolescence	Dying and death	Sexuality

On the following pages you will find descriptions of some published primary sources which are available in the UBC Library. You can use any one of these. Or you 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.

A topic statement is due in class on **Monday, October 26**. This statement should indicate

- (a) which source you will use,
- (b) which edition or volume(s) of that source you will use, and
- (c) what aspect(s) of early modern life you plan to focus on in your paper.

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

The paper itself is due in class on **Monday, November 23**. Except in the case of documented medical emergencies or the equivalent, there will be a late penalty of 1 per cent per day.

The paper should be about 2,000 words in length (roughly 8-10 double-spaced pages). The paper should be word-processed with the main text double-spaced. Make sure to **number your pages**.

Until the paper has been graded and returned, save the text on your computer and/or keep an extra printout or photocopy of the paper.

For advice about writing this paper successfully and for guidelines about style and references, see pages 5 and 6 of this handout.

Suggested Sources

Albrecht Dürer

Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528) was the most prominent German artist of his day. Dürer's *Diary of His Journey to the Netherlands, 1520-1521* reports on the trip that he and his wife undertook to Flanders and Brabant. The diary gives information about Dürer's artistic activity during this trip, about his meetings with patrons and admirers, and about the practical problems and expenses of travelling.

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 Platter Brothers

Felix Platter (1536-1614) and his half-brother Thomas Platter (c.[Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.](#) 1574-1628) were both 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 as your source, but Felix's journal, though shorter, is richer in personal information.

Lady Margaret Hoby

Lady Margaret Hoby (1571-1633) was a prosperous married woman in northern England. She kept a daily diary covering the years 1599 to 1605 in which she recorded her religious observances as well as the activities involved in running her large household. She also recorded the details of her occasional trips to London. The text of the diary was edited by Joanna Moody and published in 1998.

The Oxinden Family

The Oxinden family belonged to the landed gentry in the English county of Kent. The letters they wrote during the years 1607 to 1642 (published in 1933) describe their role as prominent members of their community as well as their personal, educational and economic activities.

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. But a careful reading of the letters can also reveal much about the relationship between Thomas Knyvett and his wife. 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, maintained 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.

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 child-rearing. Pepys and his wife had a number of young servants but no children of their own). If you use this source, you should select one volume from any *full-length* edition of the diary and read a portion 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. A short handout is available from the instructor to give you some background information about Pepys’ life as a whole.

Anna Maria van Schurman

Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678) was widely regarded as the best-educated woman in Europe of her day. Her collected letters (available in a volume edited by Joyce L. Irwin) describe aspects of her life and give her opinions about the education of women and other issues. A very careful reading of this source may reveal some interesting aspects of an educated woman’s social life.

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.

Glückel of Hameln

Glückel of Hameln (1646-1724) was a Jewish businesswoman, wife, and mother of twelve children in northern Germany. She travelled extensively throughout central Europe in order to conduct her business affairs and to arrange for the marriages of her children. Glückel of Hameln wrote a highly informative autobiography in which she described many aspects of her everyday life, her travels, her relations with other people and her religious outlook. This autobiography is an exceptionally lively and readable source of information about the experience of a minority group in seventeenth-century Europe. It is available in two different English translations, both of which are in the UBC Library. The version of the *Memoirs of Glückel of Hameln* edited by Marvin Lowenthal is also for sale in paperback.

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 topics. 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>

Ralph Josselin

Ralph Josselin (1616-1683) was the minister in a small village in the English county of Essex. Throughout his adult years maintained a detailed journal about his own life and that of his community, which is available under the title *The Diary of Ralph Josselin, 1616-1683*.

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.

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.

Lady Anne Conway

Lady Anne Conway (1631-1684) was a prominent intellectual in seventeenth-century England. Her letters to and from various male friends and relatives not only cover the philosophical interests they shared but also deal with numerous aspects of everyday life, such as issues of health and illness. There are two almost identical editions of these letters, one from 1930 and one from 1992.

Andrew Hay of Cragneithan

Andrew Hay was a country gentleman in seventeenth-century Scotland. During the period 1659-1660 he maintained a detailed diary of his daily life. This diary was edited by Alexander George Reid and published in 1901; it is volume 39 in the first series of *Scottish History Society Publications* (Koerner Library, DA750.S25).

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.

Important Advice About 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 a particular aspect of social life.

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* 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.

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 a precise **bibliographical reference** showing exactly which edition of your source you have used (and, if it is a multi-volume edition, which volume you used). Be careful to provide **page references** for all quotations and paraphrases and for any specific incidents or examples mentioned in your paper.

Because this assignment calls for a paper that is based mostly or entirely on a single source, instead of providing full footnote references for every quotation from the text you can provide these references simply by giving the page number (and, in the case of diaries or letters, the date of the entry) in *parentheses within the text*. If you use any insights or observations from the editor's introduction or commentary, make sure to indicate this clearly in your references. And if you choose to make use of any insights or observations from a secondary source, you must of course provide the necessary references to that secondary source in **footnotes** or an **endnotes**.

Examples of Correct Forms for References in a Source Analysis Paper

Laura Cereta, *Collected Letters of a Renaissance Feminist*, trans. by Diana Robin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

.....In a letter to her mother, Laura Cereta mentions that she observed how some peasants "pressed milk from the swollen udders of sheep" (p. 35, September 5, 1485). Although the editor of this volume says that this remark was included merely to evoke a "utopian" mood (editor's note, p. 34), in fact this passage also provides some valuable information about nutritional practices in Renaissance Italy. Jane Doe's classic study of sheep farming states that sheep were only important as a source of wool,¹ but Cereta's observation proves that sheep were also used for their milk.....

¹ Jane Doe, *Gathering Wool: Sheep Farming Through the Ages* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), p. 72