

LIBRARY



Dr. Brian Saunders
Humanities Librarian

MLA: Cite Like the Devil

ANTONIO: Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite. . . . (Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*).

Darkness Visible: Citation as a Black Art

Even if the Modern Language Association is not a satanic cult, MLA citation can seem devilishly tricky. But keep in mind that citation serves angelic ends: acknowledgement of the sources which have informed your work and sufficient information to find them.

A citation style attempts to say “My name is legion” in a single voice: personal letters and legal cases, journal articles and online books, television broadcasts and music downloads—all must adhere to a uniform code. You may be forgiven if you find the rules infernally fussy, but remember that Hell too is a bulwark against chaos.

Devil in the Details

For complete citation guidelines see the 2009 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*.

Confession of a Justified Sinner:

I have single-spaced this guide for compactness. Remember the MLA requires
Works Cited lists to be entirely double-spaced.

Books: In Print

To cite a book written by one or more authors *or* compiled by one or more editors, begin with the first author’s/editor’s name, inverted:

Delbanco, Andrew. *The Death of Satan: How Americans Have Lost the Sense of Evil*. New York: Farrar, 1996. Print.

Richardson, James T., Joel Best, and David G. Bromley, eds. *The Satanism Scare*. New York: Gruyter, 1991. Print.

- In the case of multiple authors or editors, invert only the first name (all other names occurring anywhere in the citation should be in the normal order).
- If there are more than three authors or editors, list them all or list only the first followed by “et al”: Cypher, Louis, et al.
- Give the full title (including any subtitle) with conventional capitalization. Titles of books should be italicized (but be aware that MLA recommends you substitute underlining in personally printed documents since this is visually clearer).

- If more than one city is listed as the publisher’s address on the title page, use only the first.
- Abbreviate the name of a publisher to the fewest words allowing clear identification. In the first example above, the full name of the publisher is Farrar, Straus and Giroux, and in the second the full name is Aldine De Gruyter.
- The preferred date is the date of publication or printing— only use copyright if no other date is listed. In the first example above the copyright was 1995 but the volume in hand was listed as a third printing in 1996, so that is the date used.

To cite a single essay or story in a collection, begin with the author and title of the specific work:

Martin, Daniel, and Gary Alan Fine. “Satanic Cults, Satanic Play: Is ‘Dungeons & Dragons’ a Breeding Ground for the Devil?” *The Satanism Scare*. Ed. James T. Richardson, Joel Best, and David G. Bromley. New York: Gruyter, 1991. 107-123. Print.

- Essay or story titles are put in quotations marks. (Although the capitalization and punctuation of a title should be reproduced exactly in a citation, any quotation marks already in the title-- “Dungeons & Dragons”--become single--‘Dungeons & Dragons’--when the entire title is enclosed in quotation marks.)
- If citing the entire book (see previous example), Richardson, Best, and Bromley are identified as eds. (editors). Here, where their names follow the title, ed. stands for “edited by” and so no “s” is added.
- When citing a component part of a book, the inclusive page numbers for that part should be added after the publication information.

To cite a scholarly edition and/or translation of a work, begin with the author and title, followed by the editor and/or translator:

Dante Alighieri. *Inferno*. Ed. Giuseppe Mazzotta. Trans. Michael Palma. New York: Norton, 2007. Print.

- If the editor and translator are the same person, follow the title with “Ed. and trans.” (Edited and translated by). For example: Dante Alighieri. *Inferno*. Ed. and trans. Louis Cypher.

To cite an illustrated book or a graphic novel in which the illustrator is different from the author, begin with author and title, followed by the illustrator:

Dante Alighieri. *Inferno*. Illus. Barry Moser. Berkeley: U of California P, 1980. Print.

To cite a multivolume work from which you are using two or more volumes, cite the entire set:

Dante Alighieri. *Dante Alighieri’s Divine Comedy*. Trans. and commentary by Mark Musa. 6 vols. Bloomington: Indiana U P, 1996-2004. Print.

- The total number of volumes follows the title of the work—and any editor/translator/illustrator information.
- References to specific volumes belong in the parenthetical citations in your text: for example (Dante 2:34) would follow a quotation from volume 2, page 34.
- Note that multivolume works are sometimes published over a span of years as indicated by a hyphen: 1996-2004.
- Also note that although Ed.=”Edited by” and Trans.=”Translated by” when following the title, there is no such abbreviation for “commentary,” so this is spelled out and “by” added.

To cite a multivolume work from which you are using only one volume, include the volume number after the title and any editor/translator/illustrator information, then add publication information for that volume alone:

Dante Alighieri. *Dante Alighieri’s Divine Comedy*. Trans. and commentary by Mark Musa. Vol. 5. Bloomington: Indiana U P, 2004. Print.

- Note that whereas the publication date for the complete set in the previous example was an eight year span, here you use only the year when this volume was published.

To cite an Introduction, Preface, Foreword, or Afterword written by someone other than the author, begin with this name, followed by the name of the part being cited--Introduction, etc.--followed by the name of the work, followed by the author of the work:

Jung, C. G. Introduction. *Lucifer and Prometheus: A Study of Milton’s Satan*. By R. J. Zwi Werblowsky. London: Routledge, 1952. Print

- If the Introduction is otherwise untitled, use neither italics nor quotation marks—see above. If the Introduction has a title, give that after the author’s name and place it in quotation marks: Cypher, Louis. “Speak of the Devil.” Preface.
- Follow the Introduction with the title of the complete work and the author’s full name, preceded with “By”—see example.
- If the author of the Introduction is also the author of the complete work, use only the last name after the work’s title: Cypher, Louis. “Speak of the Devil.” Preface. *The Diabolist*. By Cypher.

