Preface: Motives

We can bring up many books when it comes to World War II, and one of the books people would definitely mention is *Anne Frank*. The Comparisons of the Three Versions of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. 
Frank's Diary. It is famous for its honest way to present a person's life when he is forced to go into hiding. Anne Frank's sincere and enthusiastic words have inspired countless people, including me. After reading the book, I did some research on the background of the book and found out there were actually three versions instead of what everyone thought as only one. So I decide to compare and record down what I discovered in the three versions, as to understand why and when Anne deleted certain parts and added certain events.

2. Introductions of the three versions

There are three versions of the diary, the first draft was written by Anne Frank. The entry of the diary was dated June 12, 1942 (Barnouw, et al. 188). She received one of the three notebooks she used to keep her diaries on that day as her birthday present. Certain parts of version a were never found, it is suggested that Anne wrote them on loose sheets of paper as version b. The handwriting of this version is often messy and sometimes contains both cursive and straight hands on a page. This version is also closest to reality.

The second version, also written by Anne Frank, was the modified version. The reason this version appeared was that Gerrit Bolkestein, Minister of Education, Art and Science in the Dutch government in London, had delivered a message to the Dutch nation on the radio, which indicated the importance of keeping a record of life to let the descendants understand fully what the preceding people had endured, and promised that all the historical material covering these years will be collected, edited and published (189). Anne was encouraged after hearing this broadcast, and decided to start the writing of her book. She changed, rearranged, combined entries of various dates, expanded and abbreviated the first version. In addition, she drew up a list of name changes. This version contains many events Anne didn't comprehend in version a. It seems that Anne either maintained a separate diary or had access to old newspapers or other sources when version b was prepared. She deleted petty details and insignificant incidents; simultaneously, she put in some anecdotes and changed complicated sentences into simpler ones.

The final version was translated by B. M. Mooyaart-Doubleday. This version was named *The Diary of Anne Frank*, published as *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* in 1952. This version includes a few scenes from the *Tales from the Secret Annex*, an unfinished novel by Anne Frank. Some scenes and names were deleted due to the survivors' request of privacy.

After the translation and adjustment of words, the diary was simpler and easier to understand. Some researchers denounce the diary as a forgery due to its systematical arrangement of each incident. They thought the writing style and her mature way of using words were impossible to be formed by a girl who just hit puberty. However, it is proved and laws are even set to indicate that there is nothing to dispute over the authenticity of the diary (204).

3. The comparison of the three versions:
I will mainly focus on the major events or scenes related to the historical incidents. Detailed descriptions of the historical background are added to make Anne's points more concrete.

The changes from version a to version b

What Anne added in version b are often what she heard after the accurate date the diary was written, so in version b she demonstrated the story in a more detailed and precise way.

For example, on July 5, 1942, Anne wrote in version b that his father talked about going into hiding, but this statement wasn't included in version a. Anne probably knew this later (after moving into the Secret Annex) and decided this is fairly important and added it. On September 25, 1942, Anne wrote in version a that the group of men in the Secret Annex and the underneath building who knew about their hiding were very smart and think of ways to make people believe that the Frank family had moved to New Zealand; In version b, she gave these men a name “Refuge Committee” and described further details. “I must say that the Refuge Committee of the 'Secret Annex' (male section) is very ingenious” (Frank 267).

On October 1, 1942, in version a, Anne wrote a letter to her cousin Conny confiding how much she is afraid of making loud noises; in version b, she wrote down how quiet she had to be and how doing that was driving her crazy: “We are as quiet as baby mice. Who, 3 months ago, would have guessed that quicksilver Anne would have to sit still for hours—and what's more, could?” (281) Anne often mentions how quiet the people in hiding have to be, and the difficulty of actually doing things without making any noise.

On October 3, 1942, in version a, Anne wrote a letter to her friend Marianne and mentioned that “these days were horrible” (284). Miep (one of the people who helped Anne Frank's family to hide) told her that the German police were dragging Jew from their house in south Amsterdam, and there were also terrible shootings. Anne wondered how many of her acquaintances were left. This incident isn't mentioned in either version b or c. Maybe Anne thought this was too horrible to mention.

On October 7, 1942, in version a, Anne wrote that she wanted to escape to Switzerland and spend large amounts of money on anything she wanted. She made a long list of items she wanted. I think she was having a daydream at that time, and didn't want to be unrealistic so she just dropped this part in version b.

