

American Literature Style Guide

American Literature (AL) adheres first to rules in this style guide. For issues not covered in the guide, please refer to AL's main references, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th ed. (CMS16); *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (W11); and *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (W31).

ABBREVIATIONS

Avoid abbreviations in the text, including *etc.* Instead of Latin abbreviations such as *e.g.* and *i.e.*, use their English translations. (See "Documentation" for information on abbreviations in citations.)

Corporate, municipal, national, and supranational abbreviations and acronyms appear in full caps. Most initialisms (abbreviations pronounced as strings of letters) are preceded by *the*.

further expansion of NATO's membership
dissent within the AFL-CIO
sexism is rampant at IBM
certain US constituencies

Personal initials have periods and are spaced: W. E. B. DuBois; C. D. Wright

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledgments are made in the first person and appear as a first unnumbered note in the endnote section. We do not accommodate authors' acknowledgment of their anonymous *AL* reviewers.

This essay was first presented as a paper at the Center for Comparative Literature at Amherst College. I am grateful for the comments made at the gathering.

CAPITALIZATION. See also SPELLING AND TERMS

After a Colon

The first word following a colon begins with a lowercase letter, unless (1) the material introduced by a colon consists of more than one sentence, or (2) it is a quoted statement [CMS16, 6.61].

"I would go even further: even if one had a good understanding of foreign languages, a successful translation of a work into one's own language would provide a more familiar and intimate pleasure than the original."

Quotations

Silently correct initial capitalization in quotations depending on the relationship of the quotation to the rest of the sentence (see *CMS16*, 13.14). For instance:

Smith stated that “we must carefully consider all aspects of the problem.”

but

Smith stated, “We must carefully consider all aspects of the problem.”

A lowercase letter following a period plus three dots should be capitalized if it begins a grammatically complete sentence (*CMS16*, 13.51).

The spirit of our American radicalism is destructive. . . . The conservative movement . . . is timid, and merely defensive of property.

Titles of Works

For titles in English, capitalize the first and last words and all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and subordinating conjunctions (*if, because, that*, etc.). Lowercase articles (*a, an, the*), coordinating conjunctions, and prepositions (regardless of length). The *to* in infinitives and the word *as* in any function are lowercased.

For hyphenated and open compounds in titles in English, capitalize first elements; subsequent elements are capitalized unless they are articles, prepositions, or coordinating conjunctions. Subsequent elements attached to prefixes are lowercased unless they are proper nouns. The second element of hyphenated spelled-out numbers or simple fractions should be capitalized. If a compound (other than one with a hyphenated prefix) comes at the end of the title, its final element is always capitalized.

Nineteenth-Century Literature
Avoiding a Run-In
Policies on Re-creation
Reading the Twenty-Third Psalm

When titles contain direct quotations, the headline-capitalization style described above and in *CMS* should be imposed.

“We All Live More like Brutes than Humans”: Labor and Capital in the Gold Rush

In capitalizing titles in *any* non-English language, including French, capitalize the first letter of the title and subtitle and all proper nouns. See *CMS16*, 11.24 and 11.42, for the treatment of Dutch and German titles, respectively.

CAPTIONS AND CREDITS See also “Preparing Figures and Captions for *American Literature*” guide

Captions take sentence-style capitalization unless they list the formal title of an image, in which case they are capitalized in headline style. Captions that are complete sentences include terminal punctuation; those that consist solely of a single phrase do not. If a caption consists of two or more phrases or sentences, terminal punctuation should follow each phrase or sentence. If credit or source information is provided, it should be the last element of the caption, without terminal punctuation. If the source appears in the reference list, the caption should include an in-text reference (author, year, and page number).

Figure 1. The author with unidentified friend, 1977

Figure 2. The author posed for this picture with an unidentified friend in 1977.

Figure 3. Noam Chomsky at a political rally, 1971. Courtesy John Allan Cameron Archives, University of Florida, Gainesville

Figure 4. Coal miners in Matewan, West Virginia, April 1920. The miners’ strike was depicted in John Sayles’s film *Matewan*. Photograph courtesy Matewan Historical Society

Figure 5. “Religion,” drawing by Hugh Ferriss (2005, 135).

