



Library Guide – Interpreting a Citation

Indexes, abstracts, and bibliographies are important sources to consult in library research. They provide citations to other sources, such as books, periodical articles, government documents, and research reports. Different styles for formatting citations are used in different subject areas or fields. Although the format of the citations may vary, most provide the same basic pieces of information. Below are examples of citations from some common types of sources as they appear in MLA (Modern Language Association) style, in APA (American Psychological Association) style, and in various indexes and abstracts.

✓ **BOOK** – Each citation to a book gives the **author(s)** or editor(s) names, the **title**, the **publisher** and the **place** in which the publisher is located, and the **date** of publication.

To see if we own a book, use UNC Libraries' online catalog, the Source.

From a bibliography, MLA style Brown, Dan. The Da Vinci Code: A Novel. New York: Doubleday, 2003.

From an index or abstract – *Criminal Justice Abstracts* Scott, Peter Dale; Marshall, Jonathan. *Cocaine Politics: drugs, armies, and the CIA in Central America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991. 260p. \$24.95.

✓ **ARTICLE, CHAPTER, ESSAY, OR STORY IN A BOOK** – Each citation to a piece within a book lists the **author(s)** and the **title** of the piece, followed by the word “in” the **author(s)** or **editor(s)** of the entire book, the **title** of the book, the **place** of publication, **publisher**, and **date**.

Look for the title of the book, not the chapter, in the UNC Libraries' online catalog, the Source.

From a bibliography, APA style Hatfield, G. (1990). Metaphysics and the new science. In D. C. Linberg & R. S. Westman (Eds.), *Reappraisals of the scientific revolution* (pp. 93-166). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

From an index or abstract – MLA International Bibliography Koenen, Anne. “The one out of sequence’: An interview with Toni Morrison, New York, April 1980.” 207-221 in Lenz, Gunter H. *History and Tradition in Afro-American Culture*. Frankfurt: Campus; 1984. ix, 334 pp.

✓ **ARTICLE IN A MAGAZINE OR JOURNAL** – Each citation to an article in a magazine or journal gives the **author(s)** of the article, the **title** of the article, the **title** of the journal, the **volume number** (and sometimes the **issue number**) and **date** of the journal issue (sometimes just the year, sometimes the exact data), and the **page numbers** of the article. Sometimes the journal name is abbreviated, and you must find the full title of the journal in order to locate the item in a library.

Look for the title of the journal, not the article, in the Source, using a “Periodical Title” search

From a bibliography, MLA style Muller, Donna. “Shibori: A Japanese Resist-Dye Technique.” Handwoven 12.5 (1991): 51.

From an index or abstract – *Reader' Guide to Periodical Literature* Welcome to the Fishbowl [A day of being watched in America] il *Popular Mechanics* v182 no1 p58-9 Ja 2005