

**Making of the Modern World
Seminar Group 5 (William Rupp)**

General Comments on the First Essay

First essays are always a challenge – both for you who are composing what was likely your first written piece of work at university and for me who needs to recognise that fact whilst also still ensuring that you get useful feedback on how to develop your analytical and argumentative skills. I have tried to be as detailed as I can in the specific feedback that I've provided each of you. There are a couple of points, though, that I feel apply to nearly everyone so I thought I would share them here.

Research

I was impressed by how much primary source research (things like the writings of the Enlightenment *philosophes* and texts like the US Declaration of *Independence*) was included in your papers. This will, ultimately, be a critical skill you will need to develop so having it so evident at this stage was very encouraging.

What nearly everyone needs to do more of in future papers, though, is include many secondary sources. This really means that what you need to be doing is reading much more widely in preparation for your next essays. By bringing in a much broader range of historical perspectives you will be able to come up with more robust thesis statements and make points in your argument that are much better supported.

You should try to become comfortable with academic journals. I've come across what appears to be a good source that might be of help here: <https://libguides.depaul.edu/journals/journals-introduction>

We'll talk about this more about this in the lead up to the second essay. It is worth paying attention to how the historians whose works you're reading over the coming weeks use primary and secondary sources.

Citations

Everyone worked hard to reference the research they'd done. I think that the levels of academic integrity were high. On a specific level, though, people did struggle with citations. As I said, I am not fussed about which of the many methods (some listed via: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/students/referencing/>) you want to use. It is essential, though, that you provide clear page numbers for where the material is coming from. This is equally important for footnotes as it is for in-body citations.

If anyone is struggling with the mechanics of citations, I personally think system developed through the Chicago Manual of Style is the most flexible and relevant to historical writing. You can have a look here: https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html