

chicago style parenthetical citation for indirect source

Understanding Chicago Style Parenthetical Citation for Indirect Sources

chicago style parenthetical citation for indirect source is a critical element for academic integrity, ensuring proper attribution and avoiding plagiarism. Navigating the nuances of citing information found through another source can be a common point of confusion for writers. This article provides a comprehensive guide to correctly implementing Chicago style parenthetical citations for indirect sources, often referred to as "cited in" citations. We will delve into the purpose of these citations, explore the specific format required, discuss common scenarios where they are necessary, and offer practical examples to solidify your understanding. Mastering this skill will enhance the credibility of your work and demonstrate your adherence to scholarly standards in Chicago style.

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What is an Indirect Source and Why Cite It?

An indirect source, in academic writing, refers to information you encountered in one source that refers to or quotes another source. This is distinct from directly consulting the original work. You are essentially accessing a secondary account of primary or another secondary source. The primary reason for citing an indirect source is to acknowledge the original author's ideas or words, even though you did not engage with their work directly. This practice upholds academic honesty, giving credit where credit is due and allowing your readers to trace the lineage of the information if they wish.

Failing to properly cite indirect sources can lead to plagiarism, a serious academic offense. It misrepresents the origin of the ideas and can diminish the authority of your own research. Furthermore, correctly citing indirect sources demonstrates your thoroughness and your understanding of academic research methodologies. It shows that you are aware of the information chain and are transparent about your research process, even when encountering information second-hand.

The Chicago Style Format for Indirect Sources

Chicago style, specifically when using the notes and bibliography system, dictates a particular approach to citing indirect sources within your parenthetical citations or notes. The core principle is to indicate that you found the information in a secondary source, which then refers to an earlier, original source. This is often accomplished using the phrase "cited in" or a similar construction.

The general format for a parenthetical citation (or footnote/endnote) when you cannot access the

original source is to cite the secondary source you did consult. Within that citation, you will then note the original source that the secondary source is referencing. This allows your readers to understand the path of the information. It's crucial to remember that your bibliography entry will only include the secondary source you actually read and consulted, not the original, inaccessible source.

Structure of an Indirect Citation

The structure typically involves identifying the author and title of the secondary source you consulted, along with the specific page number. However, the key differentiator for an indirect source is the inclusion of information pointing to the original source. While the exact wording can vary slightly based on the specific edition of the Chicago Manual of Style you are following, the intent remains the same: to acknowledge the original author and work.

Information to Include

When constructing a Chicago style parenthetical citation for an indirect source, you will need specific pieces of information. These include:

- The author of the secondary source (the one you read).
- The title of the secondary source.
- The publication details of the secondary source (publisher, year, page number).
- The author of the original source.
- The title of the original source.
- The page number in the secondary source where the reference to the original source appears.

It is the specific wording within the citation that signals to the reader the nature of the source.

When to Use an Indirect Citation

The decision to use a Chicago style parenthetical citation for an indirect source arises in specific research scenarios. The most common situation is when you are researching a topic, and you find a valuable quote or piece of information in a book or article, but that source itself is quoting or referencing a different, earlier work. If you are unable to locate or access the original work, an indirect citation becomes necessary.

Another instance might be when dealing with historical documents or speeches that have been widely quoted and analyzed in secondary literature. If the original document is rare, difficult to obtain, or is only readily available through a scholarly commentary, you might cite it indirectly. The goal is always to be as transparent as possible about the information's origin, even when that origin is not directly accessible to you.

Limitations of Indirect Sourcing

While indirect citations are sometimes necessary, it is always best practice to consult the original source if at all possible. Relying on secondary interpretations can introduce errors, misinterpretations, or the author's own biases. The original source offers the most direct and unfiltered access to the author's thoughts and words. Therefore, if you can find and read the primary or original secondary source, do so.

However, when the original is genuinely inaccessible or impractical to obtain, an indirect citation is the appropriate scholarly solution. It allows you to incorporate valuable information while still adhering to the principles of academic integrity and providing a clear trail for your readers to follow.

Practical Examples of Chicago Style Indirect Citations

To illustrate the application of Chicago style parenthetical citations for indirect sources, let's consider a few practical examples. These examples will demonstrate how to format both footnotes/endnotes and, if applicable, in-text citations. Remember that the bibliography will only list the source you actually consulted.

Example 1: Quoting a Historian Quoting an Earlier Source

Suppose you are reading a modern history book by Author B, and Author B quotes a passage from an older historical document written by Author A. You do not have direct access to Author A's original document.

In a footnote or endnote, this might look something like:

1. Author B, *Title of Author B's Book* (City: Publisher, Year), page number, quoting Author A, *Title of Author A's Work* (Original Publication Year), page number.

For example:

1. Eleanor Vance, *The Shaping of the American Republic* (New York: Academic Press, 2018), 145, quoting Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785), 201.

In your bibliography, you would only list:

Vance, Eleanor. *The Shaping of the American Republic*. New York: Academic Press, 2018.

Example 2: Citing an Article Referencing a Book

Imagine you are reading an academic article by Scholar C that discusses the theories of Philosopher D, but you haven't read Philosopher D's book yourself.

A footnote or endnote might appear as:

2. Scholar C, "Title of Scholar C's Article," *Journal Name* volume, no. issue (Year): page number, referencing Philosopher D, *Title of Philosopher D's Book* (City: Publisher, Original Publication Year), page number.

For example:

2. Maria Rodriguez, "Postmodern Ethics in Education," *Journal of Educational Theory* 55, no. 2

(2020): 310, referencing Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 70.

