12

APA and MLA Documentation Styles

By the end of the chapter, students should be able to

- cite sources according to APA and MLA styles;
- create references and works cited lists; and
- incorporate citations into your writing.

As you saw in Chapters 10 and 11, the points in your research essays must be supported with information from outside sources. These sources need to be given proper credit and be documented in a consistent manner. This chapter introduces the American Psychological Association (APA) and Modern Language Association (MLA) styles. You will find common citations and references in print and electronic formats, with

examples of each. Sample APA and MLA essays are included to illustrate how to use these styles correctly to format your essay.

Choosing Your Citation Style

Citations and **references**

- give appropriate credit to others' work;
- establish your credibility as a researcher;
- show where your own work fits into other work in the field;
- avoid plagiarism, a form of theft and the most serious academic crime, and its severe penalties;
- enable readers (such as markers) to trace or verify your sources;
- find the reference if you need it for further research; and
- enlarge on a matter (in a footnote or an endnote) that would be disruptive if placed in the text.

Most styles require an abbreviated citation—placed in parentheses—in the sentence where the reference appears. Although there are many subtle differences among documentation styles, the main elements of a citation usually include

- the surname(s) of the author(s);
- the page number or a similar locator of the information;
- the year of publication; and, in some cases,
- other publication details.

Further details are given in an alphabetized list at the end of the essay under a heading such as "References" or "Works Cited."

Different areas of academia favour distinct styles. Business, education, psychology, social sciences, and some physical sciences use APA; literature, philosophy, and religion use MLA. Other major formats, which we will not discuss in this chapter, include the Council of Science Editors (CSE) and *The Chicago Manual of Style* (*CMS*). Subject areas such as chemistry, engineering, medicine, and music have their own style specifications. Your department or your instructor should be the final guide in your choice of citation style.

Each documentation format has a manual and/or website. If you are using the print version, which you can probably obtain at your school's library, ensure

A **citation** includes the author name, publication date, title, and publisher name and location. A **reference** gives complete retrieval information for a source used in an essay.

that it is the most current edition. The examples in this chapter are styled according to the following manuals:

> American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.).
> Modern Language Association of America. (2016). *MLA Handbook* (8th ed.).

The MLA also publishes the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*.

The following sections provide the basic standards for documenting sources in APA and MLA, with examples to illustrate each format. Both APA and LMA update their standards and criteria regularly. Check with your instructor to make sure that this text contains the most recent changes. To look for the most current information, check the associations' respective websites. For APA use https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/ and their search function to find the information you need. For MLA go to https://style.mla.org/

If you use other websites for citation and reference help, always double-check the information with at least one other site and take note of when the website was last updated to ensure you are using the latest edition. For hard-to-find formats, ask for help from your professor or from experts in your college library or writing centre.

> APA and MLA are both parenthetical styles, meaning that parentheses are used to enclose brief bibliographical information about the source within the main text.

APA

APA style is parenthetical—whenever you directly quote or paraphrase an author in your essay or use an author's idea, you include a citation in parentheses in the sentence. You also provide a more complete description of all your sources in a reference list, which appears on the final page(s) of your essay.

APA In-Text Citations

Generally, APA in-text citations include the author's surname, the work's year of publication, and (for direct quotations) the relevant page number at the end of the sentence. Separate the items with commas and use the abbreviation *p.* or *pp.* for *page* or *pages* (do not italicize the abbreviations). In most cases, the end punctuation of the sentence comes after the closing parentheses. Unless you need to guide the reader to a specific location in a larger work, such as a book, page numbers are not necessary for paraphrases from shorter works, such as journals.

> APA in-text citations include the author's surname, year of publication, and page number(s).

(Ashton, 2008, p. 12).

Sandy Crashley's essay "The Cost of Buying Happiness: Why Less Is More" (see Chapter 11, pp. 254–7) uses the APA format.

