

Interpreting Citations


Last updated 5/4/2012.

A citation is a reference to a source of information. A citation typically includes enough identifying information, such as the author, title, publisher information, date of publication, database retrieved from, etc. for a reader to be able to locate a copy of the item.

The ability to interpret citations or references from various sources of information is a fundamental research skill. In order to be able to correctly cite an source in a specific style (e.g., MLA, APA), you need to be able to determine what type of source the item is, where the source came from, and identify the various elements of the source.

The following are several examples of the most common types of sources found in the library catalog, databases, and web sites:

Print Book – Record from the Library Catalog



LIBRARY CATALOGS


<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign-in • My Account • Preferences • Sign-out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Search • Advanced Search • Browse Search • Command Search 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-catalog Search • Search History • Search Results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Library Catalogs • e-Shelf • Course Reserves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help Using Catalog • LRLive Help • Databases A-Z • Journals
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Active Catalog = J. Sargeant Reynolds

Title Request
Add to My e-Shelf
Locate
Save/ Mail

Full View of Record

Title Information



Author Laufer, Peter.

Title No animals were harmed : the controversial line between entertainment and abuse / Peter Laufer.


Published Guilford, Conn. : Lyons Press, c2012.

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graph TD
    Author[Author] --> Title[Book Title]
    Author --> PubLoc[Publisher Location]
    Author --> Pub[Publisher]
    Author --> PubDate[Publication Date]
    Title --> TitleText[No animals were harmed : the controversial line between entertainment and abuse / Peter Laufer.]
    PubLoc --> TitleText
    Pub --> TitleText
    PubDate --> TitleText
        