CONTRIBUTORS NOTES

AL does not include contributors’ notes. Each author’s affiliation is printed at the end of the essay.

DATES AND TIMES. See also NUMBERS

February 8, 1996

June 1863

fall 1992

on February 8, 1996, at 8:15 a.m. and again at 6:15 p.m.

June 10–14, 1863

May–June 1863

from May to June 1863

the early nineteenth century; early nineteenth-century fiction

the mid-nineteenth century

late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century fiction

c. 1860 (**not** ca.)

1896–1900, 1863–65, 1900–1905, 1906–9, 1910–18 BUT from 1896 to 1900
 the 1850s; the 1920s; the eighties, the fifties (not “the ’20s”)
 AD 873; 640 BC (full caps, no periods)
 September 11
 9/11

DOCUMENTATION

As of the March 2013 issue, AL uses the author-date system outlined in *CMS16*, chapter 15. Discursive endnotes may still be included. A reference list provides the full bibliographic information for each cited source.

Endnotes may include material that cannot be conveniently included in the text, such as discursive adjuncts and additional sources of information. Any material necessary for understanding the argument set forth in the article should be included in the text.

Legal sources (court cases, constitutions, treaties, statutes, and legislative materials, such as unenacted bills, hearings, and reports) should be cited in the main body of the article, not in the notes. If a case or law is well known (e.g., *Roe v. Wade*), it is not necessary to provide a full citation. The general form of legal citations should follow the conventions for law review footnotes in *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*, 16th ed. (especially secs. 1, 10, and 12–14).

In-Text Citation Style

In-text citations (enclosed in parentheses) should contain the author’s surname (with first initial if ambiguous), the date, and the pages cited.

Wert (1984, 115–17) insists that his predecessors’ conclusions were the merest speculation (see M. McLain 1981; P. McLain 1981).

If more than one work by the same author is cited, the author’s name is not repeated.

(Wilson 1963, 1974)
 (Miller 1978, 267; 1994)

For works by four or more authors, only the surname of the first author is used, followed by “et al.”

not (Cobb, Hornsby, Ott, and Smith 1982) *but* (Cobb et al. 1982)

If the work is meant, rather than the author, the parentheses are omitted.

Medwick 1924 remains the standard reference.

To refer again to the most recently cited source in the same paragraph, *ibid.* may be used in cases where the source is unclear. If there is no ambiguity about the source, citing the page number in parentheses is sufficient.

When one volume of a multivolume work is cited, the volume number is indicated before the page number.

(Koufax 1973, 1:223)

Personal communications, such as telephone conversations, e-mail messages, and nonarchived letters, are identified as “pers. comm.” and dated in the text but are not included in the References section.

Wilson (pers. comm., March 13, 2007) proved the hypothesis false.

Newspaper and popular magazine articles

Beginning with volume 89, these sources will be added to the reference list with corresponding parenthetical citations (contra CMOS author-date style):

Ovington, Mary White. 1927. “Book Chat.” *New Journal and Guide*, October 8, 14. (White 1927)

These sources may be cited in the text only, without a corresponding reference entry, if there is a compelling reason to do so, such when there is a high number of periodical sources with similar dates. In this case, provide the periodical title, date, article title (and page number[s], in the case of magazine articles).

He followed this up by issuing a memorandum on transparency the very first day after he became president, committing to make openness one of “the touchstones of this presidency” (Sheryl Gay Stolberg, “On First Day, Obama Quickly Sets a New Tone,” *New York Times*, January 21, 2009).

Abbreviations and Latin Terms in Documentation

AL does not use the following Latin abbreviations and words in its documentation: *loc. cit.*, *op. cit.*, *infra*, *supra*, *idem*, *f.*, *ff.*, and *passim*.

[*sic*] is italicized and placed in brackets.

Online sources

An access date is required only if no publication date is provided. In online citations, “http://” does not precede URLs.

If the source is available in both paper and digital format, you may cite whichever form was used.

