

# HIST 115: Critical Analysis

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**UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**  
WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM



# Writing across the Curriculum

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# Centre for Writers

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## Welcome to the Centre for Writers

The Centre for Writers will reopen on September 16, 2013. We will post more information in the coming hours soon. Please be advised that we will now require you to show your **One Card** before your appointment."

We offer free writing support to all students, instructors and staff at the University of Alberta – in any subject, discipline, program, or faculty, and at all levels of study. Tutors can assist you with any type of assignment or project, at any stage of the writing process.

**To book, change, or cancel appointments, please click here.**

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**The Centre for Writers invites YOU to weekly, \*\*FREE WORKSHOPS\*\* on the English language!**



# The Writing *Process*

## Getting started

- Explore the assignment
- Make rough notes
- Pick a tentative topic



## Drafting/revising

- Make an appointment at a writing centre; attend a group tutorial
- Get feedback on your draft/revise: work on higher order concerns: structure, argument, organization

## Editing

- Work on style and lower order concerns
- Proofread, consult checklist for assignment



Write a critical analysis essay of one of the articles given. You will need to carry out independent research as well as careful reading and analysis of the article for this assignment.

## Articles:

- Boyd, William. "Making Meat: Science, Technology, and American Poultry Production." *Technology and Culture* 42 no. 4 (Oct. 2001): 631-664.
- Guise-Richardson, Cai. "Redefining Vulcanization: Charles Goodyear, Patents, and Industrial Control, 1834-1865." *Technology and Culture* 51 no. 2 (Apr. 2010): 357-387.
- Hintz, Eric S. "Portable Power: Inventor Samuel Ruben and the Birth of the Duracell." *Technology and Culture* 50 no. 1 (Jan. 2009): 24-57.
- Kemp, R. Scott. "The End of Manhattan: How the Gas Centrifuge Changed the Quest for Nuclear Weapons." *Technology and Culture* 53 no. 2 (Apr. 2012): 272-305.
- Lucas, Adam Robert. "Industrial Milling in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds: A Survey of the Evidence for an Industrial Revolution in Medieval Europe." *Technology and Culture* 48 no. 1 (Jan. 2005): 1-30.
- Parr, Joy. "What Makes the Washday Less Blue? Gender, Nation, and Technology Choice in Postwar Canada." *Technology and Culture* 38 no. 1 (Jan. 1997): 153-186.



Genre:           close reading, rhetorical analysis  
                      descriptive/argumentative

Length: 4-5 pages maximum (excluding bibliography and footnotes, double-spaced, 12 pt font, 1" margins)

Value: 25% grade

Draft Due: February 12<sup>th</sup>

References: *Chicago Manual of Style*

Format: Essay (not Q&A)

(see [Guidelines for Historical Essays](#), Dept. of History & Classics)

Headings: ?

Abstract: ?



1. **Author:** qualifications; training; affiliation at time of publication
2. **Purpose:** audience; central argument; sub-claims; appropriate for audience?
3. **Evidence:** type(s)/genre(s); credibility; primary/secondary
4. **Effectiveness:** is the argument persuasive? why or why not?



## Sources:

Minimum of 4 footnotes & bibliography

- Should **primarily** draw on current **peer-reviewed articles**:
  - Journal articles, review articles, published monographs, edited volumes, textbooks, History manuals/guides, etc.
- Other sources:
  - Primary materials, newspaper articles, op-eds, department websites, etc.
- How many?





What kind of paper are you being asked to write?

- Look at the verbs/questions:
  - “What is...? Who is...?”
  - “Summary”
  - “Analyze”
  - “Consider”
  - Discuss
- Implicit: “argue,” “take a position”

What does this mean?



Two aspects to this:

1. **Understand** and **summarize** an article
2. **Take a position** based on reading and research

Approaches:

- **Summarize/describe** article: what are the most important aspects?
- **Analyze** the article: what are the component parts?
- **Critique** the article: how effective is it? why?
- **Synthesize: persuade** audience of your position



Who is the author and what are their qualifications for writing this piece? This should include the author's training and current academic affiliation as well as their affiliation at the time of the writing of the article.

