Citations

Citations are absolutely essential in any academic paper, but particularly and especially in history. All information that is not from your own head must be cited, whether it's a direct quote, a paraphrase, or even just an idea.

Citations are how we can tell the difference between what you're claiming is your research and analysis, and the work of others. If you don't cite others' work, you're claiming it for your own, and that's plagiarism. Plagiarism is not tolerated at any academic institution; the lightest you'll get off is a zero for the paper, but in many cases harsher penalties are invoked, including an F for the course and academic disciplinary proceedings that may result in a range of transcript-damaging punishments.

It is therefore crucial that you distinguish evidence you've gathered from primary and secondary sources from your own discussion, interpretation, and analysis. You do that with citations.

Having proper citations means making sure your paper has both of the following

- a bibliography: A list of the books and articles you used, and

- footnotes or in-text cites: which item in your bibliography a piece of information came from, plus a page number.

See the above links for more on how to make sure your papers are properly sourced and cited.

Sources

What kinds of evidence can you use, and what are the problems with them?

1. **Primary sources** are documents and artifacts that come from the time and place being investigated and so provide first-hand testimony.

2. **Secondary sources** are where a scholar writes about and interprets *primary* sources, drawing conclusions about what they tell us about the time and place they come from. Secondary sources include scholarly books that use primary sources and articles in peer-reviewed academic journals.

3. **Tertiary sources** involve writers bringing together *secondary* sources and averaging them out to make general statements about history.

Primary Sources

Primary sources are great because they give us direct access to what we're writing about. But you must remember that they are not the truth and must not be taken at face value.

Primary sources are always distorted by intentional bias (the author wants to convince you of something); unintentional bias (the author's writing is shaped by his or her culture and upbringing); point of view (the author only knows what he or she actually saw); translation (all ancient sources were written in another language unlike English, so the content is always altered by translation); survival (only some documents survive from the ancient world, and some of them were deliberately selected to survive in the intervening centuries while others were not, skewing out evidence pool). *You must always ask what idea the author was trying to convince you of in writing the work at hand.*

If the events themselves are "level zero", primary sources ("level one") are a full layer of distortion away from the truth. Because of bias and point of view, there is always this layer of distortion in all primary sources. All primary source evidence is skewed and we cannot know the pure truth. There are no facts in history. Consequently, primary source evidence must always be unpacked for bias and other distortions.

Secondary Sources

Secondary sources are valuable because they provide both expert testimony and useful contextualization not always present in primary sources. But secondary sources are, by their nature, interpretations. They are the subjective conclusions of a particular researcher, and history works by historians looking at the same evidence and positing different and often conflicting interpretations until there is a general agreement (which in many cases does not happen, especially in ancient history where there's less evidence to examine). They are not the truth either; they are informed opinion. Secondary evidence adds a layer of interpretation to events, distancing them even further from events than primary sources.
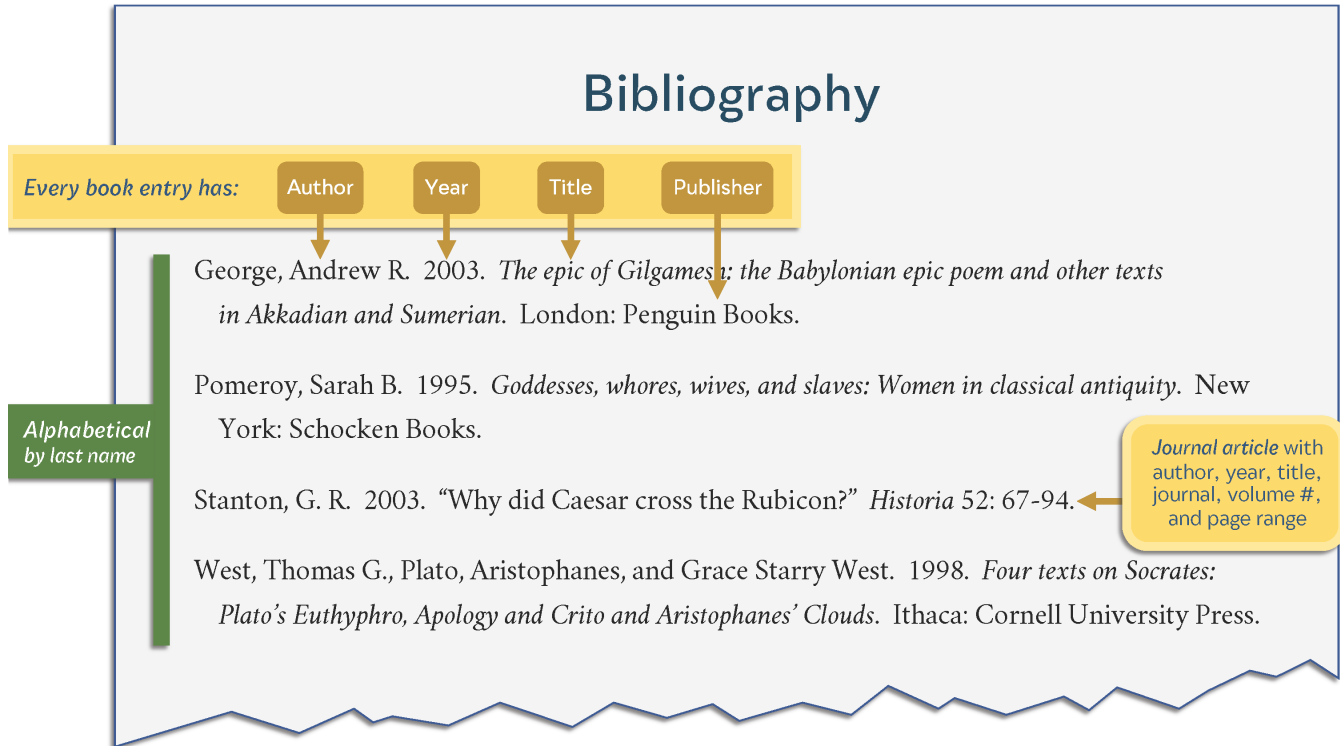
Tertiary Sources