REFERENCE LIST

The References section at the end of the article provides full bibliographic information for all works cited in the text. Works that are *not* cited should not be included in this section. References are arranged alphabetically by author, then chronologically in ascending order. Works of four or more authors are listed by the first author, followed by “et al.” Works published in the same year by the same author are labeled “a,” “b,” and so on.

In titles of works, serial commas are added, ampersands are spelled out, and numbers are spelled out (contra *CMS16* 14.96).

If the place of publication is not widely recognized or is ambiguous, it is specified with a state, provincial, or national abbreviation.

New Brunswick, NJ
 London, ON
 Bengbu, PRC
 Dover, UK

If the publisher is a university press, use the abbreviation “Univ.” in the citation.

Lebanon, NH: Univ. Press of New England
 Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press

For online works, if no publication date is provided, an access date is required. In all URLs, “http://” is omitted unless the URL does not function without it.

Book

Anderson, Jon Lee Anderson. 2002. *The Lion's Grave: Dispatches from Afghanistan*. New York: Grove.
 Dachuan, Sun. 1991. *Jiujiu jiu yici (One Last Cup of Wine)*. Taipei: Zhang Laoshi Chubanshe.
 Lennox, Eleanor. 2000. *The Scottish Diaspora*. 2nd ed. Inverness, UK: Northern Light.

For a book with more than one edition, the year of original publication is mentioned in the text when the source is introduced (if possible); only the date of the edition consulted is included in parenthetical citations thereafter. The sentence “First published xxxx” is included at the end of the corresponding reference list entry:

Locke, Alain, ed. 1997. “The New Negro.” *The New Negro: Voices of the Harlem*

Renaissance, 3–16. New York: Touchstone. First published 1925.

Chapter in a Collection

Goldstein, Rebecca. 1987. "Exploitation in the West Bank." In *Thirteen Ways of Looking at the Middle East*, edited by Wallace Kunitz, 31–37. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.

Marty, Kenneth L. "Jerusalem Dreams." In Kunitz 1987, 73–85. [If the collection has already been cited in full, you may cross-reference it.]

Translation

Rivera, José Rivera. 1999. *Labor Unions in Baja, California*. Translated by Will Moore. Richmond, VA: Univ. of Richmond Press.

Multivolume Work

Foucault, Michel. 1986. *The Care of the Self*. Vol. 3 of *The History of Sexuality*, translated by Robert Hurley. New York: Pantheon. [One volume is cited individually.]

Foucault, Michel. 1978–1986. *The History of Sexuality*. 3 vols., translated by Robert Hurley. New York: Pantheon. [The work as a whole is cited.]

Multiauthor Work

Peters, Harold, Mary Kay Rogers, and Lawrence Burke. 1992. *Why the Revolutions Stopped*. Wilmington, DE: Strong and Wills. [Three to seven authors.]

Gustafson, Albert K., et al. 1985. *If I Were a Rich Man: Comparative Studies of Urban and Rural Poverty*. Murphy, WI: Fore and Aft. [More than seven authors.]

Online Book

Pyatt, Timothy D., ed. 1996. *Guide to African American Documentary Resources in North Carolina*. Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press.
www.upress.virginia.edu/epub/pyatt/index.html.

Journal Article

Jerng, Mark Chia-Yon. 2011. "A World of Difference: Samuel R. Delany's *Dhalgren* and the Protocols of Racial Reading." *American Literature* 83, no. 2: 251–78. [AL includes the volume and issue number.]

Wood, Ellen Meiksins. 1988. "Capitalism and Human Emancipation." *New Left Review*, no. 167: 1–20. [Journal published only in issues (no volume number).]

Online Journal Article

Abdulhadi, Rabab. 2003. "Where Is Home? Fragmented Lives, Border Crossings, and the Politics of Exile." *Radical History Review*, no. 86: 89–101.
muse.jhu.edu/journals/radical_history_review/v086/86.1abdulhadi.html.

Esposito, Joseph J. 2010. "Stage Five Book Publishing." *Journal of Electronic Publishing* 13, no. 2. quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-

idx?c=jep;view=text;rgn=main;idno=3336451.0013.204.