If the sentence gives the author's name (i.e., uses a signal phrase) and does not include a direct quotation, do not repeat the name in the parenthetical citation. Include the publication year and page number(s) immediately after the author's name.

Ashton (2008, p. 12) found that . . .

Here are more guidelines for APA in-text citations:

Citation after a direct quotation: Give the author's surname, year of publication, and page number. If there is no signal phrase (i.e., the author is not named in the sentence), include all the information at the end of the quotation.

During both world wars, the Canadian government often employed masseuses because surgery and medical care were insufficient "to restore severely wounded men" (Cleather, 1995, p. ix).

If the author is named in the signal phrase, follow with the publication year; place the page number at the end of the quotation and before the punctuation.

According to Stambouli and Traversa (2002), "each gallon of gasoline produced and used in an internal combustion engine releases roughly 12 kg of CO_2" (p. 299).

Block quotation: A quotation of 40 words or more begins on a new line and is indented one half-inch from the left margin. Quotation marks are not used, and the text is double-spaced. The author's surname, year of publication, and page number appear in parentheses at the end of the quotation and *after* the punctuation. If the authors are mentioned in the signal phrase introducing the quotation, follow their name with the year of publication and place the page number only in parentheses at the end of the quotation and after the punctuation.

Do not include a page number in an in-text citation that refers to the work as a whole rather than to a specific page(s).

A paraphrase includes all the content of the source put entirely in your own words. When you paraphrase material, from a larger work, such as a book, your citation must include the page number.

. (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, pp. 81–82)

Citation for a specific reference (such as a paraphrase): State the author's surname, year of publication, and page number.

Most of the profits from British Columbia's aquaculture industry go to Norwegians, who control 92 per cent of the industry (Macdonald, 2009, pp. 148–149).

Citation for a non-specific reference: A non-specific reference, such as an author's thesis statement or a study's main findings, applies to the work as a whole rather than to a specific page. Give only the author's surname and year of publication.

> Conservation biologists agree that protecting habitats is the most effective way to conserve biological diversity (Primack, 2000).

Citation referring to an indirect source: If it is necessary to refer to a source found in another work, include the original author's name in the sentence and cite the **indirect source**. Include the phrase *as cited in* (not italicized) before the author's surname. In the references section, list the details for the indirect source.

An **indirect source** is one that is cited in another work. Always use original sources whenever possible, but if you have to cite information from an indirect source, include the phrase *as cited in* before the citation.

> Francis Bacon (as cited in Lindemann, 2001) observed that language affects our thinking when he said that "words react on the understanding" (p. 93).

Personal communication, including interviews, lectures, conversation, emails, texts, and oral presentations when the work cannot be retried by the reader. Give the author's surname and first initial(s), the phrase *personal communication* (not italicized), and the date of the conversation.

> (J. Derrida, personal communication, September 20, 2000).

Personal communications are cited only in the text of your essay; they are not listed in the references section.

Multiple sources in one citation: You may include more than one relevant source in a single citation if your point applies to both. Order the sources alphabetically by last name and separate them with a semicolon.

You may include more than one source in a single citation. Separate the sources with semicolons.

> The practices of teaching composition in college have not radically changed in the last few decades (Bishop, 2005; Williams, 2007).

APA In-Text Citations by Format

Number or Kind of Authors

Work by one author: Give the author's surname, year of publication, and page number (if required). A book with both an author and an editor or translator is usually cited by the author.

> (Bloom, 2002, p. xviii).

Work by two authors: State the surnames of both authors, with an ampersand (&) between them; year of publication; and page number (if required).

> (Higgins & Wilson-Baptist, 1999, p. 44).

When naming the authors in the text of your essay, as in a signal phrase, use the word *and* instead of an ampersand.

> When you refer to a work with more than one author in a citation, use an ampersand (&) before the last author's surname. Use *and* when listing the author names in the main text.

> **Higgins and Wilson-Baptist (1999)** argue that "a tourist exists outside of experience. A traveller, though, submerges herself in the new" (p. 44).