These include *textbooks, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and most web sites* (excluding peer-reviewed journals and transcriptions of primary sources). Also banned are "*reference entries*" (these generally come from encyclopedias) and reviews, which involve a scholar talking about a secondary source (and which is therefore tertiary). You want the secondary source itself, not a review.

Tertiary sources are not allowed under any circumstances, and you will be strongly penalized for citing tertiary sources in any paper for a history course. The level of distortion, away from the testimony of primary sources and the nuanced arguments of secondary sources, is too great.

Bibliographies

Every written assignment must have a bibliography listing all books and articles used.

Here's what it should look like:

Bibliography

Every book entry has: Author | Year | Title | Publisher

Alphabetical by last name

George, Andrew R. 2003. *The epic of Gilgamesh: the Babylonian epic poem and other texts in Akkadian and Sumerian.* London: Penguin Books.

Pomeroy, Sarah B. 1995. *Goddesses, whores, wives, and slaves: Women in classical antiquity.* New York: Schocken Books.

Stanton, G. R. 2003. "Why did Caesar cross the Rubicon?" *Historia* 52: 67-94.

Journal article with author, year, title, journal, volume #, and page range

West, Thomas G., Plato, Aristophanes, and Grace Starry West. 1998. *Four texts on Socrates: Plato's Euthyphro, Apology and Crito and Aristophanes' Clouds.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

The idea is that anyone looking at your paper should be able to find the sources you used. So you list each source you used with its basic identifying info. For books, that's author, year, title, and publisher.

FAQ: Bibliography

- **Where can I find the info?** Check the copyright page. If there's more than one copyright year, use the earliest one. Or look it up on worldcat.org.

- **Ebooks too?** Yes. Online full-text ebooks and ebooks downloaded to a reader must also be listed. Usually there's still a copyright page. With full-text resources found through the Library's OneSearch feature, the info you need will be on the library info page you opened it up from.

- **Chicago style? MLA?** I don't care which academic style you use. Two things matter: that you list each source you used (once), and that each entry contains author, year, title, and publisher.

- **What about journal articles?** Same idea: you give the author, year, article title, journal name, journal volume number, and page range. See the third entry in the sample above for an example.

- **How do I list online primary sources?** Online primary sources were almost always transcribed from a book. Most of the time the info on that book is listed at the beginning of the translation, or at the bottom of the web page. Make sure to include the translator's name, the year, and the publisher. If you can't find it, email me.

Footnotes & In-Text Cites

All info that came from your sources must be cited with a footnote or an in-text parenthetical citation.

