BRAINSTORMING / INVENTION
Instructor: Patrick LaPierre

1. Brief Description of in-class writing exercise:
Two related in-class writing exercises: see below.

2. Context for the exercise:
The context for these assignments is a section of my course on the nature of history as a
discipline and an upcoming paper that draws from this theme.

3. Goal(s) of the exercise:
The goal is to get students thinking about their second paper, which requires an
imaginative reading of the articles given to them

4. Common results of the exercise:
My students have told me that my second paper assignment is the most difficult. After
reading their papers and in-class writing assignments I noticed that there was a
connection between the two insofar as the in-class assignments served as a free-writing
beginning to the more complete articulation of their formal paper.

5. Student responses to the exercise:
Most seem to find them useful and have even made references to their in-class writing
assignments in their papers. Others have questioned the usefulness of informal writing
when it's not graded.

Exercises:

Day 1:
1 page or less) -- When people explain "That's History" they generally mean to suggest
that something's gone and forgotten. But is that an accurate use of the word "History"?
Does history play a role in our present lives? If so, how? If not, why not?

Day 2:
1 page or less) -- If David Lowenthal and David Harlan sat down to dinner and talked
about the nature of history--do you think, based on what you have read from them, that
they would have similar ideas on how we ought to understand the past? Do you think
they would agree or disagree about what constitutes history--why/why not?