

Secondary Source Analysis

Assignment

A 2-page paper (double-spaced, 12-point Times Roman, one-inch margins) on the article by Robert M. Citino, “Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction” (2007).

The goal of the essay is to explain **what** Citino argues—and **why** and **how**.

To do so requires covering the following points (in whatever order and emphasis that best suits your essay’s thesis, i.e., *your overall argument or commentary about this scholarly work*):

(First person, however, is not acceptable; essay must be written in third person.)

- the author’s reasons/goals for writing the article
- the major arguments of the article
- the kinds of sources the author uses and why and how he uses them
- the major historiographical issues and questions the author engages (and why/how)
- how the author seeks to advance his purpose (i.e., for writing the article)
- which audience he is targeting

****** These points overlap, so do not attempt to write an essay with a paragraph devoted to each. Reasons for the article, major arguments, and historiographical issues tie together, but they also tie to other angles that you need to consider.

****** **Read the article carefully: most of the “answers” for your analysis are there. Citino was motivated to do something, and he decided to do it a certain way. His essay revolves about his motivation, his decision, and his method.**

****** Your assignment is to analyze the article, NOT merely summarize it or review it.

Consider: if you analyze a film you see at a theater, you do not merely list plot points or characters when you tell people about it. You try to explain *what* it is trying to do, *why* it is structured the way it is, *how* the cinematographer advances the plot, etc.—and *what* makes it “successful.”

The following questions and directions should help provide direction:

What is Citino trying to do? (**Why** did he write the article? **Whom** is he trying to convince of the rightness of his argument? **Why** target that audience (reader)? [Authors structure essays differently, use different language and tone, refer to different sources depending on their intended audience. For example, compare Citino’s article to Moyer’s.] **What** point is he trying to make about the state and direction of military history?)

What format/approach does he use to present his argument? **What** focus/organization/structure does he use? **How** does he use them to achieve his goal?

How does Citino's identification (his profession, etc.) help explain his argument and his essay?

To figure out what to say, think about his article in comparison to Moyer's. Moyer argues in favor of the depth, breadth, and value of military history by responding to someone's criticisms of it—point by point. Does Citino have the same goal and use the same approach to achieve his goal. **What** is his goal and **how** does he go about arguing his case?

It helps to remember that there are always numerous ways to make an argument. One can do it through a long list of facts or through pointing out problems with the counter-argument; one can do it through recent examples or through a string of examples over time. **What did Citino decide to do? Accomplished with what organization?**

Is there any obvious argument/direction/approach/source that Citino clearly *chose to omit* in order to better make his case? What seems to be his motivation for doing so? What impact?

Historians use sources to back up their conclusions and interpretations: **what** type of sources does Citino use? **How** does he use them?

Consider that he could have used, for example, recent doctoral dissertations to show that, however negatively most historians think of military history, there are wide-ranging approaches being pursued in the nation's graduate schools by the discipline's bright new scholars. For example, a 2009 dissertation at George Washington University, "[Sundered by a Memory': The Legacy of the Vietnam War and the Cultural Memory of Trauma in American Culture, 1975-Present,](#)" would have been effective in supporting his argument. Instead he chose to back up his argument with a different kind of source.
Why?

What does he do with his sources? **How** does he use them to make his argument, to convince his readers?

What is Citino contributing to the existing body of scholarship on his subject? This may entail an examination of the footnotes as well as the text itself. Assess this contribution in terms of its significance, the effectiveness of Citino's argument, or additional questions the work may raise.

Ask yourself the above questions, as well as the ones below.

- Have I clearly and appropriately summarized the article's argument and main points?
- Have I effectively **evaluated and explained** the bases of the author's purpose/goals, his conclusions, his evidence and assumptions, the structure of his essay, the sources that he uses, the audience that he is trying to reach?
- Is my writing grammatical, clear, and precise? Do points follow and build on each other smoothly? Have I double-checked the writing checklist on the course website?
- Do I get side-tracked describing the article as "interesting" or "well-written" (or pointing out recommended readers), points which belong in a book review but not in my analytical essay?
- *Do I explain why I have commented on various points? Do I make clear their connection to my overall thesis about the article?*

Thesis, focus, and organization

Critical to your essay is an explicit and precise **thesis** in the introductory paragraph and its adherence throughout the paper (i.e., **focus**). That thesis should prepare the reader for a paper that covers the points listed in the above instructions, and each supporting paragraph should begin with a topic sentence that links that paragraph to the thesis (i.e., **thesis** and **focus** [again] and **organization**).