To cite a book in a language other than English, include the same information as for an English language book, to which you may add an English translation of the title:

Major, Andre. *Vent du Diable: Roman [Devil Wind: A Novel]*. Montreal: Stanke, 1982. Print.

- If you include an English translation of a title, it should follow the foreign language title and be placed in brackets. Likewise, if the city of publication is in a form unlikely to be familiar to English readers, you can add the English version in brackets.

To cite an edition other than the first, include edition information after the title and the names of any editor/translator/illustrator:

Bierce, Ambrose. *The Unabridged Devil's Dictionary*. Ed. David E. Schulz and S. T. Joshi. Rev. ed. Athens: U Georgia P, 2000. Print.

- In addition to a revised edition—Rev. ed.—you may encounter numbered editions—2nd ed., 3rd ed.—facsimile editions—Facsim. ed.—abridged editions—Abr. ed.—or dated editions—2007 ed.

To cite an anonymous work, one published before 1900, or one with a very long title:

Tom Brown Arrested by the Devil, or, A True and Wonderful Relation how the Devil Met Him on Ludgate Hill. . . . London, 1698. Print.

- If the work is anonymous, begin with the title (dropping any initial A, An, or The).
- If the work was published before 1900, omit the name of the publisher and follow the city of publication with a comma and the date.
- If a work has a very lengthy title you may shorten it, indicating omissions with ellipses—three spaced periods if the omission occurs within the title or four periods if the omission is at the end of the title (and if four periods, leave no space before the first one, as above).

To cite a “corporate author” (a committee, association, commission, organization, or group named on the title page but from which no individual authors or editors are credited):

Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th ed. New York: MLA, 2009. Print.

- Give the full name of the organization (don't use initials or acronyms), but omit any initial “The” (the official name of the organization in this example is The Modern Language Association of America). If the corporate author is also the publisher and is commonly known by initials or an acronym, you may use that in the publisher identification—see above.
- Remember, the MLA is probably not a satanic cult.

To cite an entry/article from a reference book, begin with the author or, if there is no author, the title of the entry (some reference works use authors' initials at the ends of articles, with full names listed elsewhere).

“Devil.” Def. 2d. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. Print.

- If entries/articles are arranged alphabetically, you may omit volume and page numbers.
- If the reference book is a standard, widely used resource—*New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, *World Almanac and Book of Facts*—you should omit place and publisher and give only edition and date.
- For a dictionary entry you may wish to specify a particular definition—usually designated by number or number and letter: Def. 3 or Def. 2c.

Sharma, Arvind. "Satan." *Encyclopedia of Religion*. Ed. Lindsay Jones. 2nd ed. 15 vols. Detroit: Thomson, 2005. Print.

- When citing a specialized reference work, treat the article as you would an essay from a collection and provide full publication details, including total number of volumes if it is a multivolume work arranged alphabetically.
- If entries/articles in a reference work are not arranged alphabetically, you must include a specific volume number just before the publisher information and a page or page range just after the date.

Books: From Subscription Databases

Norton, Mary Beth. *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692*. New York: Vintage, 2003. *ebrary*. Web. 17 Dec. 2008.

Shaw, George Bernard. *Three Plays for Puritans: The Devil's Disciple; Caesar and Cleopatra; Captain Brassbound's Conversion*. Ed. Dan H. Laurence. London: Penguin, 2000. *Literature Online*. Web. 2 Jan. 2009.

- Full text books may sometimes be available from subscription databases such as *ebrary* and *Literature Online*. To cite these, simply give all the required print information that is available and add the database name (in italics, reproducing the spelling, capitalization, and spacing of the name exactly), the medium of publication—Web—and the date of access (note that all months are abbreviated except May, June, and July).
- Most online books you cite will be digitalized versions of print editions. In a database like *ebrary*, the book's title page, front and back, will include all the information you need to cite it. In *Literature Online*, however, you must click on "Bibliographic Details," and consult the record for "Source Text."
- Note that MLA citation no longer requires you to include a URL or identify the institution through which you have access to a subscription database.

Books: On the Web

Twain, Mark. *The Mysterious Stranger*. Illus. N. C. Wyeth. New York: Harper, 1916. *Electronic Text Center*. University of Virginia Library. Web. 30 Nov. 2008.

Webster, John. *The White Devil*. Prod. Julie C. Sparks. N. p.: n.p., 2004. *Project Gutenberg*. Web. 18 Dec. 2008.

Book Citation with Optional Web Address:

Benet, Stephen Vincent. *The Devil and Daniel Webster*. Illus. Harold Denison. New York: Farrar, n.d. *Law in Popular Culture Collection*. Talton Law Lib., U of Texas at Austin. Web. 20 Oct. 2008. < <http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/lpop/etext/devil/devil.htm>>.

- Books available from Web sites may supply full information on a print source (*The Mysterious Stranger* above) or virtually nothing (*Project Gutenberg*, above, sometimes "produces" its texts

by transcribing from several unidentified print editions). As always with Web citation, you must conscientiously look for required information, but finally omit what isn't there—see the N.p. (no place) and n.p. (no publisher) in *The White Devil* and also the n.d. (no date) in *The Devil and Daniel Webster*.

- Note that the names of Web sites are italicized and followed by the name of any “publisher or sponsor” of the site.
- The MLA’s revised standards for Web citation no longer require—or even recommend—inclusion of a Web address (URL). Consult your instructors for their preferences. If including a URL, it may only be divided between lines after a slash, even if this leaves blank space at the end of a line. Also note that MLA now requires a period to separate the access date from the URL.