

His 2500, Spring 2004

Assignment 8. The Document.

There is a difference between published and unpublished documents.... Another distinction is between printed and manuscript material.... Documents are categorized in terms of (1) time of composition in relation to time of observation of the matter reported, or (2) the audience for which the document is intended, or (3) the intent of the composer.... Estimating the intent of the composer of a document is an important part of the process of judging its credibility or plausibility.¹

Read “Elizabethan Worlds,” in Newton Key and Robert Bucholz, eds., *Sources and Debates in English History* (London: Blackwell, 2004), ch. 4 [available at Booth Library eReserves <<http://139.67.85.13/ereserves/ereserves.asp>>; password as in class or email me]. Choose two longer documents at the end of the chapter and two shorter document passages from the “Discussion” that relate to your research topic (and your presentation topic for 15 April). Compare and contrast the four documents with respect to 1, 2, and 3 above and then comment on the credibility of the documents (for which questions are they most reliable?; in what ways are they questionable?; how does having multiple documents on the same subject help establish credibility?) **Due March 9; March 11** is fine.

¹Robert Jones Shafer, ed., *A Guide to Historical Method*, 3rd ed. (Homewood, IL, 1980), 83-4.