

2-Primary Source Paper Assignment

When historians write history, they use two types of sources: primary and secondary. Primary sources are photographs, newspaper articles, letters, diaries, or other artifacts that were produced during/by a specific time period, event, or person. Secondary sources are usually essays, articles, or books that analyze and interpret a set of primary sources in order to tell a story about a specific time period, event, or person.

The purpose of a primary source paper is to engage you in the role of a historian.

What is new in Primary Source Assignment #2?

1. **Choose FOUR sources from the source packet.**
2. **You must include in your finished paper, a worksheet for each source that you use.**
3. **You must tie together your sources with a research question, to be discussed in class at an in-class Writing Workshop (check the syllabus for the date of the workshop).**

Instructions:

1. You can use any material that we have read/watched in class as secondary source material. If you do use any of that material, you must cite the ideas or quotations using footnotes.
2. Before writing the analysis of the four sources, come up with a research question that the four sources will address. Include the research question in your essay.
3. CAUTION: The goal is to write a cohesive essay—not 4 individual source analysis papers. Make the sources speak to each other. Put them together to draw a larger conclusion.
4. You must fill out a worksheet (below) on each source before you begin writing. Turn in the worksheets with your completed paper.
5. Write a four-page (1,000-1,200 word) essay on women's history that includes the following:
 - Describe the document/source. Who wrote it, when, where? Do you know who the author is by name? Do you know the race, age, or gender of the author?
 - Why do you think the author wrote the document? What was the author's motivation for writing? Did s/he have an intended audience? Can you discern any particular characteristics about the audience?
 - What kinds of conclusions about womanhood, work, and/or activism can you draw from the sources.
 - What do we learn about the time period in which the documents were written?
 - Do the experiences that are described in the document relate to history that we have discussed in class?

Send paper to professor by email: kwarren@ku.edu

Primary Source Analysis Worksheet

Step 1: Identify the Source <i>Answer all known fields</i>	
Source title	
Author or creator	
Type of source	
Date of source	
Original source location	
Physical description	

Step 2: Analyze the Source <i>Answer all known fields, only if evidenced by the source itself</i>			
Author		Intended Audience	
Race		Race	
Age		Age	
Gender		Gender	
Other information (such as job, social status, family info, etc.)		Other information (such as jobs, social status, families, etc.)	

Step 3: Contextualize and Explore the Source <i>Answer only with information evidenced by the source, otherwise cite or note your secondary source of information</i>	
Why was this source/document created?	
What is the historical context of the source (i.e. political, social, economic, or environmental context)?	
What opinions and/or unintentional implications are conveyed by this source?	
What do you still not know, and where can you find that information?	
What contextual information should be noted about you, the researcher (i.e. your race, age, gender, familial and social background, etc.)? How might that influence your interpretation of the source?	

Step 4: Using the Source	
What is one historical statement that can be made using the source as evidence?	
What can be concluded about the validity of the source, and about its place in the broader historical/social context of the time?	
Where might historians look next to continue the discussion?	