On October 18, 1942, in version a, Miep told Anne that a man escaped from Wasterbork (a concentration camp), where things were horrible. Anne described a ruthless act performed by the Germans; they killed innocent people as guarantees against possible sabotage. In version b, Anne must have done some research because she wrote clearly how people were treated there; also many friends of the Frank family were captured. “It is almost impossible to escape; the people in the camp are all branded as inmates by their shorn heads and many also by their Jewish appearance” (302). She said that she heard from an English radio that Jews were gassed: “If it is as bad as this in Holland, whatever will it be like in the distant and barbarous regions they are sent to? We assume that most of them are murdered. The English radio speaks of their being gassed; perhaps that is the quickest way to die” (303). This was proved real, and in June 1942 the British press and the BBC began to refer to the gassings in Poland. Thus the 6:00 P.M. news on the BBC Home Service on July 9, 1942, included the following item: “Jews are regularly killed by
machine-gun fire, had grenades—and even poisoned by gas” (Banouw 293). The horrible act Anne mentioned in version a is explained plainly in version b. This act is called Hostage, and these outrages are described by the Germans as “fatal accidents”. Anne was very upset, and expressed her anguish by stating “[i]n fact, Germans and Jews are the greatest enemies in the world” (Frank 303).

On November 10, 1942, in version a, Anne wrote a letter to her cousin Conny, telling her about Peter's birthday and the news that English and American troops had landed in Tunis, Algeria, Casablanca and Oran. In version b, she quoted what the British Prime Minister Churchill had said: “This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning” (319). Anne thinks there are certainly reasons for optimism: “Starlingrad, the Russian place which they have already been defending for 3 months, still hasn't fallen into German hands” (320). Anne felt that Britain is going to defeat Germany sooner or later and the Jewish people would not be left stranded in the edge of death roll. In version c, the editors shortened the words Churchill said into only “[t]his is the beginning of the end” (320). to make the readers understand more easily. Anne adds in the last part what she just heard from the radio “Algiers has fallen. Morocco, Casablanca and Oran have been in British hands for several days. Now we're waiting for Tunis” (320).

On March 27, 1943, in version b, Anne wrote what she heard from the radio. Hanns Albin Rauter, the head of the German SS and police in the Netherlands, told an SS gathering on March 22, 1943 that “all Jew should be removed from the Netherlands, province by province. After May first we shall add Utrecht and finally North Holland and the city of Amsterdam” (Chiarello 128).

On December 22, 1943, in version a, Anne said she got a new diary and why she had not written much. In version b, she clearly described how catching a cold is a big deal when people are hiding. One simply cannot make any sound or would be discovered.

In conclusion, the changes from version a to version b are usually the completion of the descriptions of certain incidents. Anne added more of her thoughts on the specific topics. She corrected her own grammar and spelling problems to make the diary more complete and easier to read.

The changes from version b to version c

Version c is what got published and became the well-known novel *Anne Frank's Diary*. It deleted many scenes from versions a and b, due to the request of the survivors and Otto Frank, Anne Frank's father. The following are examples demonstrating the changes made from version b to version c.

On June 14, 1942, Anne wrote her first entry of diary. In versions a and b, she made a list of beautiful features and checked how many she had; this plot doesn't exist in version c, because the passage is not clear enough to make an entry.

On June 15, 1942, Anne recorded what she thought about each of her classmates in versions a and b, but the editors dropped this entry in version c, because some of the people Anne mentioned were still alive and didn't want to be presented in this way by the time the diary was published.
On October 7, 1942, Anne recorded a long list of items and their prices to demonstrate how expensive things were during the war. The list of items includes food, hygiene utensils, clothes, shoes, book and many other things. It was completely deleted in version c. Maybe the editors thought of this part as too long and disorganized to be put in a book.

On March 4, 1943, there's a very disorganized and incoherent diary entry. Each of the sentences is not related to the other, so the main point of this entry is not clear and cannot be changed. She seemed to be very upset or annoyed so the entry is unreadable. It does not appear in both versions b and c.

On July 19, 1943, in version b, Anne wrote that North Amsterdam was heavily bombed. She wondered how long it was going to take for the people to heal and for the city to be rebuilt. “I shudder when I recall the dull, droning rumble in the distance, which for us marked the approaching destruction” (Frank 392). This part is recorded in version c also. But in the later part of the diary Anne wrote something completely unrelated to the incident mentioned above. She described how she got exercise books and how rare paper was those days. However, this part is not recorded in version c, because the main point changed so drastically that it's hard for readers to grasp what she actually meant.