Jovanovic, Boyan, and Peter L. Rousseau. 2008. "Specific Capital and Technological Variety." *Journal of Human Capital* 2: 135. doi:10.1086/590066. [If the author has provided a DOI rather than a URL, use the DOI; no URL is needed. See CMS16, 14.6.]

Magazine Article

Tuckman, Mitch. 1976. "Exiled on Main Street." *Village Voice*, July 26. [Note: *The* is dropped before titles of periodicals.]

Online Magazine Article

Davis, Peter. 2003. "Ignited Iraq: Baghdad Journal." *Nation*, August 28.
www.thenation.com/doc.mhtml?i=20030915&s=davis.

Newspaper Article

DeParle, Jason. 1993. "Whither on Welfare: Clinton's Actions Are Far from Bold." *New York Times*, February 3. [Note: Page cite not necessary per CMS16, 14.203.]

Online Newspaper Article

Associated Press. 2003. "Jackson Arrested at Yale after Protest Backing Strike." *Washington Post*, September 2. www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A12012-2003Sep1.html.

Dissertation

Thomas, Joe. 1992. "Eroticism and American Pop Art." PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin. [Note: "University" is spelled out in dissertation entries].

Paper or Presentation

Gilmore, Donald. 1989. "What Does Hermeneutics Really Mean in Art?" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the College Art Association, Boston, February 13.

Interview

Vazquez, Jay. 1995. Author interview, Fairfax County, VA, February 20.

Websites (Other than Online Books and Periodicals)

[Include as much of the following information as possible: author of the content, title of the page (if there is one), title or owner of the site, URL, and access date (if no publication date is provided). The titles of websites and blogs generally use headline-style capitalization. See CMS16, 8.186 and 14.244, for guidance as to whether such titles should be set in roman type or italicized.]

Kloman, Harry. 2003. "Introduction." Gore Vidal Index. Accessed July 27, 2003.
www.pitt.edu/~kloman/vidalframe.html.

Southern Poverty Law Center. 2003. "Center Information."

- www.splcenter.org/centerinfo/ci-index.html. Accessed August 27, 2003. [If there is no author, the owner of the site may stand in the author's place.]
- Barack Obama's Facebook page. Accessed July 19, 2008.
www.facebook.com/barackobama.
- Lasar, Matthew. 2008. "FCC Chair Willing to Consecrate XM-Sirius Union." *Ars Technica* (blog), June 16. arstechnica.com/news.ars/post/20080616-fcc-chair-willing-to-consecrate-xm-sirius-union.html.

Unpublished or Archival Source

Reference listing: McCarthy Papers. Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries.

Text citation: (McCarthy Papers, folder 28.2)

ELLIPSES. See also CAPITALIZATION.

Three dots indicate an ellipsis within a sentence or fragment; a period plus three dots indicates an ellipsis between grammatically complete sentences, even when the end of the first sentence in the original source has been omitted. In general, ellipses are not used before a quotation (whether it begins with a grammatically complete sentence or not) or after a quotation (if it ends with a grammatically complete sentence), unless the ellipses serve a definite purpose. When ellipses are used in blocked poetry and verse drama excerpts, they should span the length of the line omitted (there is no specific number of ellipses). See *CMS16*, 13.48–56, for more detailed guidelines on the use of ellipses.

EMPHASIS

If italics are added to a quoted passage for emphasis, the passage must be followed by "(emphasis mine)." The author does not need to indicate "(emphasis in original)" when italics appear in the original extract.

EPIGRAPHS

Epigraphs are set flush LEFT, in roman type, without quotation marks (unless there is dialogue or a quotation within the epigraph). The attribution includes the author's name, the title of the work, and, in parentheses the original publication date. No other bibliographical information is necessary. The source appears on the line after the epigraph, flush left, following an em dash.

Endnote citations are not used in epigraphs.

AL does not place epigraphs before sections of an essay.

EXTRACTS. See also CAPITALIZATION and ELLIPSES

Dramatic dialogue, verse quotations over two lines long, and prose quotations of more than eighty words are set off from the surrounding text.

