



Citing Secondary or Indirect Sources: APA, MLA & Chicago Styles

Secondary or indirect sources are sources cited in another source (see example below). Citing secondary sources, you have not read is strongly discouraged in academic research since strong research writing is based on using sources *you have read*. Nonetheless, sometimes it is challenging to find the original source. If that is the case, it is important to cite the indirect source properly. This sheet provides basic information on citing indirect sources in APA, MLA and Chicago. For more details, consult the specific manual or style guide, see a reference librarian or writing tutor, or ask your professor how she or he would like you cite in this situation.

Sample text

In analyzing “what holds marriage together” Jan Trost proposes that most of the standard bonds have declined.

The above passage is found in *Earning and Caring in Canadian Families*, written by Rod Beaujot in 2000.

APA Style

Your reference list entry includes only the source you actually read (Beaujot in the sample text above). Because in-text citations correspond to the reference list, cite only the secondary source (Beaujot) in parentheses, and acknowledge the original author in the sentence itself.

Example #1 --- Quotes

Trost researched “what holds marriage together” (as quoted in Beaujot, 2000, p. 110) and found that several typical bonds had weakened.

Because the above passage contains a quote, the in-text citation requires not only the name and date of publication of the source, but also the page number, just as you would cite primary sources.

Example #2 - Paraphrase

Trost proposes that the customs and connections keeping marriages together are no longer as effective (as cited in Beaujot, 2000, p. 110*).

The full reference for the source you read (e.g. Beaujot) must be included in your reference list. Do not include the reference to Trost!

*When paraphrasing, APA encourages (but does not require) you to include the page number along with the author and date. Some professors, however, prefer that you *not* provide page numbers for paraphrases; it is always a good idea to ask which option they prefer.

The above information is found in the sixth edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* on page 178, in the “Secondary Sources” section.

MLA Style

Whether you're paraphrasing or quoting, your in-text citation is the same in MLA format, with the "qtd. in" phrase before the name of the author of the indirect source and the page number.

Example – Both Quotes and Paraphrases

"In analyzing 'what holds marriage together,' Jan Trost proposes that most of the standard bonds have declined" (qtd. in Beaujot 110).

As in APA, you reference the source you read (e.g. Beaujot). If you choose to give your reader additional information, you may include the original source in a note at the bottom of the page on which the in-text reference appears.

The above information is found in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (7th edition) on page 226, titled "Citing Indirect Sources."

Chicago Style

Chicago style has two possible style formats: author-date and note.

Author-date Style

Include the original author and date in the sentence, and then cite the source for that quote in parentheses, including the author and date: (quoted in Beaujot 2000). Cite the source you read (Beaujot) in the reference list.

Footnote/Endnote Style

This style does not require that you mention the name of either source in the text itself; that explanation is saved for the footnote/endnote. Unlike other styles, you must provide the full citation of the original alongside the full citation of the secondary source. Use "quoted in" to introduce the source you read.

Example – Footnote/Endnote (note: "quoted in" is in bold for emphasis.)

1. Jan Trost, "What Holds Marriage Together?" in *Continuity and Change in Marriage and Family*, ed. J. Veevers (Toronto, ON: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1986), **quoted in** Rod Beaujot, *Earning and Caring in Canadian Families* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2000), 110.

If your professor requires you to submit a separate bibliography, be sure to include entries for both sources.

The above information is found in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition, in sections "Citations taken from secondary sources" (14.260) and "'Quoted in' in author-date references" (15.52).