On August 7, 1943, Anne wrote a story about a girl named Kitty, who had the same fate as her. She imagined how Kitty played with her friends and how her living condition was. This story is not included in version c, because it's not her diary but a complete separated story.

On February 8, 1944, in version b, Anne recorded her thoughts on her parent's marriage and relationship. She was quite angry with her mother at that moment, so she wrote down some mean ideas: “if she had even one quality an understanding mother is supposed to have, gentleness or friendliness or patience or something, I'd keep trying to get closer to her. But as for loving this insensitive person, this mocking creature--it's becoming more and more impossible every day” (Frank 504). This entry is deleted in version c due to Otto Frank's request; he thought that the marriage and relationship between him and his wife was private and shouldn't be published in a book.

A few entries which Anne talked about sex are deleted; for example, on March 23, 1944, Anne recorded a conversation she had with Peter van Daan, a teenage boy whose family went into hiding along with Anne's. They talked about how contraceptive works and the physical differences between males and females. Because many children would read the book, the editors decided to delete the passage for fear of its negative effects. However, these entries aroused countless criticisms, among which some scholars, such as Ditlieb Felderer, even published a book claiming that Anne's diary is a forgery (Felderer 247). The terms he used in the book were harsh and without embellish, such as “The first child porno” and “Sexual Extravaganza” (424). I think to keep a diary is to record what happens in your everyday life, so to fake it or make it looks wonderful would lose the whole point. Anne's recordings may seem bold, but she wrote exactly and precisely. That's what we want to see in a diary, truthful and without holding back.

There were not many changes from version b to version c, because the editors and translators wanted to present the diary as authentic as possible. If it was changed too much, it would have lost the power to move so many people in the world.

(3) The appearance of the epilogue
In version c, Anne's last entry of the diary was dated on August 1, 1944. On August 4, 1944, Anne and the other members of the Secret Annex were betrayed and captured by the German police. They were sent to German and Dutch concentration camps, and only Otto Frank, Anne Frank's father, came back to the Netherlands alive after the war. While the Secret Annex was plundered by the Gestapo, it was fortunate enough that Anne's diary was unnoticed and kept by Miep Gies. She returned the diary to Otto Frank after he came back to the Netherlands.

The epilogue wasn't added in the first publication of the novel, but the editors and Otto Frank thought that it's important to let the readers know what happened after the diary ended. They put an article in the final part of the book to demonstrate what happened to each of the members in the Secret Annex. The article includes where they went to after the arrest and how many times they were transferred, their death date and where and how they died.

Some people considered it cruel to read the epilogue after reading the whole diary, because just they couldn't force themselves to accept the fact that the girl who was so lively writing a few days ago was captured and killed after just a few years. But the appearance of the epilogue is indeed important, for we have to understand that war is cruel and we can't predict what will happen in the next second.

4. Conclusion

Anne Frank's Diary demonstrates how it feels to be forced to hide, and how war is terrible in every way. When Anne wrote her first entry of the diary, she could never imagine that one day this diary would be published and read by people of all generations, genders, and ethnicities. Perhaps that's why she wrote it so truthfully. From Anne's changes of words and the adding of more complete explanations of each event, we can realize she actually spent much time on her diary. She not only recorded what happened in her life, but also marked down the news and her feelings upon hearing about the war. It indeed helped a lot to people who haven't experienced war in their lives. We can imagine how it feels to live in fear and anxiety, to picture ourselves as the victims in the war.

We should learn something from history, and try to avert ourselves from making the same mistakes again. What Anne's diary teaches us is not just how one copes with a helpless condition, but how one manages to stay optimistic in it. Her diary will be passed on, and her spirit will be remembered forever in everyone's heart.

Works Cited


The law which justifies the authenticity of the diary was set in 1998, when the Amsterdam District Court came to the conclusion that any comments indicate the false or the forgery of Anne Frank's diary should be charged with the crime of slander.

Even after the law was set, there are still scholars who held different points from the massive and grated the conception that the diary was not real. They tried really hard to prove it but eventually had to give up.

On Friday and Saturday, October 2 and 3, 1942, there were large-scale raids in Amsterdam and nearly 5000 Jews were seized.