

chicago style for performance studies

Understanding Chicago Style for Performance Studies Research

chicago style for performance studies provides a standardized framework for academic writing, ensuring clarity, consistency, and credibility in scholarly discourse. This style manual, often referred to as the Turabian style when adapted for student papers, is particularly crucial for researchers and students navigating the nuanced landscape of performance scholarship. It dictates everything from how citations are formatted to the precise way bibliographies are constructed, offering a robust system for acknowledging sources and presenting research findings. This comprehensive guide will delve into the intricacies of Chicago style as it applies to performance studies, covering essential elements like in-text citations, footnotes/endnotes, and the bibliography. We will explore how this style facilitates rigorous academic inquiry and upholds the integrity of scholarly work within the field.

Table of Contents

- Introduction to Chicago Style in Performance Studies
- The Chicago Manual of Style: Core Principles
- Footnotes and Endnotes: The Heart of Chicago Style
- Citing Performance Works: Plays, Films, and Live Events
- Citing Secondary Sources in Performance Studies
- The Bibliography: A Comprehensive Record of Research
- Formatting and Presentation in Chicago Style
- Common Pitfalls and Best Practices

The Chicago Manual of Style: Core Principles for Performance Studies

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) serves as the bedrock for academic writing across many disciplines, and its application in performance studies is no exception. At its core, Chicago style emphasizes precision and clarity in presenting research and acknowledging the intellectual contributions of others. For performance studies scholars, this means meticulously detailing the sources that inform their analyses of theatrical productions, dance, film, digital performance, and other artistic expressions. The manual provides guidelines for a wide range of source materials, from primary texts like scripts to critical essays and historical documents, ensuring that every piece of evidence is properly attributed.

Understanding the fundamental principles of CMOS is paramount. This includes a deep dive into its two primary citation systems: the Notes and Bibliography system and the Author-Date system. While both are acceptable, the Notes and

Bibliography system, utilizing footnotes or endnotes, is more commonly favored in the humanities, including performance studies, due to its ability to incorporate explanatory notes alongside citations. This is particularly useful when a scholar needs to offer supplementary information or tangential arguments without disrupting the flow of the main text. The emphasis on detailed bibliographic entries also allows readers to easily locate and verify the sources used in the research.

The Chicago Manual of Style and Its Relevance to Performance Scholarship

Performance studies is an interdisciplinary field that draws heavily on literary criticism, history, sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies. Consequently, the sources used by performance scholars are incredibly diverse. CMOS provides a flexible yet systematic approach to managing this diversity. It offers specific guidance for citing a wide array of materials, including archived performance materials, interviews with artists, visual and audio recordings, and digital resources, all of which are frequently encountered in performance research. The ability to clearly and consistently cite these varied sources is vital for establishing the author's expertise and the scholarly rigor of their work.

Choosing the Right Citation System: Notes and Bibliography vs. Author-Date

While the Chicago Manual of Style officially sanctions both the Notes and Bibliography and the Author-Date systems, the former is generally preferred in performance studies. The Notes and Bibliography system allows for the placement of detailed bibliographic information within footnotes or endnotes. This is advantageous for performance scholars who might need to include substantial contextual information about a particular production or performance artist directly alongside the citation. For instance, a note might specify the exact run dates and venue of a performance, or provide a brief biographical detail about a director that is relevant to the argument but too lengthy for a parenthetical citation. The Author-Date system, while more concise for in-text references, often proves less accommodating for the rich, layered citations that performance studies research may demand.

Footnotes and Endnotes: The Heart of Chicago Style

In the Notes and Bibliography system, footnotes and endnotes serve as the

primary mechanism for referencing sources within the text. Footnotes appear at the bottom of each page, while endnotes are collected at the end of the document, typically before the bibliography. For performance studies research, these notes are indispensable for providing detailed information about each source and, importantly, for offering opportunities to expand on the main text. This dual function makes them incredibly powerful tools for scholarly exposition.

Crafting Effective Footnotes and Endnotes in Performance Studies

When citing a source for the first time using the Notes and Bibliography system, the footnote or endnote entry should include full bibliographic details: author's full name, title of the work (italicized for books and journals, in quotation marks for articles and chapters), publication information (place, publisher, year), and specific page numbers. Subsequent citations of the same source can be shortened, typically including the author's last name, a shortened title, and the page number. This consistency is key to maintaining clarity and professionalism in academic writing. For performance studies, it's crucial to note that the level of detail in a footnote or endnote can be adjusted to suit the needs of the argument. For example, if a scholar is discussing a particular stage direction in a play, the footnote might include the precise line number and page number of the script being referenced, offering an immediate point of verification for the reader.