Works by three or more authors: Use the first author's surname followed by the abbreviation *et al.* (not italicized), which means "and others." Include the publication year and page number (if required) every time, unless the same authors are mentioned more than once in a paragraph.

> **(Smith et al., 2020, p. 34)**

Two or more works by the same author in the same year: Add lowercase letters alphabetically (*a*, *b*, *c*, etc.) to distinguish works published in the same year.

> **(Foucault, 1980a, p. 37)**

The *a* in the example indicates that the writer has used at least two works written by Foucault and published in 1980. This citation must correspond with the entry for 1980a in the references list.

Two authors with the same last name: Include the authors' first initial(s) to distinguish the names.

> **(Sinkinson, S., 2001, p. 225; Sinkinson, B., 2001, p. 237)**

Group or organization as author (corporate author): Documents published by companies and government departments may not list an author. In this case, use the group or organization's name. If the name is long or is known by an acronym or abbreviation (for example, the United Nations Children's Fund is commonly known as UNICEF), include the full name in the first citation followed by the acronym in square brackets, the year of publication, and page number (if required). Use the abbreviation or acronym with the year throughout the rest of the paper.

> If no author is given for a source, use the name of the group or organization.

> **(American Educational Research Association [AERA], 2001)**
> *later citations*: **(AERA, 2001)**

Work with an unknown author (including many dictionary and encyclopedia articles): When the author is unknown and there is no company name, use the first few words of the work's title followed with the year of publication and page number (if required).

("Plea to City Hall," 2003)

Anonymous author: If the author is listed as *Anonymous*, cite in the same way as a named author, using *Anonymous* (not italicized).

(Anonymous, 1887, p. 12)

Electronic Sources

Sample in-text Internet citation: Include the author's surname, year the site was created or last updated.

(Gregoire, 2000)

Internet site without an author or without a date: Use the full or abbreviated title in quotation marks, the year the site was created or last updated. Use the abbreviation *n.d.* (not italicized) if the site does not include a date.

("Muchinfo's Poll," 2002)
(Hannak, n.d.)

Non-Text Sources

Film, video, audio, tv broadcast, and musical recording: Use the most senior production person's name, such as the film's director, and the year of public release or broadcast. For a TV series, use the name of the executive producer.

(Coppola, 1979)

Installation, event, performance, or work of art: Use the format followed by other non-text resources, such as the name of the artist(s) and date of presentation or creation.

(Byrdmore, 2006)

> Many articles retrieved from a database are viewed as Portable Document Format (PDF) files. In such cases, use the page numbers in the document, which are usually the same as those of the print version (if one exists).

APA References

In APA style, the references section contains complete bibliographical information for a work's in-text citations. Follow these guidelines when creating a reference list:

- Begin the references on a new page at the end of the essay and number the section as part of the overall work.
- Centre the title ("References") an inch from the top of the page.
- Double-space the list, with 1-inch margins.
- Begin each entry flush with the left margin; use a hanging indent for subsequent lines. Do not number the entries.
- Alphabetize the list by author surname, usually the first item in each entry.
- Italicize titles of books, journals, plays, films, and other full-length works. Do not set titles of chapters or articles in quotation marks. Capitalize only the first word, the first word after a colon, all proper nouns, and acronyms (e.g., NFB or CBC) regardless of how the original is capitalized.
- Omit words such as *Publishers*, *Inc.*, and *Co.* in publishers' names. Include the full names of associations, corporations, and university presses.
- Use the following abbreviations where appropriate.

  ❍ ed. (edition)
  ❍ Ed. (Editor), Eds. (Editors)
  ❍ No. (Number)
  ❍ p. (page), pp. (pages)
  ❍ para. (paragraph)
  ❍ Pt. (Part)
  ❍ Rev. ed. (Revised edition)
  ❍ Trans. (Translator[s])
  ❍ Vol. (Volume), Vols. (Volumes)

The standard APA reference begins with the author's surname followed by initial(s), not given name(s); publication date; title of work; and publication details. Here are two examples of specific types.

