

# CITING SOURCES

Academic writing differs in a number of ways from newspaper and magazine articles, fiction novels, or popular non-fiction books. The goals of academic writing are (usually) *not* to entertain or provide concise information in a digest format. Instead, academic writing aims either to present research or findings, make an argument based on strong supporting evidence, or broadly overview a particular subject by examining a variety of topics or examples. Academic writing is never an opinion-piece or editorial; that is to say, it is the ideal of academic writing to leave one's personal opinion out of the discussion and to check your bias at the door.

When writing academic papers and essays, you must cite the sources you use for your information. This handout provides information on what types of sources must be cited, why we cite, when to cite, and how to cite.

## Types of Sources

There are two types of sources: **primary** and **secondary** sources. For our purposes, primary sources are ancient accounts of historical events—oftentimes first-hand witnesses—or other ancient literature that can be interpreted to help us understand religions, cultures, and societies of the past. For example then, the Bible contains some works that are historical accounts (like the books of 1-2 Kings), but also books that do not present history, but give us insight into ancient forms of worship and belief (like the book of Psalms). These are all primary sources. Material remains, that is, archaeological finds (including architecture), are also primary sources because they can be directly studied in order to understand the ancient world.

Secondary sources are typically books or articles that discuss or examine the ancient sources. A textbook, for example, can be considered a secondary source. Secondary sources are always modern sources; however, the definition of “modern” can change depending on the topic. For our class, “modern” means anything since 1950. If you find a source older than this that you'd like to use, check with the instructor first.

Both primary and secondary sources should be cited in academic writing, but the format will often look different depending on the type of source (see below). Note that “lecture notes” or “professor's comments” don't appear as either primary or secondary sources. That is because these are not valid sources for academic writing. In the academic world, if it's not written and published, it might as well not exist. If you want a citation for something that was said in class, ask the instructor. If you want to use a comment made by a fellow student in class, then just add in a footnote saying something like, “I thank so-and-so for suggesting this to me.”

## Why Cite?

There are two reasons to cite sources:

- (1) **Give credit where credit is due.** It's important to cite those who provide you with useful information. Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic ethics and code of conduct. Most student plagiarism is inadvertent. Malicious plagiarism is shameful and embarrassing, but inadvertent plagiarism is no less dishonest. It is in your best interest to become well-informed of what constitutes plagiarism. I suggest that you review the university policy on the matter *and* discuss plagiarism with your instructor(s) whenever you are unsure.
- (2) **Support your evidence and arguments.** Just because you write it, doesn't make it true. You need to support every bit of information you write with good evidence. Ideally, all your evidence would come from a detailed study of primary sources. Usually though, this is not reasonably possible. Moreover, most primary evidence has already been extensively researched by others. So, in order to utilize that evidence, you should cite the secondary author who provides an interpretation or discussion of the primary evidence.

For example, if I were to say, "Ninety-four percent of the students in my courses claim to prefer chocolate ice-cream over vanilla," you would want to see some evidence for that, right? I could cite one of two pieces of information for this apparent fact: I could either cite a study that I myself conducted on ice-cream preferences among students in my courses, and provide details in a footnote of how and when this study was conducted; or I could cite the famous 2006 study, *Ice-cream and the Average University Student in Steve's Courses*, conducted by the Hood Foundation for Research on Ice-cream and Other Frozen Treats. The former would be a citation of primary evidence; the latter would be a citation of secondary evidence. In either case, I'm providing evidence—the quality of which is up to the reader!—to help support my statement and make it more credible.

### When to Cite

Cite your sources as often as possible; there's no such thing as over-citing. You can never have *too much* support for your arguments and statements. The best academic studies have footnotes to nearly every sentence. (The worst "studies" and research—typically found on the best-seller, nonfiction shelves at Barnes and Noble and Borders, and purportedly written by talking-heads with their picture on the cover—have little to no citations, and, if you can push through the rhetoric, often include arguments that look a lot like Swiss cheese.)

More specifically, you should cite a source any time you use a piece of information that you picked up from something you read. Don't rely on "common knowledge." In academia, there's really no such thing. If you are unsure as to where you picked up that information, you need to sift through your readings and find it.

### Quotes and Quoting

**Secondary Sources:** When it comes to writing style, using quotes is a fine art. It's very easy to *over-quote*, so use quotes sparingly. In general, it is best to paraphrase your secondary sources. By putting others' ideas into your own words, you keep the writing style consistent and avoid breaking up the flow of the prose. In

addition, paraphrasing indicates to your reader that you know what you're talking about—an especially important matter when it's a graded assignment!

**Primary Sources:** Quoting primary sources is more common and typically more necessary than quoting secondary sources. The primary sources can be a powerful tool in supporting your argument, but again, be careful to avoid over-quoting. If the quote is more than three lines long, you should separate it from the paragraph and make a block-quote (without quotation marks), single-spaced, and indented from the left one-half inch.

Whenever you quote (whether primary or secondary sources), it is important to introduce the quote somehow and integrate it into the essay appropriately. For example:

Trolls and other bothersome supernatural beings are often found living under bridges and in enchanted forests. P. R. Wilson has characterized these habitats as “darkened areas that allow the mischievous to congregate and swarm” (Wilson 1994: 27). As such, one should not expect to find a troll living in a meadow.

Notice how the quote is incorporated smoothly into the prose. The use of the quote is logical; the author is pointing out the specific way in which P. R. Wilson described the habitats under discussion. Here's another example, using an ancient source:

Details contained within the Book of Tobit set the *terminus post quem* for its original composition after the 612 B.C.E. For example, the book claims that Tobiah “witnessed the exile of the city [of Ninevah's] inhabitants when Cyaxares, king of Media, led them captive into Media” (Tob. 14:15).