Using Notes for Explanatory Information and Citations

Beyond simple source attribution, footnotes and endnotes in Chicago style offer valuable space for supplementary information. This is particularly beneficial in performance studies, where context is often crucial. A scholar might use a footnote to: define a specific theatrical term, provide a brief historical context for a performance, offer a tangential but relevant anecdote about a performer or production, or even include a short critical aside that does not fit the main argumentative flow. This allows the main body of the text to remain focused and streamlined while still providing the reader with a wealth of supporting detail and nuanced interpretation. The ability to weave these explanatory threads seamlessly into the scholarly fabric is a significant advantage of the Chicago style for performance studies.

Citing Performance Works: Plays, Films, and Live Events

A significant challenge in performance studies is the accurate and consistent citation of ephemeral or multi-faceted performance works. Unlike static texts, performances are often experienced live, recorded in various media, or exist as scripts that are only one element of the total event. Chicago style provides specific guidelines for addressing these unique challenges, ensuring that the performance itself, and not just its documentation, is properly represented.

Citing Scripts and Published Dramatic Texts

When citing the written text of a play, the process closely resembles citing any other book. The author's name, title of the play (*italicized*), and publication details are included in the bibliography. In-text citations and notes will typically refer to act, scene, and line numbers, or page numbers if the edition does not use standard act/scene divisions. For example, a note might read: "William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, act 3, scene 1, lines 55-60." It is crucial to specify which edition of the play is being used, as different editions can vary in their pagination and formatting. This level of specificity is vital for performance scholars who often engage in close textual analysis of dramatic literature.

Citing Recorded Performances (Film, Video, Audio)

Citing recorded performances, such as films, television shows, or video recordings of live events, requires a slightly different approach. The citation should include the title of the work (*italicized* for films and television series, in quotation marks for individual episodes), director and/or producer, production company, release date, and any relevant distributors or platforms. For video recordings of live stage productions, details such as the recording director, the name of the theatre company, and the date and location of the performance being recorded are essential. Page numbers are not applicable; instead, timestamps are used to pinpoint specific moments within the recording. For example, a footnote might refer to a particular scene in a film by noting: "Quentin Tarantino, director, *Pulp Fiction*, Miramax Films, 1994, DVD, 00:35:12."

Citing Live, Ephemeral Performances

Citing live, unrecorded performances presents the greatest difficulty due to

their ephemeral nature. In such cases, the citation should be as detailed as possible, acknowledging the performance's title, the performing group or artist, the venue, the city, and the specific date of the performance. If the scholar has access to program notes or other documentation related to the performance, these should also be mentioned. For instance, a note might read: "The Wooster Group, *Brace Up!*, Performing Garage, New York, March 15, 2005. Program notes consulted." It is also good practice to note how the performance was experienced, e.g., "attended live" or "viewed via archival video recording from the [archive name]."

Citing Secondary Sources in Performance Studies

Performance studies scholarship often engages with a vast body of secondary literature, including critical essays, scholarly books, historical accounts, and theoretical articles. Properly citing these sources is fundamental to demonstrating how a scholar's own research builds upon, engages with, or challenges existing knowledge within the field.

Citing Books and Book Chapters

When citing a book in Chicago style, the footnote or endnote will include the author's full name, the book's title (italicized), publication information (city, publisher, year), and the specific page number(s) being referenced. For a chapter within an edited volume, the citation includes the author of the chapter, the chapter title (in quotation marks), the title of the book (italicized), the editor(s) of the volume, and the page range of the chapter. For example, a note might state: "Marvin Carlson, *Theories of the Theatre* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 78. Or for a chapter: Diana Taylor, "The Archive and the Repertoire," in *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 12."

Citing Journal Articles and Online Publications

Citing journal articles requires the author's full name, the article title (in quotation marks), the journal title (italicized), the volume and issue numbers, the year of publication, and the specific page numbers. For online journal articles accessed via databases or the internet, the DOI (Digital Object Identifier), if available, is preferred. If no DOI is present, the URL and the date of access should be provided. For instance: "Joseph Roach, "The Culture of Power and the Performance of the Body," *Theatre Journal* 49, no. 2 (1997): 205. Or for an online article: Emily Allen, "Postmodernism and the Spectacle of Power," *Performance Research* 22, no. 4 (2017): 50. DOI: 10.1080/14682766.2017.1377890. Accessed November 15, 2023."

Citing Interviews and Archival Materials

Interviews conducted by the scholar should be cited in notes, including the interviewee's name, the date and location of the interview, and the researcher's personal file or archive. For example: "Interview with Judith Butler by the author, Berkeley, California, October 20, 2022. Personal archive of the author." Archival materials, such as letters, manuscripts, or production files, require specific citation details that identify the collection, the repository, and the specific item within the collection. A note might read: "Letter from Bertolt Brecht to Helene Weigel, December 12, 1949, Bertolt Brecht Archive, Berliner Ensemble, Berlin. Manuscript Collection 45, Box 3, Folder 12."

