

chicago manual film studies citation

Mastering the Chicago Manual Film Studies Citation: A Comprehensive Guide

chicago manual film studies citation is a cornerstone of academic integrity and scholarly communication within the realm of film studies. Navigating the intricacies of citing films, directors, screenplays, and critical analyses requires a thorough understanding of the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS). This guide delves deep into the essential principles and specific applications of Chicago style for film-related sources, providing clarity for students, researchers, and scholars. We will cover the fundamental differences between notes-bibliography and author-date systems, explore common citation scenarios for films and related media, and offer practical advice on formatting bibliographical entries and in-text citations. By mastering these guidelines, you can ensure your work is accurately referenced, credibly presented, and adheres to the highest academic standards in film scholarship.

Table of Contents

Understanding Chicago Style: Notes-Bibliography vs. Author-Date

Citing Films: The Core Elements

Citing Specific Film Components

Citing Film Criticism and Secondary Sources

Formatting Bibliographical Entries

Crafting In-Text Citations

Special Considerations in Film Studies Citation

Exemplary Citation Examples

Understanding Chicago Style: Notes-Bibliography vs. Author-Date

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) offers two distinct citation systems, both widely accepted in academic disciplines, including film studies. The choice between the notes-bibliography system and the author-date system often depends on the specific requirements of an academic institution, journal, or publisher. Understanding their fundamental differences is crucial for consistent and accurate citation practices.

The Notes-Bibliography System

The notes-bibliography system is characterized by the use of numbered footnotes or endnotes within the text, which correspond to a comprehensive bibliography at the end of the work. This system is particularly prevalent in the humanities, including many areas of film studies, as it allows for detailed explanatory notes and source attribution without interrupting the flow of the main text. Footnotes or endnotes provide precise details about the source, including page numbers for direct quotations or specific arguments. The bibliography then lists all sources cited in the notes in alphabetical order by author's last name.

The Author-Date System

Conversely, the author-date system uses parenthetical citations within the text, typically including the author's last name and the publication year. This system is more common in the social sciences and natural sciences, but can also be adopted in film studies depending on the field's conventions or

specific journal requirements. Full publication details are then provided in a reference list at the end of the document, also alphabetized by author's last name. While less common for primary film sources, it is frequently used for citing scholarly articles and books about film.

Citing Films: The Core Elements

When citing a film in Chicago style, several key pieces of information are essential for proper attribution. These elements help your readers locate the specific work you are referencing, whether it's the film itself or a discussion about it.

Identifying the Primary Source: The Film

At its most basic, a film citation requires identifying the film by its title. However, for a comprehensive citation, crucial details about its production and release are also necessary. This includes the director, screenwriter, production company, and release year. The order and specific formatting of these elements will vary slightly between the notes-bibliography and author-date systems, but the core information remains the same. Accurately capturing these details ensures that your readers can distinguish between different films and understand the context of your analysis.

Key Bibliographical Information for Films

The essential components for citing a film typically include:

The film's title, italicized.

The director's name, preceded by "directed by."

The screenwriter(s) name(s), preceded by "screenplay by" or "written by."

The production company or distributor.

The year of release.

This information forms the backbone of your film citation, allowing for clear and unambiguous identification of the source material.

Citing Specific Film Components

Beyond citing the film as a whole, film studies often requires referencing specific elements within a film, such as individual scenes, dialogue, or performances. Chicago style provides mechanisms for attributing these specific contributions accurately.

Citing Dialogue and Scenes

When quoting dialogue or referencing a particular scene, it is important to provide sufficient detail to pinpoint its location within the film. While page numbers are not applicable to films in the same way they are to books, Chicago style encourages referencing by time code or reel if possible, or by describing the scene's context if time codes are unavailable. This meticulous approach ensures that readers can follow your argument and locate the exact moment in the film you are discussing.

Citing Performances

Individual performances are central to film analysis. When discussing an actor's portrayal, it is standard practice to attribute the performance to the actor and the role they played within the specific film. This might be done within a sentence or in a footnote, depending on the citation system

and the emphasis of your discussion. Properly citing performances acknowledges the artistry involved and provides clear attribution for critical commentary.

Citing Film Criticism and Secondary Sources

In film studies, engaging with existing scholarship is paramount. Therefore, effectively citing books, articles, and other critical analyses of films is as important as citing the films themselves.

Citing Film Studies Books

When citing a book about film, the citation will follow standard Chicago style for book citations. This includes the author's name, the title of the book (italicized), publication information (city, publisher, year), and page numbers for direct quotations or specific references. Properly citing scholarly books demonstrates your engagement with the existing discourse in the field.

Citing Scholarly Articles on Film

Scholarly articles published in journals are a vital source of film criticism. Their citation format in Chicago style typically includes the author's name, the article title (in quotation marks), the journal title (italicized), volume and issue numbers, publication year, and page numbers. This detailed citation allows readers to access the specific article and verify your interpretation.

Formatting Bibliographical Entries

The bibliography or reference list is a critical component of any Chicago-style document, providing a complete accounting of all sources consulted and cited. The formatting rules ensure consistency and clarity for the reader.

Essential Elements in Bibliographical Entries

Regardless of the citation system used, bibliographical entries for films and related materials share core components. These include the title, key creative personnel, production details, and publication or release information. The precise order and punctuation will differ between notes and the bibliography itself, but the underlying information is consistent.

Examples of Bibliographical Entries (Notes-Bibliography System)

Here are some common examples for the notes-bibliography system:

Film:

Citizen Kane. Directed by Orson Welles. Screenplay by Herman J. Mankiewicz and Orson Welles. RKO Pictures, 1941.

