

Instructions for Paper 3

Due date Session 26

Length: 10-12 double-spaced pages. You should use standard margins (1-inch to 1.25-inches on each side of the page) and a 12-point font.

Grade: Your grade on *Paper 3* will contribute 25% of your final course grade.

In this assignment you will be writing a 10-12 page paper that advances a specific historical argument and supports it by citing primary and secondary sources. In order to construct and present your argument, you will have to bring to bear all of the skills that you have been practicing this term. You should select one of the two topics listed on the back of this sheet. Your paper must draw on at least two primary sources, as well as at least four secondary sources. For the two topics listed below, we have compiled a list of references and made several materials available on the course website. If you would prefer to write about a different topic, you must discuss your topic ahead of time with either Prof. Kaiser or the TAs.

First, you have to do a close reading of your primary sources. What exactly do the authors say? How do they argue for the points that they make? What is taken for granted? What remains ambiguous or unclear at the end of your reading? What do the authors assume about their readership? Are there obvious ways that the text has been shaped by its social, cultural, intellectual, institutional, or political context?

Second, you have to read at least four secondary sources and try to figure out the various ways that the primary sources have been interpreted. Have historians generally understood these sources in the same way that you do? What ideas do they think are important, and why? How do they position these sources in the flow of history? How do the historians agree or disagree among themselves about these sources? What points have been particularly interesting, or contentious, or murky? What are you adding to the literature by writing your paper?

As you are reading and rereading your sources, take detailed notes. You will need to know where you found a particularly interesting quotation or idea so that you can cite the author properly. Proper footnote and bibliography citations are *required*.

When you start to compose your paper, think carefully about its structure. Do you have an introductory paragraph that sets up the problem, clearly states your thesis, and outlines your ensuing discussion? Do each of the points that you raise in the body of your paper support your thesis in a clear and compelling way? Do you have a concluding paragraph that wraps up your argument and gestures at its wider significance? Is your writing concise, precise and explicit? Is it lively? Are your TAs going to fall to their knees and bless your name for putting such a thing of grace and beauty into their hands?

Topics for Paper 3

Items marked with an asterisk are available on the MIT server.

I. Discuss the interrelationships between physicists and politics in the United States after World War II.

Examples of primary sources:

- *1. "The GAC Report of October 30, 1949," reprinted in Herbert York, *The Advisors: Oppenheimer, Teller, and the Superbomb*, 2nd ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989 [1976]), pp. 153-162.
2. Samuel K. Allison, "The State of Physics; or, the Perils of Being Important," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* **6** (January 1950): 2-4, 26-27.
3. Frederick Seitz, "Physicists and the Cold War," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* **6** (March 1950): 83-89.
- *4. *In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer: The Security Clearance Hearing*, edited by Richard Polenberg (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), pp. 94-111.

Examples of secondary sources:

1. Bart Bernstein, "In the matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer," *Historical Studies in the Physical Sciences* **12** (1982): 195-252.
2. Jessica Wang, "Science, Security, and the Cold War: The Case of E. U. Condon," *Isis* **83** (1992): 238-69.
3. David Kaiser, "Nuclear Democracy: Political Engagement, Pedagogical Reform, and Particle Physics in Postwar America," *Isis* **93** (2002): 229-268.
4. Paul Forman, "Behind quantum electronics: National security as basis for physical research in the United States, 1940-1960," *Historical Studies in the Physical and Biological Sciences* **18** (1987): 149-229.
5. Peter Galison and Barton Bernstein, "'In any light': Scientists and the decision to build the hydrogen bomb," *Historical Studies in the Physical and Biological Sciences* **19** (1989): 267-347.
- *6. David Kaiser, "Cold War Requisitions, Scientific Manpower, and the Production of American Physicists after World War II," *Historical Studies in the Physical and Biological Sciences* **33** (Fall 2002): 131-159.

II. Discuss the involvement of German physicists with atomic weapons research during World War II.

Examples of primary sources:

- *1. Selections from *Physics and National Socialism: An Anthology of Primary Sources*, edited by Klaus and Ann Hentschel (Boston: Birkhauser, 1996), pp. 332-406. [This contains several separate primary sources; you need not draw on all of the sources included here.]
- *2. *Farm Hall Transcripts*, edited by Charles Frank (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 70-91. [Available in the on-line course reader.]
3. Documents regarding the 1941 meeting in Copenhagen between Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg, available on-line at the Niels Bohr Archive website: <http://www.nbi.dk/NBA/webpage.html>. Click on "Documents Released 6 February 2002."

Examples of secondary sources:

- *1. Thomas Powers, *Heisenberg's War: The Secret History of the German Bomb* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1993), pp. 110-52, plus endnotes on pp. 506-16.
- *2. Mark Walker, *Nazi Science: Myth, Truth, and the German Atomic Bomb* (New York: Plenum, 1995), pp. 183-268, plus endnotes on pp. 301-16.
- *3. David Cassidy, *Uncertainty: The Life and Science of Werner Heisenberg* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1992), pp. 417-446, plus endnotes on pp. 621-6.
- *4. Cathryn Carson, *Particle Physics and Cultural Politics: Werner Heisenberg and the shaping of a role for the physicist in postwar West Germany* (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1995), pp. 250-334.