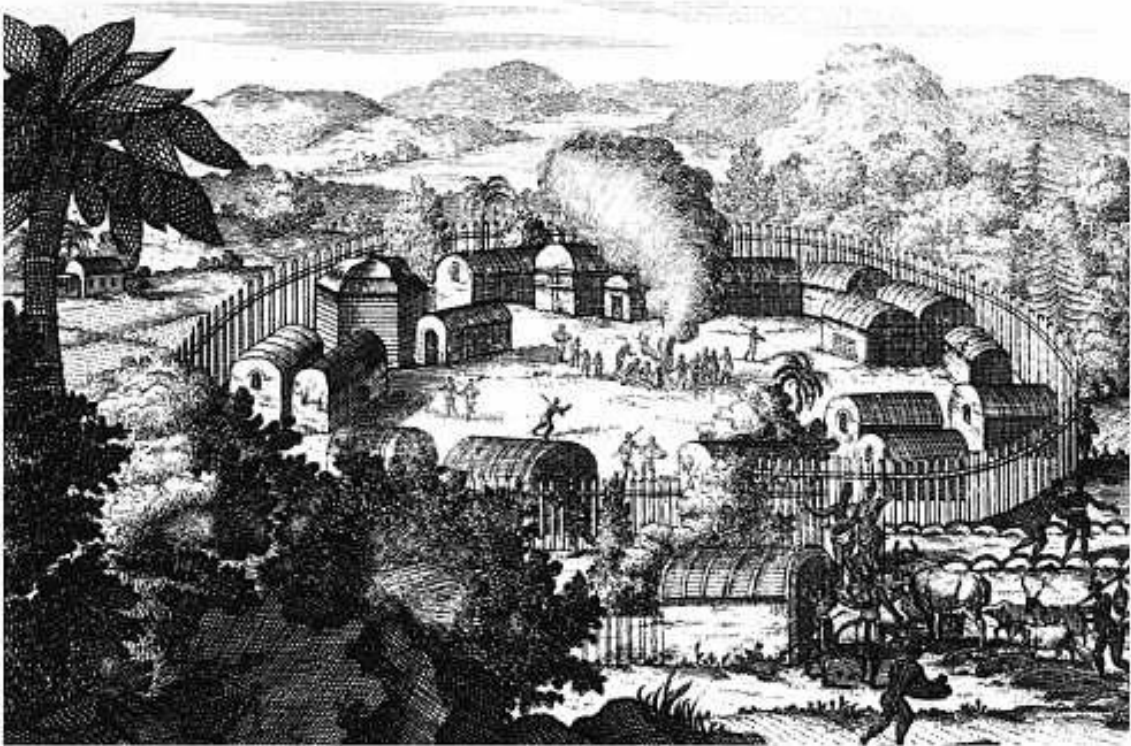


DOING HISTORY AT DALHOUSIE



(a less-than-definitive but necessary guide)

Dalhousie University

History Department Style Guide

FUNDAMENTALS: PLANNING AND TIME MANAGEMENT

As a university student, you will inevitably experience one or two weeks of each term when it seems that everything is due at once. These weeks are intimidating, and can be even more trying if you have never written an essay before, or are out of practice. But you can prevent such anxiety by planning ahead. Remember to give yourself sufficient time to do enough research and write the essay without resorting to an all-nighter just before the paper is due. All-nighters may seem like something fun that all university students do, but they ultimately compromise the quality of your work.

Make sure you understand the assignment you have been given. This might help eliminate some of the panic that can set in at essay time. What is the assignment asking you to do? Generally, professors aren't expecting a PhD thesis, but are seeking proof that you can do the research necessary for a scholarly paper, and present a simple argument about your topic based on that research. They are often trying to get students to identify what other scholars have said about an issue or topic in their discipline, to think independently and evaluate the issues at hand, and to then express the result clearly in an organized fashion. In addition, they are seeking a paper that reflects the themes of the course and that is presented clearly with proper attention to grammar, spelling, and sentence structure.

Don't wait until a week or two before the paper is due to head off in search of sources. A host of students, all with papers due at the same time, means that resources in the library get snatched up quickly. The most important thing to remember is to plan ahead and allow yourself enough time to work on the essay, without worrying about the other papers you have due. You have a syllabus for each course, so use them to plan a work schedule for the term.

So, with all this in mind, let's get down to business. There are two essential components to producing an essay: research and writing. What follows is a brief overview of both processes, designed to get you started or help you along the way.

