Images: Captions and Citations

Overview

If you reproduce an image of a work in the body of your paper, you will need to provide both a caption for it as well as a citation in your Bibliography or Works Cited page. The latter conforms to MLA format (refer to MLA section 5.7.6: A Work of Visual Art).

A caption is the text accompanying an image inserted into your paper. The citation is the reference included in your Works Cited page or Bibliography.

Similarities: Both citations and captions include the artist’s name, title of the work, date (if available), and owner of the item.

Differences: The caption notes the dimensions and medium, the citation does not. The citation includes more detailed information regarding the source of the image and in the case of Internet resources also documents the date the image was retrieved online (noted by the use of the terms “Print” or “Web” found at the end of the citation).

For more information, consult a member of the LCAD Library staff or the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th edition, 2009) – a copy is always in the library at REF LB 2369 G53 2009.

General format for captions for an image inserted in a paper

Usually the caption text is a little bit smaller than the text used in the body of the paper (i.e., you may want to use 10 point type for the caption if using 12 point for the rest of the paper).

Example:

*Image*

Fig #. Name of artist (last name first)  
*Title of Work of Art, Date of work.*  
Medium  
Size  
Owner of the original/right to reproduce image

Example 1: Creating a caption and citation for an image from a book

First you cite the creator and the image, then you cite in what book you found it and where.

Citation:


Caption:

Fig. 1. Blake, William, 1757-1827
*Ancient of Days,* frontispiece of *Europe: A Prophecy,* 1794
Metal relief etching, hand colored
9.5” x 6.75”
Pierpoint Morgan Library, New York

**Example 2: Creating a caption and citation for an image of your own work**

Citations:


Captions:

Fig. 2. Student, Ima Goode
*Canyon Road Twister,* 2012
Oil on canvas
16”x20”
Collection of the artist

Fig. 3  D’artiste, Crystal Vue
*Vending Machine Angst,* 2013
Digital drawing
Private collection

**Example 3: Creating a caption and citation for an image found on the Internet**

First you cite the creator and the image, then you cite the information about the website where you found it and the date on which you saw it.

Citation:


Caption:

Fig. 4. Kalpakjian, Craig.
*Corridor,* 1995
Computer-generated animation on later video disc
SFMOMA

**Example 4: Creating a caption and citation for an image found on ARTstor**
First you cite the creator and the image, then you use the ARTstor-recommended format to note where you found it and the date on which you saw it. With the caption, however, you also note the ARTstor ID number.

Citation:


Caption:

Fig. 5. John Singer Sargent, 1856-1925
*Madame X (Madame Pierre Gautreau)*, 1883-84
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
ARTstor : MMA_IAP_1039651030