What and Why: Citation means giving credit to another author when you use her/his ideas or words. It is basic to scholarship and to our class, and mastering it will be an important part of your course grade. MLA is the Modern Language Association, which created one system for citation used often in history scholarship. Plagiarism means taking someone else’s idea or writing and passing it off as your own. It is a serious offense, and could lead to serious trouble for you. To avoid it:

- **Never** use someone else’s ideas without citing them. Even if you reword, you must cite the original source or you are plagiarizing in the worst way—by making it look as if the ideas are yours when in fact they are not!
- **If you use key words** from the source, it must not sound more like the source than like you, or you have plagiarized.
- Use quotation marks or another method explained below, and cite the source.
- **Don’t cite** your own ideas and common knowledge—things that at least three sources have said. But in history writing, most ideas aren’t yours, and even if you are discussing common knowledge, if you quote it you must cite it. When in doubt, ask or cite it!
- **Every quote** must be worked smoothly into a sentence, neither awkward nor hanging on its own. **Every** item on your Works Cited list must be in your paper; every internal citation must lead to a source on the Works Cited list.

**Five Formats for Internal Citations:** There are five formats to cite within your paper. Three (1,3, 5) are quotes, two (2,4) are paraphrases. Be sure to learn the difference early in the term! ALSO NOTE where the punctuation belongs--it varies:

1. A short quote (four or fewer lines, word for word, exact punctuation, with quote marks) introduced by an author and followed by the page number in parenthesis.
   For websites, and quotes within quotes, see Special Cases below.
   According to Joan Didion, “People were missing. Children were missing. Parents were missing” (94).

2. A paraphrase—your words, the author’s ideas—introduced by the author.
   Didion believes that the project of the United States was massively failing in the spring of 1967, and she went to San Francisco to witness the crash (95).

3. A long quote of more than five typed lines. Lead smoothly in with your own introductory statement. Indent two tabs, use no quotes unless they’re in the original, and change the location of the end period as shown. Space these like the rest of the paper—no special spacing! If you change anything for clarity in any direct quote, use brackets to show you have changed [or] inserted something.

   Didion found that many women both were and were not following new patterns.
   Barbara [says] she learned to find happiness in “the women’s thing.” She…had gone somewhere to live with the Indians, and although she first found it hard to be shunted off with the women and never to enter into any of the men’s talk, she soon got the point. “That’s where the trip was.” Barbara is on what is called
the women’s trip to the exclusion of almost everything else….Most of the time she keeps house and bakes. (118-119) Many women in San Francisco in 1967 rejected traditional roles, but ironically found themselves doing the same old work in new and strange surroundings.

4. A short quote (four lines or fewer) not introduced by author, but followed by author’s last name and page numbers in parenthesis.
   The sad fact was that “pathetically unequipped children were trying to create a community in a social vacuum” (Didion 127).

5. A paraphrase not introduced by author, but followed by author’s surname and page number in parenthesis.
   Many young people had moved often and were raised without the rich family and community contacts that earlier generations enjoyed; this had made them simply miss out on community and values (Didion 127).

Special Cases

a. Citation from a website with an author requires you to use the author’s name but unless there is a pdf with page numbers, do not use page numbers as every computer printer would print the document differently.

b. Citation from a website without an author requires you to use the first word or two (or more, if there are other works you need to cite that have identical titles for the first few words) of the title, always in quotes, instead of an author, and same rule as (a) above on page numbers. Thus an article called “Acing History” could be cited like this (“Acing”) or try: According to the online article “Acing History,” people who do the reading are most likely to pass the class.

c. Citation of material your author found somewhere else requires that you mention the original source, but also cite your author. Here is an example with a paraphrase; a quote would look similar but would have it word for word and with quotation marks. #5 format--The rock group Buffalo Springfield sang a song during this era about paranoia and how profoundly it can influence us (Didion 109).

d. A quote within a quote for #1 and #4 looks like this—“The little girl who was dancing by herself giggles. ‘Too much,’ she says softly” (Didion 99).

MLA Style Part 2—Works Cited.
The first word of any Work Cited listing must match whatever is internally cited in your paper; that’s how the reader finds the source of every citation. Thus (Didion 99) matches Didion below. “Works” for two or more; “Work” below for only one.

Work Cited:


1981.