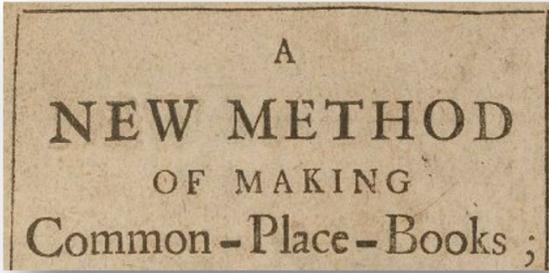


Commonplace (Digital) Journals Assignment



From the title page of John Locke's book on the subject (London, 1706). At the Houghton Library at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

BACKGROUND: Commonplace journaling, or “commonplacing,” was popular in Europe and North America in the 17th and 18th centuries. In inexpensive hand-held journals educated men and women collected quotations from their favorite pamphlets, newspapers, novels, poems, plays, as well as Bible verses. They found these quotes profound, enlightening, beguiling, or even enraging. After copying the quotes down (by hand using quill ink pens) commonplacers added their own commentary about what they had read. Their reflections were analytical in nature, explaining what the meaning of the quote was and how they interpreted it in relationship to other texts and ideas. Commonplace journals were shared among friends and family members, with lots of people responding to each other in them, engaging in spirited debate. During the revolutionary era, rebellious sentiments were spread through educated society in these journals.

This semester, along with your classmates, **you will create a digital commonplace journal on Slack** using our course readings. The purpose of this assignment is to:

- ✦ Assist you in the close-reading of assigned primary sources,
- ✦ Develop your analytical reflection skills,
- ✦ Crowd-source good pieces of evidence and,
- ✦ Crowd-source various interpretations (sometimes conflicting).

You should use the digital commonplace journal when crafting arguments in your speeches and papers. (This is called “scaffolded learning” – doing a little bit at a time). Use this class-created resource to your advantage!



INSTRUCTIONS

For every primary source reading we complete (10 total):

1. **POST ONE PIECE OF EVIDENCE & a SHORT ANALYTICAL REFLECTION on SLACK.** Channels exist for each reading (example: #cpj_1_rousseau_sept_2). Your **evidence** can be a sentence, an example, or an entire paragraph along with a **brief (3-4 sentence) analytical reflection**. You can pick the same piece of evidence as someone else, but your analysis should be individual. A handout on Canvas can help you with “analysis.”
2. **TAG** your evidence with at least **3 thematic hashtags (#)** to organize evidence for later. For example, if you’ve picked a piece from John Locke about the importance of “life, liberty, and property,” you might add “#property” and “#liberty.” The point is to help us easily find those pieces of evidence that might help someone write a paper on that given subject.
3. **RESPOND TO ONE PERSON’S ANALYSIS by the start of class.** Respond in 3-4 sentences. You can agree, disagree, ask a question, etc. Be civil and collegial. This is an intellectual exercise. In the response, you can post hashtags, images, links, and gifs you find appropriate.

**Each entry is graded out of a possible 100 points.
You may drop your lowest two scores (including zeros).**

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Model of Commonplace Entry (Steps 1 & 2) on Rousseau's "The Social Contract"

(posted on the Slack channel #cpj_1_rousseau_september_2)

Includes a good and complete quotation from Rousseau.

"This man believes that he is the master of others, and still he is more of a slave than they are." In a slightly mocking tone, Rousseau points out that eighteenth-century men think of themselves as masters (slave masters), but in reality, they are subjects. He's referencing their subjecthood and oppression to a tyrannical king. Enlightenment authors like Rousseau loved to use analogies of "slavery" to evoke shock and make people realize their rights were restricted. #slavery #freedom #subjecthood #tyranny

Analytical reflection is specific. It comments on tone, makes historical connections, and further explains the quotation.

Provides at least three thematic hashtags that easily organizes this piece of evidence and analysis.

Model of a Reply (step 3) to the Above Entry

(posted as a "reply" to the above entry on the Slack channel #cpj_1_rousseau_september_2)

Demonstrates engagement with the post. This does not have to be a disagreement or a question. It could also agree with the post.

Is this truly mocking in tone or is it meant to be evocative? Rousseau and other Enlightenment thinkers really liked to play-up the metaphor to 18th-century men being oppressed instead of oppressors themselves as this made men question their status quo **as we discussed in class.** It seems intended to help **make the connection to tyrannical monarchical rule that much more apparent.**

Brings up specific evidence in relationship to our class lectures and/or readings. Could be a bit more specific here, but this is sufficient.

Provides additional analysis of the evidence at hand that will help someone with their future papers and/or speeches.

HELP and FEEDBACK: Please reach out if you want help or feedback before writing your entry or response. I am always happy to help you organize your ideas or with the analysis. Contact me via email, Canvas message, or Slack.