Original sources

When one source quotes another, mention the original author and date in the text, then indicate the secondary source in the parenthetical citation. Only the secondary source needs to be included in the reference list.

In Louis Zukofsky's "Sincerity and Objectification," from the February 1931 issue of *Poetry* magazine (quoted in Costello 1981, 78)

Prose excerpts

In running text, internal quotation is used to indicate a quotation within a quotation. In a blocked excerpt, only one set of quotation marks is needed.

In-text quotation of dialogue:

"But, Aunt Chloe, I'm getting mighty hungry,' said George" (Stowe 1852, 25).

Poetry excerpts

In running text, continuous lines of quoted poetry are separated by a single slash (see *CMS16* 13.27):

Andrew Marvell's praise of John Milton, "Thou has not missed one thought that could be fit, / And all that was improper does omit" ("On Paradise Lost"), might well serve as our motto.

For in-text quotations that span more than one stanza, a double slash (//) should be used to show that a new stanza is being quoted (see *CMS16* 13.32). Ideally, however, lengthy poetry excerpts should be blocked rather than run into the text.

HYPHENATION

To determine whether standard terms are hyphenated, consult *W11*. For nonstandard constructions, refer to the general principles outlined in the *CMS16* "Hyphenation Guide for Compounds, Combining Forms, and Prefixes" (7.85).

ILLUSTRATIONS (FIGURES) AND CAPTIONS

See our guide "Preparing Illustrations and Captions for *American Literature*."

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Always use bias-free and gender neutral language (avoid *chairman*, *mankind*, and the like). See *CMS16*, 5.225.

For pronouns, do not use the following nonstandard forms: “he/she,” “s/he,” “(s)he.” Instead, use “he or she” or “she or he” or recast the sentence in the plural. Refer to Marilyn Schwartz’s *Guidelines for Bias-Free Writing* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995) for helpful suggestions for dealing with issues of gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and age.

INITIALS. See ABBREVIATIONS

NUMBERS. See also DATES AND TIMES

Spell out cardinal and ordinal numbers up to 100, such numbers followed by *hundred*, *thousand*, or *million*, any number at the beginning of a sentence, and common fractions. Common fractions are hyphenated as well. Numerals are used to express very large numbers (in the millions or more).

Thirty-two children from ten families were packed into three vans.
Eight thousand trees, forty-seven thousand persons
The three parking lots will provide space for 560 more cars
one-fifth to an almost incredible one-half, two-thirds
the 122nd and 123rd days of the strike
three-hundred-odd articles

Exceptions: When referring to chapter and section numbers, numbers do not need to be spelled out:

chapter 2
part 1

Numbers that express decimal quantities, dollar amounts, and percentages are written as figures. “Percent” is spelled out.

80 percent
15–20 percent of the citizen population
more than \$56

Numbers applicable to the same category are treated alike in the same context.

between 51 and 211 people

NUMBERS, INCLUSIVE

Inclusive page numbers are given as follows (per *CMS16*, 9.60):

1–2, 3–11, 74–75, 100–103, 104–9, 112–15, 414–532, 505–16, 600–612, 1499–1501

Roman numerals are used in the pagination of preliminary matter in books, in family names and the names of monarchs and other leaders in a succession, in the names of world wars, in legal instruments, and in the titles of certain sequels.

On page iii Bentsen sets out his agenda.

Neither John D. Rockefeller IV, Elizabeth II, nor John Paul II was born before World War I.

Yet Title XII was meant to rectify not only inequities but iniquities.

Most critics consider *The Godfather, Part II* a better movie than *Jaws 2*. [Follow the usage in the original work, per *CMS16*, 9.44.]

Arabic numerals are used for the parts of books.

In part 2, chapter 2, of volume 11 of the *Collected Works*, our assumptions are overturned.

POSSESSIVES

The possessive of nouns ending with the letter *s* are formed by adding an apostrophe and an *s*.

