

How to Cite Primary Sources

rev. 6/8/09

Citing a Primary-Source Quote Found in a Secondary Source

Sometimes you will find a primary-source quote in a secondary source – e.g., a quote from Bill Clinton in a book about him.

In this case, include the abbreviation **qtd. in** ("quoted in") within the parenthetical reference, as in this example:

Bill Clinton believes that a system of national service would represent "America at its best--building community, offering opportunity and rewarding responsibility" (qtd. in Landaus 43).

You can do the citation the same way when you paraphrase what someone said rather than give a direct quote:

Clinton believes that if we do not act now to curb childhood obesity, American children will face grave health conditions (qtd. in Landaus 23).

Here is the Works Cited entry for this source:

Landaus, Elaine. *Bill Clinton and His Presidency*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1997. Print.

Citing Primary Source Documents from MPI Library Databases

All of the MPI library databases create citations for primary source documents, just as they do for regular articles. So you can copy-paste the citations into your Works Cited page and then edit them, just as you do for regular articles. (Follow the guidelines on page 3 of the MPI Style Sheet.) **BUT....**

...the DATE OF THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT should be included, if available, in your citation. The date of the original document is sometimes already included as part of the title, as in the top example below.

But if the original date is not already in the citation, you should add it in (written in MLA style) right after the document title, as in the bottom example below.

EXAMPLES:

Example of a primary source citation in which the original date is already included as part of the title:

"Herbert Hoover: Rugged Individualism speech (1928)." *American History*. ABC-CLIO, 2009. Web. 17 March 2009.

Example of a primary source citation in which YOU need to add in the original date:

If it's not already written in the citation provided, add in the date of original source, if you can find it, right after the title. Write the date in MLA style. Often the original source date will be written either at the top or the bottom of the article page.

"Nixon, Richard M." 24 Nov. 1969. *Vietnam War Reference Library*. Vol. 4: Primary Sources. Detroit: UXL, 2001. 77-94. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*. Gale. Web. 17 May 2009.