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MLA Citation Style Guide II: Parenthetical References

BASIC GUIDELINES

Sections 6.1–6.3 of the *MLA Handbook (7th ed.)* provide general guidelines, including:

- In addition to providing a list of Works Cited (see *MLA Citation Style Guide I*), MLA Style also requires that you indicate exactly what information you derived from each source and exactly where in the work this information can be found.
- MLA recommends inserting a brief parenthetical acknowledgement in the text of your paper "wherever you incorporate another's words, facts, or ideas" (*MLA Handbook* 214). The parenthetical reference in the preceding sentence, for example, indicates that the quotation comes from page 214 of the *MLA Handbook*.
- The parenthetical reference refers the reader to the Works Cited at the end of the paper where complete publication information is provided.
- Parenthetical references should be brief. Providing the author's last name and a page reference is generally sufficient to identify both the source and the specific location where the material was found. In cases where there is no author, use the title, shortened or in full, as in the example above.
- In the absence of page numbers (as with many web publications), use section or paragraph numbers only if these numbers appear in the text. There is no need to count unnumbered paragraphs. Paragraph numbers are preceded by par. or pars. (see section 6.4.2. for details).
- The preferred location for the parenthetical reference is at the end of the sentence (preceding the period) containing the material documented. If the parenthetical reference follows a quotation, place it after the closing quotation mark.

Guidelines for creating a list of works cited are provided in *MLA Citation Style Guide I: Preparing a List of Works Cited*.

SELECTED EXAMPLES

Examples of parenthetical references in this guide refer, when possible, to sources listed in *MLA Citation Style Guide I: Preparing a list of Works Cited*.

Citing an Entire Work

When citing an entire work (such as a book, film, broadcast), MLA recommends including in the text, rather than in a parenthetical reference, the name of the person that begins the corresponding entry in the Works Cited (see 6.4.1).

Example: Schuster discusses how the writings of Baudrillard can inform a reading of DeLillo's treatment of consumerism.

Citing Part of a Work

When quoting, paraphrasing or using a specific passage from a book or other work, relevant page or section numbers must be given in a parenthetical reference (see 6.4.2).

Example: One relation between mourning and photography in contemporary French narrative “involves the inclusion of photographs within the page of the text” (Fortin 696).

If the cited author’s name is included in the sentence, the name does not need to be repeated in the parenthetical reference. In this case, include only the page numbers.

Example : The “inclusion of photographs within the page of the text” is, Fortin writes, but one possible relation between mourning and photography (696).

Citing Two or More Works by the Same Author(s)

If your Works Cited includes two or more works by the same author, include in the parenthetical reference the title (if brief) or shortened version of the title of the work cited (see 6.4.6). The example that follows assumes a Works Cited which includes more than one work by Jutta Fortin.

Example: One relation between mourning and photography in contemporary French narrative “involves the inclusion of photographs within the page of the text” (Fortin, *Mourning* 696).

Citing Indirect Sources

As a general rule, original sources are preferable to secondhand sources. If only an indirect (secondhand) source is available, you must cite the item you used. Quoting or paraphrasing Jean Baudrillard based on a quote found in Mark Schuster’s book would be an example of an indirect source. Use the abbreviation *qtd. in* if the material you quote or paraphrase is itself a quotation (see 6.4.7).

Example: According to Baudrillard, consumption is a “mode of systematic activity and global response which founds our entire cultural system” (qtd. in Schuster 15).

Citing More than One Work in a Single Parenthetical Reference

When citing two or more works in a single parenthetical reference, separate citations with a semicolon (see 6.4.9).

Example: (Beers; Whitworth and Friedman)

This guide is based on the latest edition of the *MLA Handbook*. For more details and examples, please see:

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th ed. New York: Modern Languages Association of America, 2009. Copies are available at LB 2369 .G53 2009 in the Reference Collection of both libraries.

This guide and the *MLA Citation Style Guide I: Preparing a List of Works Cited* are available online:http://www.mta.ca/library/mla_guide1.pdf | http://www.mta.ca/library/mla_guide2.pdf

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