The Bibliography: A Comprehensive Record of Research

The bibliography, appearing at the end of a Chicago-style paper, is a comprehensive alphabetical listing of all the sources cited in the text. It serves as a crucial tool for readers who wish to explore the research further or verify the information presented. The organization and formatting of the bibliography are as critical as the footnotes and endnotes themselves.

Structure and Alphabetical Order in the Bibliography

Entries in the bibliography are arranged alphabetically by the author's last name. If a source has no author, it is alphabetized by its title, ignoring initial articles like "a," "an," or "the." The format of each entry closely mirrors the full first-time citation in the footnotes or endnotes, but with a key difference: the author's last name is listed first, followed by their first name. This inversion facilitates alphabetical sorting. For example, a book entry would appear as: Carlson, Marvin. *Theories of the Theatre*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984.

Formatting Different Source Types in the Bibliography

Each type of source discussed in the previous sections will have its corresponding entry in the bibliography. Books are listed with author, title, and publication details. Journal articles include author, article title, journal title, volume, issue, year, and page range. For films, it's director, title, production company, and year. For live performances, it would be the performing group, title, venue, city, and date. It is imperative to maintain

consistency in formatting across all entries. For example, all italicized titles should be italicized uniformly, and all quotation marks should be used consistently for article or chapter titles.

The Role of the Bibliography in Performance Studies Research

The bibliography is more than just a list; it's a testament to the breadth and depth of the scholar's research. In performance studies, a robust bibliography can indicate the author's engagement with key theoretical texts, historical performance contexts, and critical analyses of specific works. It allows readers to quickly assess the scholarly lineage of the work and to identify foundational texts they might have missed. For performance scholars, this section can also highlight their engagement with primary source materials, such as interviews or archival documents, underscoring the empirical basis of their arguments.

Formatting and Presentation in Chicago Style

Beyond the specifics of citation, Chicago style also dictates general formatting and presentation rules that contribute to the overall professionalism and readability of a scholarly document. Adhering to these guidelines ensures that the work is presented in a manner that is both aesthetically pleasing and academically sound.

Manuscript Preparation: Margins, Spacing, and Font

A Chicago-style manuscript typically calls for standard margins of 1 inch on all sides of the page. The document should be double-spaced throughout, including block quotations, notes, and the bibliography. This consistent spacing enhances readability, particularly for longer academic texts. A clear, readable font, such as Times New Roman or Arial, in a 12-point size, is generally recommended. Title pages should be centered and include the title of the paper, the author's name, the course name and number, the instructor's name, and the date. For performance studies, the title page might also include the specific performance or artist being studied if it is central to the paper's focus.

Using Block Quotations and Indentation

Longer quotations (typically those exceeding 400 characters or four standard

lines of prose) should be presented as block quotations. This means indenting the entire quotation from the left margin and omitting quotation marks. The quotation should also be double-spaced, consistent with the rest of the document. The citation for a block quotation follows the same rules as for shorter quotations, typically placed after the final punctuation mark of the quote, with the note number appearing after the quote itself. This visual separation allows readers to easily distinguish between the author's own words and the quoted material, a crucial aspect of scholarly integrity.

Tables, Figures, and Visual Materials

When performance studies research incorporates tables, figures, or images, Chicago style provides guidelines for their presentation and labeling. Each table and figure should be numbered consecutively (e.g., Table 1, Figure 1) and given a descriptive title. Captions for images should include essential attribution information, similar to how any other source would be cited. The placement of these visual elements within the text should be logical, typically appearing soon after they are first mentioned. For performance studies, images of set designs, costume sketches, or production photographs can be invaluable, and their proper citation and integration are key.

Common Pitfalls and Best Practices in Chicago Style

Navigating Chicago style can present challenges, and being aware of common errors can significantly improve the quality and adherence to academic standards. Proactive attention to detail can prevent these pitfalls.

Inconsistent Citation Formatting

One of the most frequent errors is inconsistency in the formatting of citations, both within the footnotes/endnotes and in the bibliography. This can include variations in punctuation, the order of elements (e.g., author first name then last name in notes, but last name then first name in bibliography), or the use of italics and quotation marks. Maintaining a style sheet or using citation management software can help ensure uniformity. For performance studies, this might involve consistently citing performance titles as italics and article titles in quotation marks, across all notes and the bibliography.