****** Indicate (**bold**? underline? **color**? **highlighting**? *italics*?) the overall thesis and each paragraph's topic sentence.

The introduction should include critical information, such as the author's full name and the article's full name and publication date. *All are relevant to analyzing the article.*

Deadlines

- 1) start of class, Wednesday, February 6: 2 copies of paper.

Electronic copy due no later than 10 p.m. on Slack (direct message to instructor). No message. Just use the plus sign to the left of the message block; attach your essay; hit "enter" key.

Title Word document: your last name Citino -- e.g., Smith Citino

- 2) start of class, Friday, February 15: 1 copy of rewrite.

In a 2-pocket folder with:

- Original paper with instructor's comments/notes
- Checklist (which will also be submitted with all future rewrites)

Electronic copy due no later than 10 p.m. on Slack (direct message to instructor).

Title Word document: your last name Citino rewrite (see above instructions)

e.g., Smith Citino rewrite

**penalty on rewrite for incorrect and late submission of either paper (see below)*

Meeting

Each student *must* meet with the instructor to review the original paper and to discuss plans for the rewrite.

Arrange meeting in person or through Slack.

**A rewrite cannot be submitted without meeting to discuss the first paper; thus, a first paper is required.

Grading and penalties

The original paper must be a serious effort; a penalty will be imposed on the rewrite for an *incomplete* original paper or for significantly not following instructions.

Late penalties (5 points per 12 hours or part thereof) and any other penalty for either paper will be applied to the rewrite.

checklist

Use ***checklist*** on the website. It provides standards accepted by the profession and stipulated in the *Chicago Manual*. Consult the *Chicago Manual* on-line (*through library's databases*) if you have mechanical/style questions or concerns not addressed in the checklist.

*Obvious failure to use the checklist = deduction from paper's grade.

*Print one copy of the checklist. *THIS copy must be submitted with rewrites of ALL papers.*

Paper title and submission: mechanics

The **“title”** *must* be the correct bibliographic entry for the article. (See *Chicago Manual* for “journal” articles or ***library's short guide*** [“Cite sources”—accessed from library's main page].)

Do *not* use a **title page**.

Do *not* submit as front/back.

Be sure to type or write **your name** at the top of the first page or in a header. (There is no need for date, course number, instructor's name, etc. – all take valuable lines from your two-page limit.)

Submit original paper by itself, i.e., no folder, no checklist, etc.

Submit rewrite in a folder with checklist and original paper (with instructor's comments).

Verb tense

Covered in Checklist (see above).

Descriptions of historical events, actions, facts, persons, etc., should be in the past tense.

The present tense may be used when discussing the abstract ideas and political philosophies of historians. For example: “According to Marx, class struggle is a crucial element in history.”

**Present tense should be used when describing scholars in their own writing and in the books they offer. For example: “In his study of slavery, Kenneth Stampp explores s slave resistance both overt and subtle that occurred ed in the antebellum period.”

So, “Citino use s his sources to argue that”

Documentation and parentheticals

If you include a *quotation* from the article, use a parenthetical notation with the page number(s) in parentheses at the end of the quotation or sentence in question. See parentheticals instructions in WRITING folder of website for brief explanation (with examples) of rules for using parenthetical documentation

Do **NOT** provide page numbers for general information about/from the article. The “title” at the top of page one and your reference to the article in your introduction tell readers where the info is from.

Grammar, spelling, and punctuation

Use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Do not depend upon your computer to catch errors; your computer will fail you. Instead, ask someone to proofread your writing (see below regarding acceptable help within the Honor Code), and read over your paper several times to eliminate all errors. Note helpers in your honor pledge.

Do not “wing” format. It is easy to look it up in the Chicago Manual Online (UMW databases).

Plagiarism and Honor Pledge

The **honor pledge** must be on the last page of both the hard copy and the rewrite.

Sign the hard copies; type your name in the copies submitted on Slack.

If you take someone else’s ideas or words and present them in your paper as your own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the author), you have committed **plagiarism**. *If you are unsure about what this means, do not hesitate to ask the instructor for clarification.*

Also, see Honor section of the course syllabus for useful link.

Asking someone for help in proofreading your essay and critiquing your ideas is highly encouraged. However, another person *cannot* write your essay for you or assist you significantly with ideas, wording, etc. This is *unauthorized* assistance and an honor violation. This paper—and all others in this course—must be YOUR work.

**When someone reads your paper, he/she must do so *without* marking the paper in any way: comments/feedback are oral, not written.

**You are free (*encouraged*) to use the Writing Center with this and all assignments in HIST 297.