Sample book entry: Include the author's name, date of publication, title of book, and publisher.

Fries, C. C. (1962). *Linguistics and reading*. Rinehart & Winston.

Sample journal entry: Provide the author's name, date of publication, title of article, title of journal (italicized), volume number (italicized), issue number (if required), page range, and DOI or URL. Note that the comma after the journal title is also italicized and that there is no end punctuation after a DOI or URL. The abbreviations p. or pp. are not used in journal entries.

> Valkenburg, P. M., & Jochen, P. (2007). Who visits online dating sites? Exploring some characteristics of online daters. *CyberPsychology and Behavior, 10*, 849–852. doi:10.1089/cpb.2007.9941

> The order for most references is author's surname and initial(s); publication date; title of work; and publication details, which vary depending on whether the work is a book, journal article, or electronic document.

> Chapter 10 discusses DOIS.

Number or Kind of Authors

Work by one author: See "Sample book entry."

Work by two authors: Invert both authors' names and separate them with an ampersand (&).

> For a work with two to seven authors, invert all authors' names and use an ampersand (&) between the second-last and the last name.

> Luckner, J., & Nadler, R. (1992). *Processing the experience.* Kendall/Hunt.

Work by three or more authors: List all the authors as they appear, up to twenty names. If there are more than twenty authors, list nineteen names, then use an ellipsis followed by the final author's name.

> Terracciano, A., Abdel-Khalek, A. M., Ádám, N., Adamovová, L., Ahn, C. -k., Ahn, H. -n., Alansari, B. M., Alcalay, L., Allik, J., Angleitner, A., Avia, M. D., Ayearst, L. E., Barbaranelli, C., Beer, A., Borg-Cunen, M. A., Bratko, D., Brunner-Sciarra, M., Budzinski, L., Camart, N., . . . McCrae, R. R. (2005). National character does not reflect mean personality trait levels in 49 cultures. *Science, 310*(5745), 96–100. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1117199

Two or more works by the same author: Works by the same author are arranged chronologically, earliest to latest. Works with the same author(s) and publication year are arranged alphabetically by the first major word of the title. In the example, the earliest article is listed first; the *h* in *history* precedes the *P* in *Power*, justifying the order of the second and third items.

> Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison* (A. Sheridan, Trans.). Random House.

Foucault, M. (1980a). *The history of sexuality* (Vol. 1) (R. Hurley, Trans.). Random House.

Foucault, M. (1980b). *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972–1977* (C. Gordon, Ed.). Harvester Press.

Work by two authors with the same last name: The alphabetical order of authors' initials determines the sequence. If two works have the same first authors, the last names of the second authors determine the order.

Jason, L. A., & Klich, M. M. (1982). Use of feedback in reducing television watching. *Psychological Reports, 51*, 812–814.

Jason, L. A., & Rooney-Rebeck, P. (1984). Reducing excessive television viewing. *Child & Family Behavior Therapy, 6*, 61–69.

Group or organization as author (corporate author): Use the full group name in place of the author's name. If the name begins with an article (e.g., *The*), omit it. If the organization is also the publisher, do not repeat the organization's name at the end of the reference. If the reference is to a webpage or DOI, the URL will follow the title of the article.

Education International. (2008). *Guide to universities & colleges in Canada.*

When there is no author in a non-electronic source, alphabetize the entry by the first major word in the title. (Do not include words such as *The*.)

Work with an unknown author (non-electronic source): Alphabetize the entry by the first major word in the title. When an author is listed as "Anonymous," alphabetize by the letter *A*.

Interveners. (1993). In *Canadian Encyclopedia* (Vol. 11, pp. 344–348). Smith Press.

No date: Use *n.d.* (not italicized) after the author's name where you would normally put the date.