Two key ideas to bear in mind:

1. Doesn't matter if it's a quote, a paraphrase, a description, or an idea. If it came from a source, it must be cited.

2. A footnote says this information came from one of the items in your bibliography, and that it came from a particular page.

1 Any information that came from your sources *must be cited,* whether it's *a direct quote, a paraphrase, a description, or even an idea.*

Prostitutes are consistently shown in ancient literature to be outside the social structure of the community, and yet at the same time they are presented as manifestations of the feminine idea. In *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Enkidu's actuation as a man, a citizen, and as a counterpart to Gilgamesh is all made possible by the harlot Shamhat, who performs "the work of a woman"[1]—the miraculous transformation of a male beast of the wild into a valuable member of society on equal footing to its king. The most famous woman in fifth-century Athens was Aspasia, who started as a trained consort (called a *hetaera*) and ended as a madam.[2] She stood separate from conventional society, yet was still seen as an empowered embodiment

direct quote? footnote it

info from a source, but not quoted? footnote it

_____
[1] George, 7.
[2] Pomeroy, 89.

A footnote says: "I found the information I'm quoting or describing in this book, on this page." Like so:

Prostitutes are consistently shown in ancient literature to be outside the social structure of the community, and yet at the same time they are presented as manifestations of the feminine idea. In *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Enkidu's actuation as a man, a citizen, and as a counterpart to Gilgamesh is all made possible by the harlot Shamhat, who performs "the work of a woman"[1]—the miraculous transformation of a male beast of the wild into a valuable member of society on equal footing to its king. The most famous woman in fifth-century Athens was Aspasia, who started as a trained consort (called a *hetaera*) and ended as a madam.[2] She stood separate from conventional society, yet was still seen as an empowered embodiment

_____
[1] George, 7.
[2] Pomeroy, 89.

2 *A footnote points to an item in the bibliography and adds a page number.*

Bibliography

George, Andrew R. 2003. *The epic of Gilgamesh: the Babylonian epic poem and other texts in Akkadian and Sumerian.* London: Penguin Books.

Pomeroy, Sarah B. 1995. *Goddesses, whores, wives, and slaves: Women in classical antiquity.* New York: Schocken Books.

Stanton, G. R. 2003. "Why did Caesar cross the Rubicon?" *Historia* 52: 67-94.

West, Thomas G., Plato, Aristophanes, and Grace Starry West. 1998. *Four texts on Socrates: Plato's Euthyphro, Apology and Crito and Aristophanes' Clouds.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

FAQ: Footnotes & in-text cites

- **Do I have to use footnotes?** No. You can use in-text parenthetical cites, as in (George, 7).

- **How do I footnote?** In most programs, go to the Insert menu and click on "Footnote…".

- **What if the author appears twice in the bibliography?** Give the author name plus part of the title, then the page number, as in (Pomeroy, Goddesses 89).

- **What about ancient primary sources?** There's a special way. See the Ancient Sources page.

Citing Ancient Sources

With an ancient primary source, you cite author, work, book, and section in the footnote. The specific book or web transcription you used still goes in the bibliography as usual.

Why is it different?

The thing about ancient sources is, there are lots and lots of different versions, editions, and translations for each work. Think about *The Iliad* by Homer. There are hundreds of different versions, printings, and translations in English alone, not to mention every other language and printing that exists. Everyone has their own copy, and it could be any version of the original text. Referring to a page number in the edition you happen to have in front of you is of limited usefulness.

To get around this problem, scholars long ago divided each ancient work into books, chapters, and sections (for prose works) or books and line numbers (for poetry and plays). The other copies of *The Iliad* out there won't have the page numbering you have—but they will be divided the same way.

You may already be familiar with this idea from a particular kind of ancient primary source—scripture. The Bible, Qur'an, Torah, and other scriptures are divided this way (e.g., John 3:16; Quran 2:185).

Examples

Here's how it works in practice.