The line from Tobit is not hanging in limbo by itself, but is fully integrated into the paragraph.

### Online Resources

Internet websites can provide valuable and credible information for research purposes. The problem is that anyone can post whatever they want online, making it difficult for non-specialists to recognize the good websites from the junk. (Conversely, academic books and articles go through a long process of peer-review before being published.) Wikipedia for instance provides a lot of useful information for quick-access, however it is *not* a credible resource for our purposes since it is not reviewed by qualified specialists prior to online publication. That said, a website like Wikipedia *can* point you toward credible sources, particularly books, articles, journals, or encyclopedias and dictionaries.

In general, websites are *not* an acceptable resource for our course unless they have been approved by the instructor. If you come across a website that you find useful and would like to use as a source or share with your classmates, please contact the instructor first.

NOTE: Some academic journals are published online in addition to paper-form on JSTOR or other subscription-requisite, online journal providers. If the journal website is accessed through the university's library website, then it *is* acceptable to use without contacting the instructor.

### Citing Ancient Sources

Most ancient sources that we use in class can be cited by the ancient author, title, and section alone, without the information for the modern publication or source reader. So for example, if you cite Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, book twelve, paragraph fifty, you simply can write "Jos., *Antiq.* 12: 50." For a list of abbreviations, see the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* in your library.

### Ibid. and Idem

In order to avoid repeating names and titles over and over again, you can sometimes use "*ibid.*" and "*idem.*"

*Ibid.* is short for the Latin term *ibidem*, meaning "in the same place." It is used to refer to the same work as the one cited immediately before. (See below on format.)

*Idem* is Latin for "the same," meaning the same author as the previous. It is used when the author is the same as the previously cited, but the work is different. (See below on format.)

## CITATION FORMATS

There many different formats one can use for citing. For the sake of standarization, you are required to use one of the following two formats in our course. Format 1 is used by the *Journal of Biblical Literature (JBL)* and employs footnote citations. Format 2 is used by the *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research (BASOR)* and employs in-text citations. Choose one of these formats to use; do not mix them together.

When citing, you should be as accurate and precise as possible so that your reader can look up the reference. You should almost always include page numbers, and never refer to a chapter only.

### **Format 1: Journal of Biblical Literature**

The JBL format uses footnotes. Use the “Insert Footnote” function in whatever word-processing program you are using. The first time a work is cited, it should include all the publishing information (as in footnote 1 below). After the first time, you can abbreviate, using only the last name of the author, and an abbreviated version of the title (like footnote 8 below). Because all of the publication information should be in the footnote (the first time it is cited), a bibliography at the end of the paper is not necessary. The footnotes should like one of the following:

#### Books

- 1 Steven H. Werlin, *Introduction to Judaism* (Boston: Bozo Publishing, 2008), 122-33.
- 8 Werlin, *Judaism*, 134.

#### Articles or Chapters in Edited Volumes

- 1 Steven H. Werlin, “Understanding Ancient Judaism,” in *Introduction to Judaism* (ed. E. Wright; Boston: Bozo Publishing, 2008), 37-95.
- 8 Werlin, “Understanding,” 41.

#### Journal Articles

- 1 Steven H. Werlin, “Lecture as a Means of Torture,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 125 (2008): 1-44.
- 8 Werlin, “Lecture,” 9-11.

#### Ancient/Primary Sources

- 1 Dan. 4.12.
- 2 Jos., *Ant.* 4.33-122.

#### Ibid. and Idem.

- 1 Werlin, *Judaism*, 12.

2 *Ibid.*, 44.

3 *Idem*, “Recitation,” 7.

### **Format 2: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research***

The format for *BASOR* uses in-text citation, meaning that footnotes are *not* used. Instead the citation is put in parentheses within the text. The citation should be placed at the end of the sentence (before the period). If the citation is for a quote, then the quote should be closed, followed by the citation in parentheses, followed by the final punctuation mark (period, question mark, exclamation mark). If the quote appears in the middle of the sentence, then the citation can go immediately after it, rather than at the end of the sentence.

This format places the bibliographic information for each source at the end of the paper in a “Works Cited” section only, *not* within the parentheses of the in-text citation. For secondary sources, the footnote includes only the last name of the author, year it was published, and the page number. If more than one work was used by the same author in the same year, the sources are differentiated by letters. If the same source is used as the one in the previous footnote, only the page numbers are necessary. If the source has the same author, then only the year and page numbers are necessary.

For primary sources, if the author has more than one known work, there should be an abbreviated form of the author’s name, and then an abbreviated form of the title of the work in italics, then the book/chapter and verse numbers. If there is only one known work by the author, then simply the name and numbers will suffice.

#### *In-text Citations*

(Werlin 2000a: 38).

(*Ibid.*, 104-55).

(*Idem*, 1998: 21).

(Jos., *Ant.* 17.2-9).

(Jer. 12.12).

#### *Works Cited* (at the end of the paper, entitled “Works Cited”)

Werlin, Steven H.

2008        The First Jewish Revolt and Josephus. *Journal of Biblical Literature*  
125: 101-104.

Werlin, Steven H.

1998        *Introduction to Judaism*. Boston: Bozo Publishing.

- 2000a      Understanding Ancient Judaism. Pp. 37-95 in *Introduction to Judaism*, eds. J. E. Wright and B. Alpert-Nakhai. Boston: Bozo Publishing.
- 2000b      Lecture as a Means of Torture. *Bulleting of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 44: 99-155.

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