Omitting Essential Bibliographic Information

Another common mistake is leaving out crucial details in citations, such as publication dates, page numbers, or publisher information. For performance works, forgetting to include details like the specific run dates or venue of a live performance can render the citation incomplete. Always double-check that every required element for each source type is present. This thoroughness is what lends credibility to performance studies research.

Misinterpreting Rules for Different Source Types

The diversity of sources in performance studies means that scholars must be adept at applying the correct citation rules for each specific type of material. Confusing the citation of a book with that of a film, or a live performance with a recorded one, can lead to inaccurate referencing. Familiarizing oneself with CMOS guidelines for each specific source type encountered in one's research is essential. For example, understanding when to use page numbers versus timestamps is critical.

By diligently applying the principles of Chicago style, scholars in performance studies can produce research that is not only rigorous and well-supported but also clear, credible, and accessible to a wider academic audience. The style manual's detailed guidance, when thoughtfully implemented, enhances the scholarly dialogue and contributes to the robust development of the field.

FAQ

Q: What is the primary difference between the Notes and Bibliography system and the Author-Date system in Chicago style for performance studies?

A: The primary difference lies in how sources are referenced within the text and compiled at the end. The Notes and Bibliography system uses numbered footnotes or endnotes for in-text citations, allowing for more explanatory detail, and concludes with a comprehensive bibliography. The Author-Date system uses parenthetical citations in the text (Author Year, Page) and is followed by a reference list. For performance studies, the Notes and Bibliography system is often preferred for its flexibility in accommodating rich contextual information about performances.

Q: How should I cite a live performance that I attended in Chicago style?

A: Citing a live, ephemeral performance requires detailed descriptive information. In your note and bibliography entry, include the title of the performance (*italicized*), the name of the performing company or artist, the venue, the city, and the specific date of the performance. For example: "The Wooster Group, *The Wooster Group's 'The B-Sides'*, Performance Space New York, New York, May 5, 2023. Attended live."

Q: Is it necessary to cite every single detail about a performance, such as the entire cast and crew, in Chicago style?

A: Not necessarily. The level of detail required for citing a performance depends on its relevance to your argument. For a live performance, the essential information for identification (title, artist, venue, date) is usually sufficient for the citation itself. If specific roles or contributions (e.g., a director's innovative staging) are critical to your analysis, you would discuss those in the body of your text and reference the performance accordingly.

Q: How do I handle citing multiple performances of the same play by different companies in Chicago style?

A: When citing multiple performances of the same play, each distinct performance should be treated as a separate source. You would cite the script of the play as a primary text, and then each specific production as a separate event. For each production, you would provide the production title (if different from the play title), the performing company, the venue, and the date. This distinguishes analyses of different interpretations and performances.

Q: What is the best way to cite archival materials related to performance, such as production notes or correspondence, in Chicago style?

A: Citing archival materials requires specificity to help readers locate the exact item. Your note and bibliography entry should include the name of the collection, the repository (archive or library), the location of the repository, and a precise description of the item within the collection (e.g., manuscript number, box number, folder number). For instance: "Letter from Thornton Wilder to Theresa Helburn, March 10, 1948, Playwriting Department Records, The Dramatists Guild Fund, New York Public Library for

the Performing Arts. Box 15, Folder 7."

Q: Can I use footnotes to include tangential discussions or explanations in my performance studies paper using Chicago style?

A: Yes, one of the strengths of the Notes and Bibliography system in Chicago style is its utility for explanatory notes. Footnotes or endnotes can be used to provide supplementary information, definitions of terms, historical context, or brief asides that enhance the reader's understanding but would disrupt the flow of the main text. This is very common and useful in performance studies.

Q: What are the common mistakes to avoid when citing films or videos of performances in Chicago style?

A: Common mistakes include failing to distinguish between the film's director and actors, omitting the production company or year, and not providing precise timestamps for specific scenes or moments. It's also crucial to correctly italicize film titles and use quotation marks for individual episodes of television series. For recorded stage productions, ensure you include details about the original performance context if relevant.

Q: How do I format a bibliography entry for a performance theory article published online without a DOI in Chicago style?

A: For online articles without a DOI, you should include the author's name, article title (in quotation marks), journal title (italicized), volume and issue numbers, publication year, and the URL. Crucially, you must also include the date you accessed the article. For example: "Roach, Joseph. "The Culture of Power and the Performance of the Body." *Theatre Journal* 49, no. 2 (1997): 205-220. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3209104>. Accessed November 15, 2023."

[Chicago Style For Performance Studies](#)

Chicago Style For Performance Studies

Related Articles

- [chicago style essay format best](#)
- [chicago style for educational dissertations](#)

- [chicago style for pedagogy research](#)

[Back to Home](#)