Only one work survives	Multiple works survive	Poetry and plays
"Every political system has a source of corruption growing within it, from which it is inseparable. For kingship it is tyranny, for aristocracy it is oligarchy, and for democracy it is government by brute force" (Polybius 6.10.3).	"The busts of twenty most illustrious families were borne in the procession, with the names of Manlius, Quinctius, and others of equal rank. But Cassius and Brutus outshone them all, from the very fact that their likenesses were not to be seen" (Tacitus *Annals* 3.76).	"No man or woman born, coward or brave, can shun his destiny" (Homer *Iliad* 6.489).
Polybius only survives via his greatest work, *The Histories*. Thus, no need to specify the work, just book, chapter, and section number.	Several works survive from the Roman historian Tacitus. For such writers, specify work, chapter, and section.	Homer's works, *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, are epic poetry. They're divided into books, then the lines are numbered within each book. For ancient plays (not divided into acts as modern plays are), you give line numbers: e.g., Aristophanes *Clouds* 625-629.

Note: Print editions and better online transcriptions give chapters and sections. Use the Ancient Texts page on my website to find online sources.

Research Options

Whether the libraries are physically accessible or not, there's a huge amount of scholarly material available online to provide you with primary and secondary evidence to support the arguments you're making in your papers.

Primary sources

All of the ancient primary source texts available in English on the web that I could find are consolidated on the Ancient Texts page on my website. This is linked to under "ancient texts" on the Resources page.

If you're looking for dirt on Cleopatra, for example, one of the sources you'll want is Plutarch's biography of Mark Antony. Look under P for Plutarch and click on the "E" (for English) opposite Parallel Lives, which is what he called his biographies.

If you click on the "Archives" tab, you'll see a list of great websites that are chock full of ancient primary sources.

I strongly recommend you make use of primary sources as eyewitness testimony to the time and place you're investigating, but remember—primary sources can't be taken at face value. You must always ask what idea the author hoped to convince you of, every time, for every passage. Nothing was ever written for no reason.

Journal articles and full-text books via OneSearch

The CUNY library system has a huge amount of online secondary scholarship in the form of full-text books and scholarly journal articles.

To make sure you're looking at online-accessible materials: enter your search in the search box on the Lief Library home page. Get your results. In the right-hand panel, click on "Full Text Online" and then on "Apply Filters" at the bottom. This filter will include both online journal articles and online full-text books.

Don't just stop at the first page—keep loading results. But consider your search terms. If you search for "Cleopatra", you'll get a million hits, a lot of them about Shakespeare's play (which is not ancient and so not relevant to us). But if you search (say) "Cleopatra suicide" you'll get some relevant journal articles, a chapter in a book called Cleopatras specifically devoted to her suicide, and so on.

- **Warning:** Some tertiary sources will come up in these searches.
  - As a reminder, tertiary sources (encyclopedias, dictionaries, textbooks) are not allowed. Most of the encyclopedia entries are marked by the "reference entry" tag (instead of "book" or "article"). But if it looks like an encyclopedia, dictionary, or textbook, you can't use it. Ask me if you're not sure.
- Note that while you're off-site, you'll need to be logged in using the ID code on your Lehman ID to access the full-text material.
- Lehman Library has a 24/7 ask-a-librarian chat for guidance on finding what you are looking for. It's linked to at the top of the library home page.

Links:

- MBW Ancient Texts page: http://markbwilson.com/pages/texts.html
- Lief Library main page and OneSearch access: http://www.lehman.edu/library/
- Lehman Library Remote Resources Guide: https://libguides.lehman.edu/offcampus

Other online resources

You may find what you need using the CUNY library resources. There are also other resources online. Here are a couple:

- The Internet Archive at Archive.org is a good resource for scanned copies of old books in general. However, this collection includes kids' books, novels, textbooks, and other material that isn't scholarly. Make sure the book you pick is a scholarly work that relies directly on primary sources. Also, note the year. The scholarship in older books might have been superseded by more research historical research and consensus.

- Google Scholar searches peer-reviewed journal articles available online. For the most part you're better off with the CUNY library search, because CUNY provides you free access to articles that are behind a paywall for nonacademics. But sometimes an article will come up here and not in the library search. Google Books rarely provides more than a snippet, but there are exceptions.

Citations

Remember to get the citation information you need for your footnotes and bibliography when you're browsing these online resources.

For the things you find through the library search, these will be on the library catalog page, and also on the full-text page that the catalog page links to. Make sure to record this information for your bibliography.

- For a journal article, the bibliography info needed is:
  Author name. Year. "Title of Article." *Journal Name* VolumeNumber: PageNumbers.

- For a book, the bibliography info needed is:
  Author name. Year. *Book Title*. City: Publisher.