

## Analyzing a Secondary Source

1. Identify the source and author:
  - a. Who is the author and what are their credentials?
  - b. Who is the audience?
  - c. Give the full citation.
2. Check it out!
  - a. Check out the table of contents:
    - i. Are there chapters that might relate to your topic?
  - b. Check out the index:
    - i. Who are the key people?
    - ii. What are the key events?
    - iii. What are the key subjects?
  - c. Check out the citations:
    - i. Are they based on primary sources or mostly other secondary sources?
    - ii. Name one primary source collection the historian uses:
    - iii. Name one primary source and one secondary source used that might help your research:

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### 3. Figure out the Argument:

- a. Read the introduction and conclusion. Find the sentence(s) in which the author states their thesis and note the page number, then restate it in your own words.
- b. How does the author build their argument?
- c. If the author discusses others' interpretations of the topic, who are the key scholars included?
- d. How does the author place their book/article in the "big picture"? What is the big historical question the work is addressing?

### 4. Use it!

- a. How might this book/article help your own research? State three specific ideas:
- b. What new questions about your topic did this source raise?