

## ABSTRACT

### The Agony of Dissertation Writing: A History

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This thesis analyzes the process of writing a doctoral dissertation in a historical context. Neck cramps, writer's block, frustration and hysteria will be discussed alongside inspired prose, completed final drafts, and successful deposits. The thesis will also trace the history of doctoral requirements and will seek to answer questions such as why bond paper is needed (and whence the term derives), who first set the left margin at one and one-half inches, and the origins of the abstract itself.