Source Type

Edited work: Begin with the editor's name followed by *Ed.* (one editor) or *Eds.* (more than one editor; not italicized) in parentheses.

Corcoran, B., Hayhoe, M., & Pradl, G. M. (Eds.). (1994). *Knowledge in the making: Challenging the text in the classroom.* Boynton/Cook.

Chapter or other type of selection, such as an essay, in an edited volume: Begin with the author's name, year of publication, and chapter (or essay) title.

Follow with the name(s) of the book's editor(s), not inverted, preceded by *In* and followed by *Ed.* or *Eds.* (not italicized). The reference concludes with the book title, page range (in parentheses), and publication information.

> Williams, N. (1989). Behold the Sun: The politics of musical production. In C. Norris (Ed.), *Music and the Politics of Culture* (pp. 150–171). Lawrence & Wishart Limited.

Translated work: Place the translator's name and the abbreviation *Trans.* (not italicized) in parentheses after the work's title.

> Lacan, J. (1977). *Écrits: A selection* (A. Sheridan, Trans.). W. W. Norton. (Original work published 1966)

To cite a translated book in the text of your essay, use both the original and the current publication dates:

> (Lacan, 1966/1977)

Volume in a multivolume work: Include the volume number after the title.

> Bosworth, A. B. (Ed.). (1995). *A historical commentary on Arrian's history of Alexander* (Vol. 1). Oxford University Press.

If referring to more than one volume, give the specific volumes or range (e.g., Vols. 1–3).

Second or subsequent edition of a work: Include the edition number after the title.

> Suzuki, D. T., Griffiths, A. J., & Lewontin, R. C. (1989). *An introduction to genetic analysis* (4th ed.). W. H. Freeman.

Article in a journal with continuous pagination: If a journal's pagination continues from one issue to the next, include the volume but not the issue number. Page numbers for journal articles are not preceded by *p.* or *pp.*

> Garner, R. (2003). Political ideologies and the moral status of animals. *Journal of Political Ideologies, 8*, 233–246.

> The usual order for an essay or other selection in an edited book is author name, year, essay title, book editor's name preceded by *In*, the abbreviation *Ed.*, book title, page range, and the publisher's name.

> For editions beyond the first, include the edition number in parentheses after the title.

Whether you include the issue number in a citation depends on whether each issue is numbered separately (include issue number) or the numbering continues from the previous issue (do not include issue number).

Article in a journal that is paginated by issue: If each issue of a journal is numbered separately, include both volume (italicized) and issue number (in parentheses and not italicized).

> Trew, J. D. (2002). Conflicting visions: Don Messier, Liberal nationalism, and the Canadian unity debate. *International Journal of Canadian Studies, 26*(2), 41–57.

Unlike journal and magazine articles, newspaper articles require the abbreviation *p.* or *pp.* with all page numbers included. References also include the exact publication date (i.e., year-month-day format).

Article in a magazine: Provide the complete date in the year-month-day format. Do not abbreviate month names. Include the volume and issue numbers if available.

> Knapp, L. (2007, September/October). Licensing music to the film and television industries. *Canadian Musician, 29*(5), 49–56.

Article in a newspaper: Include the author's name or, if none is given, the title of the article. Include abbreviation *p.* or *pp.* before the page number(s). If the article continues later in the work, give all page numbers and separate them with commas. A letter to the editor or an editorial follows the same format and includes specific information in square brackets after the title (e.g., [Letter to the editor]).

> Lawyer seeks mistrial for client accused of illegal midwifery. (2003, April 20). *National Post*, p. A8.

Book/movie review: Follow article format with the reviewer's name as author and include *Review of the*, the medium, title, and the author's or director's name in square brackets (e.g., [Review of the film *Avengers End Game*, by Anthony Russo & Joe Russo]) after the title.

> Mihm, S. (2009). Swindled: The dark history of food fraud, from poisoned candy to counterfeit coffee [Review of the book *Swindled: The dark history of food fraud, from poisoned candy to counterfeit coffee*, by B. Wilson]. *Business History Review, 83*(2), 379–381.