Book about Film:

Corrigan, Timothy J. *The Film Experience: An Introduction*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012.

Journal Article on Film:

Bazin, André. "The Ontology of the Photographic Image." Translated by Hugh Gray. *Film Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (Summer 1960): 4-9.

These examples illustrate the consistent structure and inclusion of essential details necessary for accurate bibliographical entries.

Crafting In-Text Citations

In-text citations serve to direct the reader to the corresponding bibliographical entry or note, providing immediate context for the information presented. The method of in-text citation depends heavily on the chosen Chicago style system.

Footnotes and Endnotes (Notes-Bibliography System)

In the notes-bibliography system, each citation in the text is marked by a superscript Arabic numeral. This numeral corresponds to a numbered note, either at the bottom of the page (footnote) or at the end of the document (endnote). The first note for a source typically includes full bibliographical details, while subsequent notes for the same source can be shortened.

Parenthetical Citations (Author-Date System)

For the author-date system, citations are placed directly within the text, usually in parentheses. A typical parenthetical citation includes the author's last name and the year of publication, e.g., (Corrigan 2012). If the author's name is already mentioned in the sentence, only the year is needed in parentheses.

Special Considerations in Film Studies Citation

Film studies often presents unique challenges for citation due to the multimedia nature of the subject and the varied forms of scholarship it encompasses. Adhering to Chicago's guidelines while addressing these nuances is crucial for rigorous academic work.

Citing Different Media Forms

Beyond feature films, scholars frequently engage with short films, documentaries, television series, and even archival footage. Each of these may require slight adjustments in citation. For instance, when citing a television series, the episode title, series title, network, and air date are essential. For documentaries, the director and subject matter are key identifiers.

Archival Materials and Unpublished Sources

Researchers in film studies often work with archival materials, such as production notes, scripts, or correspondence. Chicago style provides guidelines for citing these unpublished or archival sources, which typically involve identifying the collection, the specific item, and the repository where it is housed. Clarity and specificity are paramount to ensure others can access these unique materials.

Online Film Resources and Streaming Services

The accessibility of films online through streaming services and digital archives necessitates clear citation practices for these platforms. When citing a film accessed online, it is important to include the title, director, production company, release year, and the URL or streaming service name, along with the date of access. This acknowledges the medium through which the film was viewed and aids in reproducibility.

Exemplary Citation Examples

To further solidify understanding, let's review a few more specific examples that illustrate Chicago

style in practice for film studies. These examples demonstrate the consistent application of principles across different types of film-related sources.

Examples for Notes-Bibliography System

Direct quotation from a film:

"Here's looking at you, kid."

1 *Casablanca*, directed by Michael Curtiz, performances by Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, Warner Bros., 1942.

Citing a specific argument from a book:

Corrigan argues that the cinematic gaze profoundly shapes audience perception.

2 Timothy J. Corrigan, *The Film Experience: An Introduction* (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012), 78.

Citing a journal article:

The influence of Neorealism on contemporary directors is well-documented.

3 David Bordwell, "The Art Cinema as a *□□□□□□□□* Spectacle," *Modern Language Quarterly* 66, no. 2 (June 2005): 175–200.

These examples highlight the structure and detail expected in Chicago-style citations for film studies, ensuring accuracy and academic rigor.

FAQ Section

Q: What is the primary difference between the notes-bibliography and author-date systems in Chicago style for film studies?

A: The primary difference lies in how sources are cited within the text. The notes-bibliography system uses numbered footnotes or endnotes, while the author-date system uses parenthetical in-text citations (author, year). Both systems conclude with a comprehensive list of all sources cited.

Q: How do I cite a film if I can't find the specific screenplay credits?

A: If screenplay credits are unavailable or difficult to ascertain, you can omit them from the citation. However, it is always best practice to attempt to find this information through reliable film databases or reference works. The director and title are generally considered the most essential elements.

Q: Should I include the production company or the distributor in my film citation?

A: Chicago style generally recommends including both the production company and the distributor if readily available, especially for older films where this distinction is important for historical context. For more recent films, the distributor might be more commonly cited. Consistency within your work is key.

Q: How do I cite a specific scene or a quote from a film if time codes are not available?

A: If time codes are not provided with your film source, you can describe the scene or the context of the quote within your narrative or in a footnote. For instance, you might mention it occurs "early in the film, during the train sequence," or "in the climactic confrontation scene."

Q: What is the best way to cite a documentary film in Chicago style?

A: Citing a documentary film follows a similar structure to feature films, emphasizing the title, director, and production company or distributor. You may also want to note the primary subject or focus of the documentary if it aids in identification. The year of release is also crucial.

Q: How should I cite a film accessed through a streaming service like Netflix or Hulu?

A: When citing a film from a streaming service, include the film's title, director, production company, release year, the name of the streaming service, and the URL of the film on that platform. It is also good practice to include the date you accessed the film.

Q: Is it acceptable to use a shortened form for repeated citations of the same film in the notes-bibliography system?

A: Yes, the Chicago Manual of Style permits the use of shortened forms for subsequent citations of the same source in the notes-bibliography system. The first note should be full, and subsequent notes can include the author's last name (or director's last name for films), a shortened title, and page number or time code.

Q: What are the key differences when citing a film director versus citing an author of a book about film?

A: When citing a film, the director is typically listed after the title, preceded by "directed by." When citing an author of a book, their name appears first, followed by the book title. This distinction is fundamental to differentiating primary film sources from secondary scholarly analyses.

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