RESEARCH

If you are trying to decide on a topic, or have already decided and want to begin your research, the best place to start is with the SUBJECT GUIDE for history located on the Dal Libraries website. To find the SUBJECT GUIDE, go to the library home page (<http://libraries.dal.ca> or click on "Libraries" on the Dal homepage), then click on the "Subject Guides" tab. You will find history under "Arts & Humanities". Click on "History."

After selecting history, you'll arrive at the history SUBJECT GUIDE's homepage. Here you will find some quick links to search engines for books (such as Novanet and WorldCat) and some of the main electronic repositories for scholarly articles (such as JSTOR and Historical Abstracts). On this page you will also find help with writing and citation, as well as information on using the library catalogue and how to order books that Dalhousie or other Novanet libraries do not own (this service is called Document Delivery).

Selecting a Paper Topic

If you have yet to choose a topic for your essay, select the KEY REFERENCE TOOLS tab in the history SUBJECT GUIDE. A drop-down menu will appear when you place your cursor over this tab. The drop-down menu is divided into geographic regions. Select the region that is most appropriate to your subject. Once you've made your choice, you will see the relevant material available to you either in print in the Killam reference section, or online. Remember, material found in KEY REFERENCE TOOLS is designed to provide general information about a subject, and is not considered fit material to use for your essay. It can, however, be very useful reading when trying to narrow down a topic or issue to explore in more depth.

Delving Deeper: Finding Primary and Secondary Sources

Once you have selected a topic, you can use the KEY DATABASES and PRIMARY SOURCES tabs to find relevant and appropriate sources for your essay. Clicking on KEY DATABASES provides you access to the major databases for locating historical articles. These include, but are not limited to: American History and Life, the main database for North American history; Historical Abstracts, to access articles for subjects outside of North America; JSTOR, EBSCO, ProQuest and other electronic journal repositories. You will also find more subject-specific databases, like the Bibliography of British and Irish History or Index Islamicus. Of course, don't forget about the Novanet Catalogue to find books held by Dalhousie or at other libraries in the Novanet system, and to find journal articles whose titles and publication information you already know. Books held at these other libraries can be brought in via Novanet Express for no charge.

Click on the PRIMARY SOURCES tab to locate material pertinent to your topic, written during the period that you are studying. Once again, placing your cursor over this tab will generate a drop-down menu divided by geographical regions. Select your region and you will find an array of sources available online, in print, or on microfilm/fiche.

The Other Source of Sources: Evaluating Websites

The World Wide Web can be a useful resource or a scourge for researchers. Students hit the web to do some quick research on any topic – but few take the time to evaluate the web sites they find before they incorporate the information into their essays. The result is that sometimes sixth-grade class web projects make their way into university-level scholarly papers. Before using a website for your essay, evaluate it. Ask yourself some or all of the following questions:

- Who is the intended audience the web site is trying to reach? Sixth grade students? Scholars? General public? You can evaluate this by looking at the content, tone and style of the page (Hint: If any of the text is moving or whirling in any way, give it a pass)
- Does the page look complete- or is it still a work in progress? Is there any date to indicate the last update of the website?
- Is it clear who is responsible for the page? Is the author or producer of the site clearly identified? (Hint: Websites produced by, or affiliated with universities can often be identified by .edu if they are American, or .ac.uk if they are British)
- What credentials or expertise can the author of the site claim on the subject? What are their qualifications?
- Is there an e-mail link, phone number or address provided to which you can direct questions or comments?
- Is the page protected by copyright? Who owns it?
- What topics are covered and to what depth are they explored?
- How reliable is the information?
- Is credit given to sources? Is there a bibliography attached to the information on the web page? Are links provided to supporting documents or web pages? Are facts, statistics, etc, clearly cited?
- Is the page unbiased? To what extent is it trying to sway your point of view?
- Is the page appealing and user-friendly?
- Who can access the site? Is there a fee for doing so?

Real People Can Help, Too

Library staff are there to help you and are an excellent resource. Reference librarians have helpful information on researching a topic in history. Roger Gillis is the library's subject specialist for history, and his contact information is prominently displayed on the history SUBJECT GUIDE's homepage. Of course, you may also contact your professor or TA for help, too. Just don't leave it until the last minute.

WRITING

If you are new to writing essays or out of practice, don't panic. The Writing Centre in the Killam Memorial Library provides non-credit writing classes as well as one-on-one tutoring for students, and offers an array of specialized services for students who have learned English as a second or foreign language.

Visit the Writing Centre at <http://writingcentre.dal.ca> for more information. Or you may visit them in person in the Ground Floor Learning Commons of the Killam Library, Room G40C. They can also be reached by phone at 494-1963 or email: WritingCentre@dal.ca.