Kansas's weather

Burns's poetry

Camus's novels

Descartes's philosophy

Euripides's plays

Demosthenes's orations

Jesus's name

Moses's direction

QUOTATIONS. See EXTRACTS

SECTION HEADINGS (SUBHEADS)

AL allows two types of breaks in essays: (1) section breaks with subheads and (2) section breaks indicated by three filled-in squares (■ ■ ■). Subheads, always unnumbered, are set in boldface. The first paragraph after a subhead is not indented. A subhead is not permitted for the opening section.

Endnotes are not allowed in subheads.

If a subhead includes a quotation, the quotation must appear also in the body of the section, accompanied by a full citation. (Occasionally, it appears earlier in the essay instead.)

SPELLING AND TERMS

Follow *W11* and *W3I* for spelling. If more than one spelling is provided in the dictionary, follow the first form given (e.g., *judgment*, not *judgement*; *focused*, not *focussed*).

AL generally prefers a down (lowercase) style. For detailed guidelines on capitalization of terms, see *CMS16*, chap. 8.

modernism, imagism, romanticism, transcendentalism, gothic fiction, mugwumps

BUT

New Criticism, Democratic Party, the Left, the radical Right, the Cold War

Common foreign terms (e.g., *ad hoc*, *mutatis mutandis*, *fin de siècle*, and *bon vivant*) are set in roman type. Common foreign terms are defined as those with main entries in *W11*. Otherwise, foreign terms are set in italics the first time they appear and in roman type in subsequent appearances.

Neologisms are placed within quotation marks at first use.

Prefixes are hyphenated before numerals and proper nouns. Otherwise, prefixes are generally not hyphenated before words; refer to *W11* for guidance. Temporary compound adjectives are hyphenated before the noun to avoid ambiguity but are left open after the noun. Non-English phrases used as modifiers are open in any position, unless hyphenated in the original.

A term referred to as the term itself is italicized, not placed in quotation marks.

Perhaps the most overused term in recent monographs is *hermeneutics* (not “hermeneutics”).

In the twentieth century *socialism* acquired many meanings.

The word *hermeneutics* is the most overused term in recent monographs.

The term *lyricism* was misused in Smith’s book review.

Scare Quotes

AL avoids scare quotes whenever possible. In most cases, the author’s control of the context can and should convey how a word is being used.

TRANSLATIONS

Definitions of isolated foreign words or phrases are enclosed in parentheses following the original. When it seems advisable to translate a lengthier passage within the text, the translation is placed in parentheses following the original. Quotation marks are used only for the original.

The word she used was not *une poêle* (frying pan) but *un poêle* (stove).

When an original non-English title and its translation appear together in the text, the first version (whether the original or the translation) takes the form of an original title, and the second version is always enclosed in parentheses and treated like a bona fide title (whether or not the work represents a published translation), with capitalization appropriate to the language. Following *CMS16*, 11.3, capitalize only words that would be capitalized in normal text (first word of title and subtitle and all proper nouns).

I read *Mi nombre es Roberto* (*My Name Is Roberto*) in 1989.

I read *My Name Is Roberto* (*Mi nombre es Roberto*) in 1989.

Rubén Darío's poem "Azul" (Blue) is one of my favorites.

Rubén Darío's poem "Blue" (Azul) is one of my favorites.

If an extended passage has been translated by the author, indicate "(my translation)" following the translated text or "Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own" in the endnote for the translated source (*CMS16*, 13.76).

USAGE

African American, Black

AL uses *African American* for both the noun and the adjective. We never use *blacks* as a noun unless the context involves *whites* and *blacks* and there is no other reasonable phrasing (such as "white residents," "black citizens") or the term includes people from countries other than the United States. The adjective *black* may also be used in instances where the descriptor *African American* is used frequently and variation is needed. If "African-American" appears in the title of a book, leave the hyphen as is.

Chicano/a and Chicana/o, Latino/a and Latina/o

Although *AL* typically does not use slash constructions, with gendered ethnic terms this practice is preferable because it conveys gender equality.

US, American: *AL* prefers *US* rather than *American* for political and historical contexts

(except for periods that precede the nation's existence, in which case *American* should be used). For many literary contexts, *US* is preferred.

US policy, US government, US intervention, US history

Nineteenth-century US literature

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