Government document: If the author is unknown, begin with the name of the government followed by the agency (e.g., ministry, department, Crown corporation) and the document name.

> British Columbia. Office of the Auditor General. (2005). *Salmon forever: An assessment of the provincial role in sustaining wild salmon.*

In cases or reports, such as government documents, the report number can be placed after the title (e.g., Research Report No. 09.171).

Indirect source: Give the work the citation comes from, not the original text.

Personal communication: Because they cannot be reproduced or verified, personal communications (including emails, phone calls, interviews, lectures, oral presentations, and conversations) are not included in the list of references.

Do not include personal communications (including emails, phone calls, interviews, and conversations) in the reference list.

Electronic Sources

The APA manual recommends that electronic sources include the same elements of print sources in the same order, with exact location information added as needed. As we mentioned in "Sample journal entry," include a journal article's DOI if it is available (you'll find it with the other publication information, such as journal title and volume number, and/or on the first page of the article).

APA encourages the use of a DOI where available, instead of an URL.

Not all publishers use this system. If the DOI is unavailable or your instructor tells you to do so, cite the URL of the journal's or publisher's home page. If the document would be hard to locate from the home page, provide the exact URL or as much as is needed for retrieval. APA does not require your date of access for Internet sources, but you should confirm electronic links before including them in your paper. More information on referencing electronic references in APA format is available at https://extras.apa.org/apastyle/DOI-URL/#/

Sample electronic reference: Citation formats follow those of print sources with the title of the website included. There is no period after the DOI or URL.

> Czekaj, L. (2014, May 23). Promises fulfilled: Looking at the legacy of thousands of black slaves who fled to Canada in the 1800s. Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. http://www.ideas-idees.ca/blog/promises-fulfilled

If it is necessary to break the URL over more than one line, break before punctuation, such as the slash before *blog* in the example; never use a hyphen unless it is part of the URL.

Group or organization (corporate or government) website: If there is no author, use the organization's name.

> Environment Canada. (2009, August 12). 10 things you should know about climate change. http://www.ec.gc.ca/cc/default.asp?lang=En&n=2F049262–1

The complete URL is given here because it would be hard to locate the document from the organization's home page.

Article in an online-only journal: Follow the format for a print article; add the URL at the end. Note the journal name is in italics.

> Rye, B. J., Elmslie, P., & Chalmers, A. (2007). Meeting a transsexual person: Experience within a classroom setting. *Canadian On-Line Journal of Queer Studies in Education, 3*(1). http://jps. library.utoronto.ca/index.php/jqstudies/index

The name of the database is not usually required in a reference, even if there is no DOI.

Article from a database (with a DOI): The name of the database is not usually required.

> Martel, M. (2009). "They smell bad, have diseases, and are lazy": RCMP officers reporting on hippies in the late sixties. *Canadian Historical Review, 90,* 215–245. doi:10.3138/chr.90.2.215

In this example, the quotation marks in the title indicate a direct quotation.

Article from a database (no doi): The home page of the journal is used; the name of the database is not usually required.

> Barton, S. S. (2008). Discovering the literature on Aboriginal diabetes in Canada: A focus on holistic methodologies. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research, 40*(4), 26–54. http://cjnr.mcgill.ca/

No date: Place *n.d.* (not italicized) where the date would normally go.

> Hegemony. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster online dictionary.* http:// www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hegemony

E-book: Use *n.d.* (not italicized) for the date and include the URL.

> Radford, B. (n.d.). *Soil to social.* http://on-line-books.ora.com/mod-bin/books.mod/javaref/javanut/index.htm

Electronic version of a print book: E-book references are formatted using the same pattern as print book: author, year, title, publisher, URL or DOI if available.