Making Your Point: Have a Thesis

Your own personal thoughts and musings on a topic do not make a first-class scholarly paper. An essay should have an argument and must try to prove a point by using the evidence you present from your research. Essentially, an essay is a long answer to a question, or set of questions, that you have asked yourself about your topic. Your thesis, then, is the answer to such question(s), stated briefly in one or two sentences at the outset of your paper. It is then your job to elaborate on this answer, using the evidence you've gathered from your research to convince your reader that your conclusion is sound. Revisit your thesis in the concluding paragraph of your paper, and provide a brief summation of the evidence.

It's quite normal to have developed a thesis early in the research process, only to have it challenged by further research. Don't be afraid when this happens, but do ask yourself whether or not this new evidence changes what you initially thought about your topic. It is alright to adjust your conclusions as your research progresses; in fact, your paper is usually the richer for it.

For more information on how to write essays, you can consult the following resources:

<http://libraries.dal.ca> – Select the WRITING AND STYLE GUIDES tab from the libraries main page. The history SUBJECT GUIDE homepage also contains a section devoted to "Writing History Papers.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu> – "The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)" provides extensive information about the writing process. Click on "Non-Purdue Instructors and Students" on the left sidebar.

The Craft of Research – Wayne Booth

The History Student Writer's Manual – Mark Hellstern, Gregory Scott, Stephen Garrison

Writing History : A Guide for Students - William Kelleher Storey

Some Words on Words...

As you will no doubt have discovered from reading your course syllabi, style, grammar, spelling and proper punctuation all count towards your essay grade. This is not simply nit-picking or hoop-jumping on the part of your professors: language, particularly the written word, is the historian's primary tool and basic to the craft. Put simply, you might have the most brilliant ideas about the topic you've chosen, but if you cannot communicate those thoughts clearly, convincingly and intelligently, you might as well not have them at all.

So, the words you choose and how you use them to construct sentences and paragraphs are important. Equally important are the words other scholars have chosen, and how you incorporate them into your essay. It takes a great deal of hard work to write a scholarly book or article, and that is why an author's written words are considered their "intellectual property." An author's words and the ideas that they communicate, therefore, cannot be used by others without proper citation. You must give credit where credit is due.

We will come to proper citation shortly, but for now let's concentrate on how to incorporate others' words and ideas into your essay. You will have no doubt read a lot of material during the research phase, some of which you want to include in your essay as evidence to support your conclusions. This is done in two ways: by paraphrasing and by direct quotation. When you paraphrase, you take what an author wrote and put it into your own words – ENTIRELY into your own words. You cannot simply change a word here and there and think it fine – it's not. What follows is an example of an acceptable and an unacceptable paraphrase.

ORIGINAL TEXT:

"The late Tudor and early Stuart soldier has undergone a significant historical reappraisal over the course of the last three decades. Prior to the 1980s, scholars portrayed the early modern English soldiery as amateurish in the best of times and downright incompetent in the worst. The words 'decayed', 'dormant', 'inexperienced', 'inefficient' and 'isolated' were commonly used to describe him and the evidence supporting this gloomy portrait seemed, on the surface, to justify such criticisms. When a list of late Tudor and early Stuart military expeditions is drawn up, the failures clearly outweigh the successes – evidence that few historians could over look." (David Lawrence, "Reappraising the Elizabethan and Early Stuart Soldier: Recent Historiography on Early Modern English Military Culture," *History Compass* 9:1 (2011): 16.)

UNACCEPTABLE:

The late Tudor and early Stuart soldier has been reappraised over the last thirty years. Before the 1980s, historians thought the early modern English soldier was amateurish and incompetent. They often used words like 'decayed', 'dormant', or 'inexperienced' to describe the English soldier and there was plenty of evidence to support these critical terms. When we look at late Tudor and early Stuart expeditions, the failures clearly outweigh the successes.

ACCEPTABLE:

For a long time, historians held the early modern English soldier in poor regard. Historians thought him not very experienced or capable, and contemporary English military endeavours largely supported this conclusion. Over the past twenty years, however, many scholars have looked critically at this view of the English soldier.

Proper paraphrasing requires that you summarize an author's argument, and reiterate it succinctly in your own words. Think of it as summarizing for your reader what a particular author has to say. Paraphrasing also requires citation: you didn't know this about the English soldier until David Lawrence told you, so you must credit him properly for providing you with this information.

Oftentimes, an author's words will creep into our own because we have not taken enough care during the research phase. Convert an author's words into your own *when you are taking your notes*, and try to write the paper from your notes, not directly from your sources. If you must take down the author's words, ensure that you place them in quotation marks in your notes and jot down the page number. This way, when you sit down to write, you will remember that those are the authors' words, not yours.