Your bibliography would then include:

Rodriguez, Maria. "Postmodern Ethics in Education." *Journal of Educational Theory* 55, no. 2 (2020): 305-325.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

When citing indirect sources in Chicago style, several common mistakes can undermine the clarity and accuracy of your work. Being aware of these pitfalls can help you avoid them. One of the most frequent errors is forgetting to explicitly state that the source is indirect. Simply citing the secondary source without indicating that it is quoting or referencing an original work can mislead your reader into believing you accessed the primary material directly.

Another common pitfall relates to the bibliography. Many students incorrectly include the original, inaccessible source in their bibliography. This is incorrect because you did not consult that source. Your bibliography should only contain the works you have personally read and referenced in your paper. Confusing the author of the secondary source with the author of the original source is also a recurring error.

Misattributing Information

Ensuring that you correctly attribute the ideas or words to their original author, even when presented through a secondary source, is paramount. Misattributing information not only demonstrates a lack of careful research but can also lead to factual inaccuracies within your own argument. Double-checking author names, titles, and publication details for both the original and secondary sources is crucial for accuracy.

Inconsistent Formatting

Inconsistent formatting across your citations is another common issue. Each citation, whether in a footnote, endnote, or parenthetical note, should adhere strictly to Chicago style guidelines. This includes the correct placement of commas, periods, italics, and quotation marks. Inconsistencies can make your bibliography difficult to navigate and detract from the overall professionalism of your paper.

Tips for Effective Indirect Sourcing

To effectively incorporate indirect sources into your Chicago style paper, adopt a meticulous approach to your research and citation practices. Always prioritize consulting the original source if it is within your reach. However, when an indirect citation is unavoidable, be thorough in documenting both the secondary source you read and the information about the original source as presented in the secondary text.

When you encounter information that requires an indirect citation, make a note of it immediately. Record the author and title of the secondary source, the page number, and crucially, all the details provided about the original source. This proactive approach will save you time and prevent errors later in the writing process.

Double-Checking Information

It is always a good practice to double-check the information presented about the original source. Sometimes, secondary sources may contain errors in their transcription or attribution of the original material. If possible, a quick search for the original source or a more authoritative secondary discussion of it can help verify the accuracy of the information. This adds an extra layer of confidence to your citation.

Maintaining Clarity and Transparency

The ultimate goal of any citation is to provide clarity and transparency to your readers. When using indirect sources, this means ensuring that your citation clearly indicates the path of the information. Your readers should understand that you are reporting on something that an intermediary source has reported. This transparency builds trust and demonstrates your commitment to scholarly rigor in your Chicago style writing.

Understanding and applying the rules for Chicago style parenthetical citation for indirect sources is a vital skill for any student or researcher. By accurately attributing information, even when accessed indirectly, you uphold academic integrity, enhance the credibility of your work, and contribute to the scholarly conversation responsibly. Mastering these nuances ensures your writing is both informative and ethically sound.

FAQ: Chicago Style Parenthetical Citation for Indirect Source

Q: What is the fundamental difference between citing a direct source and an indirect source in Chicago style?

A: The fundamental difference lies in whether you have directly accessed and read the original material. A direct citation refers to information you found in the original work. An indirect citation is used when you encounter information in one source (the secondary source) that refers to or quotes another source (the original source) that you have not directly consulted.

Q: How do I cite an indirect source if Chicago style prefers notes and bibliography?

A: In Chicago style's notes and bibliography system, you cite the secondary source you actually read. In your footnote or endnote, you include the information for the secondary source, and then you will add a phrase like "quoting" or "cited in," followed by the details of the original source as it appears in the secondary source. Your bibliography will only list the secondary source you consulted.

Q: Can I include the original, unread source in my Chicago style bibliography when citing indirectly?

A: No, you absolutely cannot include the original, unread source in your Chicago style bibliography. The bibliography is a list of sources you have personally read and consulted for your paper. When

citing indirectly, you only list the secondary source that provided you with the information.

Q: What are the key components that must be included in a Chicago style indirect parenthetical citation (or note)?

A: When citing an indirect source in a Chicago style note, you need to include the author and title of the secondary source you consulted, along with the page number. You will then add a phrase indicating it's an indirect citation (e.g., "quoting" or "cited in") followed by the author and title of the original source, and the page number as referenced in the secondary source.

Q: Is it ever acceptable to cite an indirect source in a Chicago style paper?

A: Yes, it is acceptable and sometimes necessary to cite an indirect source when the original work is unavailable or impractical to obtain. However, it is always best practice to consult the original source whenever possible to ensure accuracy and avoid misinterpretations introduced by the secondary source.

Q: What is the phrase typically used in Chicago style to indicate an indirect source?

A: The most common phrases used in Chicago style to indicate an indirect source are "quoting" or "cited in." For example, a note might read "...quoting John Smith" or "...cited in Jane Doe's article."

Q: If I find a quote from a speech in a book, and I haven't heard the speech, how do I cite it in Chicago style?

A: You would cite the book where you found the speech. The note would include the author and title of the book, the page number, and then indicate that it is quoting the speech, providing the speaker's name and the title of the speech if known, along with any other identifying details provided by the book.

Q: Should I try to find the original source if the secondary source's information seems questionable?

A: Absolutely. If you have doubts about the accuracy or completeness of the information presented from an indirect source, making an effort to locate and consult the original source is highly recommended. This ensures the integrity of your own research and arguments.

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