> Frederick Douglass (1881). *My Escape From Slavery.* University of Virginia Library. http://xtf.lib.virginia.edu/xtf/view?docId= modern_english/uvaGenText/tei/DouEsca.xml

Message posted to an online forum, discussion group, or blog post: Use the following format: Last name or user name (year, month, date). Comment title or the first 20 words of the comment. [Comment on the blog post "Title of blog post"]. *Title of Blog*. URL

> Carrick (2009, November 15). I especially love your observation that we are many things—in fact more than the sum of these parts. I too. [Comment on blog post "Success is not measured by word count"]. *WrightingWords*. http://www.wrightingwords.com/2009/11/15/success-is-not-measured-by-word-count/

Non-Text Sources

Film or video: Use the following order: producer, director, year, and title of film followed by *Motion picture* (not italicized) in square brackets. Conclude by giving the country of origin and studio.

> Coppola, F. F. (Producer & Director). (1979). *Apocalypse now* [Film]. Zoetrope Studios.

Episode from a television series: Use the following order: writer, & director, year and date of first broadcast, title of episode, (series/season number, episode number) [TV series episode]. Then give the producer's name and the title of the series in italics. Conclude by giving the broadcasting company.

> Lindelof, D. (Writer), & Bender, J. (Director). (2005, September 21). Man of science, man of faith (Season 1, Episode 1). [TV series episode]. In J. J. Abrams (Executive Producer), *Lost.*: American Broadcasting.

Music: For song lyrics, use the following order: writer, (copyright year), title of song [Song]. On *title of album*. Record label. Add the URL at the end if the material can be retrieved from services such as SoundCloud or from the artist's site. If the lyrics are taken from a YouTube video, sheet music, or web page use the recommended strategies for those media.

> Morrison, V. (1993). Gloria. [Song] On *Too long in exile*. Polydor.

The following student essay uses the APA documentation style.

Sample Student Essay: APA

Polar Bears: Bright Outlook or Grim Future

Adam Cook

INTRODUCTION

[1] The population of the polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) species has been alarmingly decreasing throughout the years. The polar bear is classified as a vulnerable species, with approximately 8 of the 19 polar bear subspecies in decline. Polar bears have to continuously fight the extreme odds of man, machine, and the global environment just to keep their place on this planet. Everything from the human race overhunting and encroaching evermore on their territory, to the garbage and toxic pollution that is sweeping and growing over the Arctic, to the drastically changing weather and temperature fluctuations is unquestionably haunting and harming the future of the polar bear species, if indeed they even have one.

IMPACTS

[2] Humans: The human race is the number one cause for the dwindling population of the polar bear species. Every year, humans intrude further and further onto the polar bears' natural territory. Humans have almost pushed them right off of their land directly into the water with nowhere to go. Humans have so little regard for this species that we have intensely overhunted them for years to make carpets, coats, good luck charms, medicinal uses, head-trophies, etc. It is well known that the commercial hunting of polar bears almost drove them to extinction. Humans regularly disturb their breeding cycles, hibernation timeframes, and birthing den procedures, which causes immense stress to the mother polar bear. She can even lose her cubs if being disturbed during the developmental stages of the fetus in the mother's womb. American zoologist Dr Steven C. Armstrup conducted an 11-year study that proves the negative impacts that humans have on hibernating and prenatal polar bears. On top of that, humans have negative effects on the polar bears' food chain. Humans have hunted and also overhunted many of their own food sources to the point of depletion, which thus leave polar bears undernourished, stressed, and incredibly desperate

for food (Armstrup, 1993, p. 12). If polar bears are to survive, humans need to respect and maintain the natural habitat of these creatures.