It is acceptable, and often helpful, to use the author's name in the sentence in which you are going to discuss that author's ideas. Using the above example, one could say: "According to David Lawrence, for a long time historians held the early modern English soldier in poor regard." Remember, **YOU STILL NEED TO PROVIDE A CITATION**, even though you have mentioned the author's name. (Also: the first time you use an author's name in your paper, you must use both their first and last name. If you mention them again, you may just use their last name. Never use only an author's first name.)

Sometimes, an author will use a phrase or sentence that you feel is particularly artful, or sums up exactly what you want to convey in a way you don't want to change. If this is the case, you may put those words into your essay using a direct quotation. Here, you use the author's **EXACT** words and place them between quotation marks. This, of course, also requires proper citation.

As a general rule, it is better to quote directly from your primary sources rather than your secondary ones. Avoid overusing direct quotations. Your paper should be almost entirely your own words, with well-chosen direct quotations, derived mostly from primary sources, to help drive home your points.

CITATIONS

There are two kinds of citations that you **MUST** include in your essay: **footnotes or endnotes** and a **bibliography**. A footnote or endnote is made by placing a number directly following a passage, idea or quote from a source you are using in your paper. In a **footnote**, the number that appears in the text of your essay will also appear at the bottom of the page you are typing and will provide a space for you to enter the specifics about your quote or passage – where it came from, who wrote it, etc. An **endnote** works in the same way, except the corresponding reference information is placed at the end of the paper, on a separate page. Most word processing programs will perform footnote or endnote functions automatically for you.

The second type of citation, a **bibliography**, appears on a separate sheet at the end of the paper and is formatted differently. It lists the publication information of all the sources you have used to write the paper, including those you have consulted but not cited directly in your paper.

Citation styles vary across disciplines and in different countries. The following models and examples follow North American standards of historical writing, established by the University of Chicago Press in what is now a massive tome entitled *The Chicago Manual of Style*, first published in 1937. Like many important tools, it is now available online. *The Chicago Manual of Style Online* may be accessed via the history SUBJECT GUIDE homepage on the Dal libraries website. In print, you might also consult the shortened version: Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Use the most recent edition, the ninth, published in 2018. You will find it in the reference section of the Killam library, call number LB 2369 T8 2007. Since it is reference material, you may only use it in the library. The book also retails for about \$20 from major book sellers, and is not a bad investment if you can spare the cash. Turabian's *Manual* is most useful for more detailed models, examples, and special cases. What follows is a brief overview of correct citation formats; for more information, and more particular cases, consult *The Chicago Manual*.

Footnote/Endnote Style

Include the **author's name**, the **title of the book (underlined or italicized)**, the **publication information in brackets (place: publisher, date)** and the **page number(s)** where your passage or idea can be located. Pay close attention to punctuation in the following examples.

A. First Full Reference to:

- Books:

1. Bruce G. Trigger, *Natives and Newcomers: Canada's "Heroic Age" Reconsidered* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1985), 109.

1. David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 276-78.

- Journal Articles:

2. Peter N. Moogk, "'Thieving Buggers' and 'Stupid Sluts': Insults in Popular Culture in New France," *William and Mary Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (October, 1979): 524-26.

- Chapters in an edited collection:

3. Karen Dubinsky, "'Maidenly Girls or 'Designing Women'? The Crime of Seduction in Turn-of-the-Century Ontario," in *Gender and Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History*, ed. F. Iacovetta and M. Valverde (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 35.

- Government Documents:

4. Nova Scotia House of Assembly (hereafter NSHA), Standing Committee on Social Development (hereafter SCSD), *Debates of the House of Assembly*, 10 September 1960, s-6.

- Unpublished primary documents:

5. Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (NSARM), *Coroner's Inquest Reports*, RG 49, vol. 110, no. 34.

- Newspaper articles:

6. "In Your Face, Always," *Globe and Mail*, 6 June 2002, sec. 2A, p. 3.

- Internet sources

For the most up-to-date information on the citation of all manner of electronic sources (e-book editions, blogs, online only journals, even email messages), see *The Chicago Manual of Style Online*. What follows here is a basic website citation.

7. Jonathan Smele, "War and Revolution in Russia 1914-1921," BBC-History-World Wars, last modified 10 March 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwone/eastern_front_01.shtml

If a "last modified" date is not included in the material, provide the date you accessed the material.