1. How will you answer this?
2. What information will you look for?
3. Where will you look for it?



What is the argument being made by the author and for what audience are they writing? This should include a summary of the author's major and minor theses/arguments and whether they are appropriate for their audience.

1. How will you answer this?
2. What information will you look for?
3. Where will you look for it?



What evidence is the author using to support their claims? In analyzing the evidence used by the author students should also consider whether this evidence is based on primary sources or secondary sources.

1. How will you answer this?
2. What information will you look for?
3. Where will you look for it?



Do you find the author's argument persuasive? Discuss why or why not using evidence from the article, your course readings, or other appropriate academic sources.

1. How will you answer this?
2. What kind of evidence will you use to support your position?
3. Where will you look for it?



Draw on topic description for your structure:

- Introduction: what is the article, why is it significant? who is the author? who is the audience? what kind of evidence is used? how effective is the piece?
- Body:
  - Author credibility
  - Argument
  - Audience
  - Persuasiveness of article
- Conclusion: review findings, suggest recommendations (?), further research needed (?), **implications/significance of analysis**



Must have an **explicit** position statement that answers the research question.

Position must be:    specific  
                                  manageable  
                                  interesting

Contains an **observation**, an **argument**, and (potentially) suggests some **implications**

**Explicitly links** your **position/claim** to your **sub-claims/reasons** and **evidence**.

“I argue X because of A, B, and C”





Order of thesis statement/paper

**Claim /  
Solution**

**Link (because)**

**Reason /  
Analysis**

**Challenges / Problem**

(How, So what, Why?)

**Evidence**

(Case studies, gov't reports, legal documents, literature reviews, etc.)

Order of tasks



Always have a **topic sentence** that explicitly indicates what the paragraph is about, and how it fits in your argument

Always have a **transition sentence** that connects each chunk of argument to the next:

- use transitional words/phrases
- link back to main claim or sub-claim

## **Transitions for purpose**

For this purpose	In order to	To that end
In order that	So that	To this end

## **Transitions for argument or proof**

Accordingly	Despite	In addition	Nevertheless	Therefore
Admittedly	Even so	In any case	Nonetheless	Thus
Although	Even though	In conclusion	Obviously	To be sure
At this level	Evidently	Indeed	Of course	Truly
Because	For	In fact	On the one	Whatever the
Besides	For the same	In light of this	hand... On	case may be
But	reason	evidence	the other hand	What's more
Certainly	Furthermore	In summary	Regardless	
Clearly, then	Granted	Meanwhile	Since	
Consequently	However	Moreover	That is	

## **Transitions for exemplification, illustration, addition or clarification**

Additionally	For instance	More importantly	Specifically	The next part
Again	Further	Moreover	Such as	To add
Also	Furthermore	Most importantly	Take the case of	To clarify
And then	Generally	One characteristic...	That is to say	To demonstrate
As an illustration	speaking	Another characteristic	The final type	To explain
Besides	i.e., (that is)	One example...	The first	To illustrate
Besides that	In addition	another	(second, third)	To put it another
Case in point	In another case	example	category	way
Equally	In general	One kind... another	The last group	To rephrase it
important	In other words	kind	The most	What's more
Finally	In particular	One way... Another	important	
First	In the same way	way	component	
Following this	In this case	On this occasion	The most important	
further	In this situation	Point in fact	example... The	
For example	Like	Pursuing this further	next example	

## **Transitions for emphasis or repetition**

Absolutely	Certainly	In brief	Obviously	To repeat
Always	Definitely	Indeed	Of course	Undeniably
As I have noted	Emphatically	In fact	Perennially	Undoubtedly
As I have said	Eternally	Naturally	Positively	Unquestionably
As has been noted	Extremely	Never	Surely	Without a doubt
Assuredly	Forever	Nobody denies	Surprisingly	Without reservation
By all means	In any case	No doubt	To be sure	