[3] Garbage and Pollution: A major factor affecting the polar bear species is the ever-growing rate of garbage and pollution hitting their homeland. Every year, scientists are noticing the increasing trend of various amounts of garbage from all parts of the world making its way to the Arctic regions. Air and water pollution are negatively impacting the polar bears' natural territory and their species as a whole as time goes on. Over 80 per cent of marine pollution expels from land-based activities (WWF, n.d.). Everything from numerous types of deadly oils, varieties of virulent fertilizers, mounds and mounds of garbage, masses of sewage disposal, slews of toxic chemicals, and other contaminates affect the natural habitat of polar bears. Oil spills cause a great deal of damage to the marine environment. Fertilizer runoff has had severe negative impacts for coastal areas around the world. This runoff has some nutrients that can lead to eutrophication. Eutrophication is when algal blooms increase so significantly that it drains the water's dissolved oxygen, which horribly leads to the suffocation of the marine life (Walsh et al., 2011). Eutrophication has resulted in large "dead-zones" in many parts of the world such as the Bering Strait. Mounds of garbage also float their way throughout the oceans, containing copious amounts of plastic and non-decomposable garbage, glass items, packaging material, lumber, and toxic canisters. If people do not dispose of garbage correctly, just about every single item tossed incorrectly can orbit and grow in the seas and oceans. In many areas of the globe, man-made sewage typically flows substantially or completely untreated straight into the seas and oceans. Extensive research has shown that much of the urban sewage drained into the Atlantic Ocean from South America is completely untreated. This sewage can lead to eutrophication as well. Unfortunately, almost every single marine creature is contaminated by or with man-made chemicals. The human race once truly believed that the ocean was so vast that every single chemical, toxin, or bit of garbage would eventually dilute throughout the oceans and break down to the point that it vanished. The truth of the matter is that these dumped items have not simply disappeared. On top of that, certain dumped toxins and chemicals that have found their way into the food chain have become more concentrated and found at higher levels

> Note that many of the points in this paragraph are deemed general knowledge, so they do not need to be cited. See Chapter 11 for more on general knowledge.

compared to years past (WWF, n.d.). In order to protect polar bears from these toxins and the contaminants in their food sources, humans have to become responsible caretakers of the planet.

[4] Climate Change: The environment in which polar bears live in is extremely sensitive and can be easily disturbed. They typically live throughout the Arctic region, which is comprised of ice and snow. These natural elements that make up the Arctic are what the polar bears undeniably depend on for survival. Nowadays, such reductions in the thickness and length of the ice and extreme changes in the ice dynamics all negatively alter the condition and success of the polar bears' survival. Examples of this include Hudson Bay and James Bay in Canada. The ice is melting earlier in the spring and being formed later in the fall. The time polar bears spend on the ice is precious for hunting their prey. This is the time when they get to restore their body fat and fitness levels. Unfortunately, this crucial time for storing up fat and energy for the time when there is less ice and sparse food reserves is becoming dangerously finite. As the timeframe without food lengthens, their bodies start to decline quickly. This is certainly critical for mothers that are pregnant or nursing. Scientists have pointed to either lack of fat from the mother or lack of food to be number one causes for death in cubs. With such significant reductions in the ice length and thickness throughout the summer months, the open window for the polar bears' hunting time is ever more decreasing (de la Guardia, et al., 2013, para. 4). Will this cause alone be the ultimate destruction of the polar bears' future?

> Cook assumes that people agree with the climate change evidence often spoken about in the media and with the fact that climate change exists. Would his argument be better with citations from outside sources?

CONCLUSION

[5] The polar bears are indeed an incredibly intelligent, strong, resourceful species that are truly the king of the food chain in the Arctic, but these admirable qualities are not enough for them to continue battling these ever-growing, negative effects moving forward into the future. Polar bears are directly threatened from how very little regard the human race has for them, other species, for the environment, and for the earth as a whole. From years and years of gathered, factual research, scientists have estimated that two-thirds

of the polar bear population could become extinct by 2050 (WWF, 2012). The way the human race continues to use and abuse the planet, undoubtedly the climate change supporting scientists will be correct about the polar bears' extinction unless immediate and corrective actions are engaged by people united. Can the human race pull it together, or are the polar bears' days truly numbered? Only time will tell.

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APA requires that the references begin on a new page at the end of the essay.