Notes on Quotes

At various times in your life, whether you are preparing a grant proposal or writing a research paper, you will need to include material from other sources in your own work. Many of you have already done this in other classes.

Any time you use someone else's words, you need to put them in quotation marks and identify whom you're quoting. Using quotations to support or illustrate your claims can increase your credibility and validate the points you make. They do not substitute for your own ideas; they enhance them. Use quotations sparingly, though, usually no more than 20% of your paper.

The usual impulse is to include a large, undigested chunk of material plunked down in the middle of your own ideas. However, often we need only a word, phrase or sentence from the source to make our point, and, in these instances, there are more subtle, sophisticated ways of accomplishing this.

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1. Do you want to paraphrase or do you want to quote?

Before you use a quotation, decide if you can use your own words (paraphrase) to express the author's ideas. Use quotations if the author's words are:
- so impressive and clever that to put them into your own words would lessen the impact
- so precise that putting them in your own words would change the meaning
- so concise that you would need twice as many words to paraphrase the passage

If an author's ideas but not his/hers exact words are important to your point, you may wish to paraphrase rather than use a quote. A paraphrase should not change the ideas but it can eliminate or change words, often in order to condense a long sentence that contains details unnecessary to your point. For example:

Original: The solidarity that characterizes communities does not mean, however, that all is unity and harmony within. Many commentators err, I think, by insisting that absence of conflict, like the family conflict we all know, is real, though it differs from, say, market competition, in being mediated by emotional bonds. (from "The Meanings of Community" by Thomas Bender)

Quote: According to Bender, "The solidarity that characterizes communities does not mean, however, that all is unity and harmony within."

Paraphrase: While some people believe a lack of conflict characterizes community, Bender asserts that some communities may have and need conflict.

Partial Paraphrase: Unlike other forms of conflict, though, Bender believes that family conflict is "mediated by emotional bonds."

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2. Don't let a quote just hang there!

Always place a quote within a sentence of your own. Try using the following strategies:

- Introduce or in some way lead into the quotation so that readers know whose words are being quoted or can understand why the quotation is important.
- Comment on the quotation after you have included so that its readers understand connection to other points made in the essay.

You often need to use an introductory phrase for a quotation to indicate to your reader whom or where the quotation is from. Try using these "formulas":

FORMULA 1: **In** + TITLE + AUTHOR(S) + **write(s)** + QUOTATION
In "Meanings of Community," Thomas Bender **writes** that, "Sense of self and community may be difficult to distinguish."

FORMULA 2: **According to** + AUTHOR(S) **in** TITLE + QUOTATION
According to Thomas Bender **in** "Meanings of Community," "Sense of self and community may be difficult to distinguish."

Other introductory phrases include: THE AUTHOR *argues that, says that, assumes that, says, states, notes, writes, comments that, believes that, asks, claims, concludes,* and so on.

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3. Make your quotation "fit" into your sentence.

Quotations must grammatically fit into your sentences. If you need to add or change words in the original sentence in order to do this, indicate such changes with brackets [ ], not parentheses ( ).

Incorrect: Smith makes a good argument, "we have a responsibility to preserve the future for our children."

Correct: Smith argues convincingly that "we have a responsibility to preserve the future for our children."

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4. You don't <u>always</u> have to mention first and last names all the time…

In your first reference to an article, you need to give the name(s) of the author(s), the complete title of the article, and the name of the magazine or book (if you know it):

In "Man to Man, Woman to Woman" in *Texts and Contexts*, Mark Sherman and Adelaide Haas write, "When it comes to conversations, husbands and wives often have problems that close friends of the same sex don't have."

In later references to a source you have already quoted, you simply use the last name of the author(s) plus the quotation. Notice that when you use words like "states" and "writes," you put a comma after this word.

Sherman and Haas state, "Not only do men and women like to talk about different topics, but spoken language serves different functions for the sexes."

Punctuation

1. Use quotations marks at the beginning and end of any word, phrase, line, or passage you quote.

2. **Commas** and **periods** go <u>inside</u> quotations marks.

   > After the professor stood up quietly and said, "I do not expect
   > to continue at this position any longer," the other professors at
   > the meeting stared at her in amazement.

3. **Semi-colons, colons,** and **dashes** go <u>outside</u> quotation marks.

   > Baker focuses on two choices that cause young women "to be
   > unclear about their goals": their interest in family life and
   > their desire for professional success.

4. **Question marks** and **exclamation points** go:
   <u>inside</u> quotation marks, if they are part of the original quotation, but
   <u>outside</u>, if they are part of the sentence.

5. Use **square brackets** whenever you need to substitute or add words to a quotation.

   > Othello says that he "[has] done the state service."

6. **Single quotation marks** are placed inside regular quotation marks when you have a quote within a quote.

   > Professor Stevens claimed that he "always asks his students
   > Professor Begley's question about 'the meaning of a college
   > education.'"

7. Sometimes you will want to leave out material in the middle of a passage, quoting the most important words. When you do this, use an **ellipsis** (…). Use three dots if the omitted passage does not contain a period and four dots if it does.

8. If you decide to use **a quotation of more than three lines**, set it off from the rest of your essay by indenting about ten spaces from either side and single-spacing the quotation. You do not need to put quotation marks around this block quotation, unless it is actual dialogue.

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        In the essay "A Room Of One's Own," Woolf elaborates her

        argument for psychological androgyny:

                And I went on amateurishly to sketch a
                plan of the soul so that in each of us
                two powers preside, one male, one
                female . . . . The normal and
                comfortable state of being is that
                when the two live in harmony together,
                spiritually cooperating. (Woolf 98)

        This passage resonates distinctly with Freud's own

        theories on...
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GUIDELINES FOR PUNCTUATING TITLES

✓ Use quotation marks ("") around the titles of short stories, essays, articles, poems, chapter names, song names.

SHORT STORY:	Richard Christian Matheson's "Red"
ESSAY:	"A Tale of Two Sitcoms" by Steven D. Stark
ARTICLE:	"Generation Next" by Chris Smith
POEM :	Lois-Ann Yamanaka's "Haupu Mountain"
CHAPTER NAME:	"Let's Go Mexico!" from How to Be a Chicana Role Model by Michele Serros
SONG:	"Livin' La Vida Loca" by Ricky Martin

✓ Underline or *italicize* the titles of books, novels, periodicals, newspapers, plays, movies, TV series, and album names.

BOOK:	Errors & Expectations by Mina Shaughnessy
NOVEL:	*Island of the Sequined Love Nun* by Christopher Moore
PERIODICAL:	Newsweek
NEWSPAPER:	*The San Francisco Bay Guardian*
PLAY:	*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* by Tom Stoppard
MOVIE:	Chicken Run
TV SERIES:	*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*
ALBUM:	Less Than Jake's Losing Streak