## **Transitions for comparison and contrast**

Although	Despite	Likewise	hand... On the	Vis à vis
After all	Even though	Meanwhile	other hand	Where
As	However	Nevertheless	Otherwise	Whereas
Balanced against	In comparison	Nonetheless	Similarly	While
But	In contrast	Of course	Still	Yet
By comparison	In the same way	Once in a while	Though	
Compared to	In spite of	On the contrary	Unlike	
Conversely	Like	On the one	Up against	

## **Transitions for concession and exception**

Admittedly	Granted	Nevertheless	Once in a while	Though
Although this may be true	However	Nonetheless	Perhaps	To be sure
Certainly	In spite of	Of course	Regardless	True
Despite	It is true that	Of course, it is true that	Sometimes	Yet
	Maybe		Still	

## **Transitions for cause and effect**

Accordingly	Because	For this reason	The first	important cause
Another cause	Consequently	On account of	(second, third)	/ effect
Another effect	For	Since	cause / effect	Therefore
As a result	For that reason	So	The most	

## **Transitions for narration and process**

After	At first	third	Meanwhile	(second, third)
After a few hours (days, months, years)	At last	Firstly...	Nearly	step
After that	At the same time	secondly... thirdly	Never	The next step
Afterwards	Before	Formerly	Next	The last step
Almost	Before long	Frequently	Now	Then
Always	By this time	Immediately	Once	Thereafter
As	Earlier	In the first place	Previously	Two hours
As soon as	Eventually	In the meantime	Soon	(days, months, years) later
	Finally	Later	Subsequently	When/While
	First... second...	Later on	The first	

## **Transitions for description**

Above	Beyond	Inside	On one side... On the other side	The least important
Behind	In	Nearby	Outside	The most important
Below	In back of	Next to	Over	Under
Between	In front of	On		

## **Transitional chains**

Basically... similarly... as well	In the first place... pursuing this further... finally
First(ly)... second(ly)... third(ly)...	In the light of the... it is easy to see that
Generally... furthermore... finally	In this case... in another case
In the first place... also... lastly	To be sure... additionally... lastly
In the first place... just in the same way... finally	

## **Transitions for conclusion or summarization**

Accordingly	Finally	In final analysis	In summary	To summarize
As a result	Hence	In final consideration	Lastly	To sum up
As I have said	In brief	In general	On the whole	Therefore
As I have shown	In conclusion	In sum	Summing up	Thus
Consequently	Indeed		To conclude	

## **References**

- Kirszner, L.G. & Mandell, S.R. (2006). *Writing first: Practice in context* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- The OWL at Purdue (2007). *Transitional devices*. Retrieved November 1, 2007, from <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/574/02/>
- Transition words* (n.d.). Retrieved November 1, 2007, from <http://larae.net/write/transition.html>
- The Writing Centre at the University of Wisconsin – Madison (2006). *Using transitions*. Retrieved November 1, 2007, from [www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/Transitions.html](http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/Transitions.html)



## How will you draw on your evidence?

- Direct quotation (statistics, clinical findings, etc.)
- Paraphrase
- Summary

Paraphrase & summarize when the **ideas** are important:  
**content**

Quote when the **words** are important: pithy/well put; to the point; new term/definition

**Always integrate and comment on your quotations**

**Always indicate when you're drawing on the words or ideas of another: you can never have too many footnotes!**



- Get feedback from a “trusted reader”
  - Consider using other students in the course or the Centre for Writers
- Ask readers to read for specific purposes: thesis, structure, transitions, development of a particular paragraph or idea.
- Focus on higher-order concerns before lower-order ones



**Towards the due date, switch your focus from**

**higher-order concerns** (arrangement, arguments, evidence) to

**lower-order concerns:** proofreading, grammar, citation format,  
grammar/spelling



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