```

Note: If you are using MLA style, include the medium of source consulted at the end of your citation (e.g., Print).

Chapter/Essay in a Print Book – Record from the Library Catalog

Title Information		Book Title	Book Editor
Title	Animal welfare / Sylvia Engdahl, book editor.		
Published	Farmington Hills, Mich. : Greenhaven Press, c2010.		
Description	198 p. ; 24 cm.		
Bibliogr.	Includes bibliographical references (p.185-189) and index.		
Publisher Location	welfare advocates take to the Supreme Court. Case overview: Primate Protection League v. Tulane National Fund (1991) -- U.S. Supreme Court : animal welfare advocates have the right to sue in the court of their choice / Thurgood Marshall -- Animal welfare advocates lack standing to take animal mistreatment issues to court / Kenneth Starr -- Courts should view animals as more than mere personal property / Lauren Magnotti -- The research done on the Silver Spring monkeys led to an important discovery / Denyse O'Leary -- Animals cannot be names as plaintiffs in lawsuits. Case overview: Cetacean Community v. George W. Bush (2004) -- The court's opinion : animals do not have standing to bring suit / William A. Fletcher -- The Cetacean ruling opens the door to other suits by animals / John F. Tamburo -- Congress does not have authority to give animals the right to sue / Matthew Armstrong -- Cetacean exemplifies the difficulty of suing for harm to nature / W. Earl Webster -- Human plaintiffs can act as proxies for animals in lawsuits / Harvard Law Review --	Publisher	Publication Date
Contents	<p>choice / Thurgood Marshall -- Animal welfare advocates lack standing to take animal mistreatment issues to court / Kenneth Starr -- Courts should view animals as more than mere personal property / Lauren Magnotti -- The research done on the Silver Spring monkeys led to an important discovery / Denyse O'Leary -- Animals cannot be names as plaintiffs in lawsuits. Case overview: Cetacean Community v. George W. Bush (2004) -- The court's opinion : animals do not have standing to bring suit / William A. Fletcher -- The Cetacean ruling opens the door to other suits by animals / John F. Tamburo -- Congress does not have authority to give animals the right to sue / Matthew Armstrong -- Cetacean exemplifies the difficulty of suing for harm to nature / W. Earl Webster -- Human plaintiffs can act as proxies for animals in lawsuits / Harvard Law Review --</p>		
	Essay in Book	Author of Essay	

Notes: You will also need to include the page number range when citing a specific essay within an edited book. Review the actual book to locate the page number range. If you are using MLA style, include the medium of source consulted at the end of your citation (e.g., Print).

Online Journal Article by 4 Authors – Retrieved from a Library Database

[New Search](#) | [Publications](#) | [Subject Terms](#) | [Cited Re](#)

Database Name



Searching: **Academic Search Complete** | Ch
 animal welfare or animal rights

Article Title

Human Rights, Animal Wrongs? Exploring Attitudes toward Animal Use and Possibilities for Change.

Authors: Knight, Sarah¹ seknight@dstl.gov.uk

Bard, Kim²
 Vrij, Aldert²
 Brandon, Doug²

Volume #

Issue #

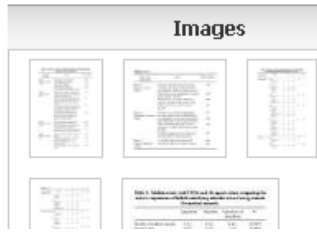
Source: [Society & Animals](#); Jul2010, Vol. 18 Issue 3, p251-272, 22p, 4 Charts, 3 Graphs

Document Type: Article

Journal Title

Year

Page #s



Notes: Do not include the month or season (e.g., July, Summer) when citing a scholarly journal article in MLA style. If an article has more than 3 authors, provide only the first author, followed by "et al." For example: Knight, Sara, et al. If you are using MLA style, include the medium of source consulted (e.g., Web) as well as the date of access (e.g., 10 Oct. 2012) at the end of your citation.

Online Magazine Article by 2 Authors – Retrieved from a Library Database

The screenshot shows the EBSCO MasterFILE Premier search interface. At the top, there are navigation links: New Search, Publications, Subjects, Dictionary, and M. The search bar contains the text 'animal welfare' and 'movies or films' with an 'AND' operator. The search results display the article title 'Beasts of Burden.' in blue. Below the title, the authors are listed as 'Walsh, Bryan' and 'RAWLINGS, NATE'. The source is 'Time, 1/23/2012, Vol. 179 Issue 3, p50-54, 4p, 7 Color Photographs'. The document type is 'Article'. Arrows point from labels to specific parts of the interface: 'Database Name' points to the EBSCO logo, 'Article Title' points to the title 'Beasts of Burden.', 'Authors' points to the authors' names, 'Magazine Title' points to the source 'Time', 'Publication Date' points to the date '1/23/2012', and 'Page #s' points to the page range 'p50-54'.

Notes: Do not include the volume and issue number when citing a popular magazine article in MLA style. If you are using MLA style, include the medium of source consulted (e.g., Web) as well as the date of access (e.g., 10 Oct. 2012) at the end of your citation.

Online Newspaper Article by 2 Authors – Retrieved from a Web Site

The screenshot shows the Los Angeles Times website. The newspaper title 'Los Angeles Times' is at the top. Below it is a navigation bar with links: LOCAL, U.S., WORLD, BUSINESS, SPORTS, ENTERTAINMENT, HEALTH, LIVING, TRAVEL, OPINION. The article title is 'Luck' raises stakes on animals' use. Below the title is a sub-headline: 'The deaths of three horses on the HBO set put the focus on American Humane Assn.'s oversight.' The publication date is 'March 17, 2012' and the authors are 'By Richard Verrier and Scott Collins, Los Angeles Times'. Below the date and authors are social media sharing buttons: Comments, Recommend, Tweet, and Share. The article text begins with 'Set amid the hurly-burly of a racetrack, the low-rated drama starring Dustin Hoffman and Nick Nolte halted production Wednesday after the deaths of three horses used in filming raised ire among animal-rights activists. HBO said it couldn't guarantee more accidents would not occur, but it also took pains to isolate the "Luck" case as unique given the dangers of horse racing – a point backed up by some experts.' An image of horses racing is shown on the right. Arrows point from labels to specific parts of the article: 'Newspaper Title' points to 'Los Angeles Times', 'Article Title' points to the main title, 'Publication Date' points to the date, and 'Authors' points to the authors' names.

Notes: If you are using MLA style, include the medium of source consulted (e.g., Web) as well as the date of access (e.g., 10 Oct. 2012) at the end of your citation.

Online Government Publication – Retrieved from a Web Site

The screenshot shows the top of the USDA National Agricultural Library Animal Welfare Information Center website. The header features the USDA logo, the text "United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Library", and the "ANIMAL WELFARE INFORMATION CENTER" logo. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: Home, About AWIC, Publications, Workshops, Services, and News and Events. The main content area has a red header with the word "Publications". Below this, the title "Legislative History of the Animal Welfare Act" is displayed. To the left of the title are links for "<< Table of Contents" and "Authors". To the right are links for "<< Previous | Next >>". Below the title, the text "Introduction" is followed by "By: Benjamin Adams, B.S. and Jean Larson, M.S. USDA. NAL. Animal Welfare Information Center." To the right of this text is a box labeled "Date Last Updated". At the bottom, there are more links for "<< Table of Contents" and "<< Previous | Next >>". At the very bottom, it says "Last Modified: Mar 26, 2012".

U.S. Government Department

U.S. Government Agency

U.S. Government Division of the NAL agency

Publications

Publication Title

Authors

Date Last Updated

Legislative History of the Animal Welfare Act

<< Table of Contents

<< Previous | Next >>

Introduction

By: Benjamin Adams, B.S. and Jean Larson, M.S. USDA. NAL. Animal Welfare Information Center.

<< Table of Contents

<< Previous | Next >>

Last Modified: Mar 26, 2012

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