

Reliable sources essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Reliable source writings are everywhere, whether it be on a website or in a textbook all authors claim whatever they have to say is true, and they claim firsthand accounts. How can one be sure of themselves that any one of these authors is actually telling the truth? Some accounts can never truly be proven false or true, but evidence can lead some to come to conclusions themselves. In the two stories, or reliable source writings, *Of Plymouth Plantation* written by William Bradford; or *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* written by Olaudah Equiano, both authors claim to have experienced what they wrote about firsthand. But how can one be sure that each is a “reliable source”. It all boils down to what the reader wants to believe.

Olaudah’s narrative is a moving piece, describing the hardships of the middle passage after being captured by the Europeans. Olaudah describes the hellish event in vivid detail. He speaks of how the nauseating aromas emanating from the lower decks, and describes the living conditions for the slaves on board. Many slaves suffer from sickness and starvation. Yet, it is hard for one to believe that Olaudah had actually experienced this horrible occurrence.

There are three major things that factor into this conclusion. Firstly historians discovered documents stating that Olaudah was born in the colony of South Carolina. This alone refutes the fact that he made the passage across the middle passage. Any one person who had knowledge of the middle passage could have written a story about the events of the journey, which means Olaudah may have heard the story of another slave’s firsthand experience and may have made it his own. Secondly there was a manifesto of the slave

ship he would have been on, and his name was not on the list anywhere. Thirdly, and this is the most surprising thing, he owned slaves and a large plantation. Considering he spoke out against slavery and was a slave himself, this furthermore discredits his reliability of an author. Though his narrative seemed to be an accurate portrayal of the middle passage, it is not intelligent for one to be so gullible and believe that he was the one who experienced what happened.

Of Plymouth Plantation was yet another personal narrative written around the same time by a white male colonist named William Bradford. He documents all of the things which happen to the pilgrims during their first year in the new colony. He begins describing their relief as they spotted land but they were misfortunate, they had been blown off course and did not land in the correct place. They landed far north from Virginia, their intended location, during the winter. They arrived during the most dangerous part of the year. He speaks of how many pilgrims died from illness and starvation. Yet they encounter a helpful native who proceeds to help them grow crops, and they have a feast called thanksgiving.

Bradford's narrative, which had been published in England raises some questions; but it does not seem like it was a falsely written story. Bradford explains the pilgrims predicament and their hardships very well, and most of the things he had written about have been proven to be true by many historians. Although, some historians believe that it was a form of propaganda used by England to put a negative outlook on colonization, this does not seem to be solid grounds to call Bradford an unreliable source. Many of the hardships were very real, and definitely believable given the <https://assignbuster.com/reliable-sources-essay-sample/>

conditions the pilgrims had to endure. This further supports Bradford's credibility as an author. The narrative was an accurate portrayal of life in Plymouth.

Not every source is as reliable as they seem, though there are some out there that are irrefutable; but there are also many that are easily discredited. It is imperative that one researches their sources; it could mean the difference between your information being spot on, or being completely false.

Works Cited

Bradford, William. Of Plymouth Plantation. American Literature.

McDougelLitell, 2009. 78-84. Print. Equiano, Olaudah. The Interesting Narrative of the Life of OlaudahEquiano. American Literature. McDougelLitell, 2009. 78-84. Print.