B. Subsequent References

With history, there are few shortcuts to doing anything – so take them when you can get them. It isn't necessary to repeat the format of the above mentioned citations every time you refer to them in an essay. The following are a few shortcuts to subsequent references of the same material in your essay:

- Previously cited books (the author's last name, a shortened version of the title or a keyword from it and the page number):
 2. Blackbourn and Eley, *Peculiarities*, 173-75.
- Previously cited articles (keywords from title in quotations):
 3. Moogk, "Thieving Buggers," 530.
- Previously cited government documents or unpublished primary sources:
 4. NSHA, SCSD, *Debates*, ps-10.
 5. NSARM, RG 49, vol. 110, no. 34.
- A reference to the immediately preceding source, taken from same page as previous reference:
 6. *Ibid.* OR a shortened citation, as above (e.g., Blackbourn and Eley, *Peculiarities*, 174.)
- A reference to the immediately preceding source, taken from a different page
 7. *Ibid.*, 11. OR a shortened citation, as above (e.g., Blackbourn and Eley, *Peculiarities*, 174.)

(Note that "*Ibid.*" is an abbreviation for *ibidem*, Latin for "in the same place." It must be underlined or italicized and requires a period. Note, too, that the Chicago Manual now discourages use of 'Ibid.', given its unhelpfulness in electronic publications and recommends instead a short citation.

If you are unsure, ask – don't omit a citation simply because you are unsure of the appropriate style.

Bibliographic Entries

Bibliographies should be alphabetized by the last name of the author, or by other elements as illustrated below. Bibliographic entries are NOT numbered. Note the differences in format and punctuation: inverted names of author (last name first), periods instead of commas, hanging paragraphs (Hanging paragraphs are the opposite of conventional paragraphs. As you will see, the first line overhangs the rest of the text). In cases where the book or article possesses multiple authors, the name of the FIRST author is inverted, while the rest of the author's names are listed first-name-first. Note also that bibliographic entries for journal articles contain the page ranges for the whole article.

Using the aforementioned sources, your bibliography should appear something like this:

Blackbourn, David and Geoff Eley. *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Dubinsky, Karen. "Maidenly Girls or 'Designing Women'? The Crime of Seduction in Turn-of-the-Century Ontario." In *Gender and Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History*, ed. F. Iacovetta and M. Valverde, 27-66. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992.

(or more generally):

Iacovetta, F. and M. Valverde, eds. *Gender and Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992.

Moogk, Peter N. "'Thieving Buggers' and Stupid Sluts': Insults in Popular Culture in New France." *William and Mary Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (October 1979): 524-47.

Nova Scotia. Archives and Records Management. *Coroner's Inquest Reports*. RG 49, vol. 110.

Nova Scotia. House of Assembly. Standing Committee on Social Development. *Debates of the House of Assembly*. 10 September 1960.

Trigger, Bruce G. *Natives and Newcomers: Canada's "Heroic Age" Reconsidered*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1985.

Again, the above is meant as a rough guide. For more detailed information, please consult *The Chicago Manual*.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, using another's work without proper attribution, is not just unethical, it's a crime. Plagiarism occurs when one takes another's work and presents it in such a way as to make the reader believe it was the writer's own. It is both theft and fraud: you are stealing someone's "intellectual property" by not crediting them for their ideas, and then you are deceiving the reader by claiming that property as your own. It is also plagiarism if you turn in someone else's paper or assignment under your name, or if you purchase a paper to turn in. In both cases, you are still claiming authorship of something you did not create.

It's important for all students to realize that plagiarism can occur through carelessness, even if there is no demonstrable intent to plagiarize. Go to Dalhousie's web page devoted to Academic Integrity, <http://academicintegrity.dal.ca> and familiarize yourself with Dalhousie's policies. Here, you will also find tools to help you avoid accidental plagiarism. (FYI: "Academic Integrity" is an umbrella term that refers to all manner of cheating, but plagiarism is a big part of it). If you are still uncertain about how to avoid committing plagiarism, consult with your instructor **before turning in any written assignment**.

Below is the most recent statement on plagiarism. You will find it on all your class syllabi. Read it and understand it.

"At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect. As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity. (read more: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html ")

Finally: Standards and Precautions

When note-taking and drafting text on your computer, back-up your work frequently; proof-read all texts before turning them in; number the pages of your essay; staple the package together.

Provide a cover page which includes the title of your project, your name and student number, the class number for which this paper is being written; the name of your instructor or (if appropriate) Tutorial Assistant.

SAVE AND RETAIN ELECTRONIC COPIES OF YOUR PAPER IN ITS VARIOUS DRAFT STAGES (i.e., when it's completed, you should have a number of different electronic files corresponding to your different drafts, from the first to the final).