A guide for your paper on the media

How to utilize a source

Students continually have difficulty with research writing. They generally have a problem knowing what to cite, what not to cite, and how to go about having a nice mix between direct quotes and paraphrases (paraphrases DO need to be cited, because you are using the *ideas* though not the exact WORDS of someone else). This may help you with style:

Here is information from what we will call source 1 from the paper. The author of the paper is John Smith, the title is “Media and Ethics” and the internet address is <http://www.scu.edu/ethics/publications/ethicalperspectives/elder.html>. Notice the new changes in MLA format in terms of citing internet sources here:

**Online sources**

* MLA guidelines assume that readers can track down most online sources by entering the author, title, or other identifying information in a search engine or a database. Consequently, MLA ***does not require a URL*** in citations for online sources.
* MLA no longer requires the location of the database (the library name, for instance).
* MLA style requires a ***sponsor or publisher*** for most online sources. If a source has no sponsor or publisher, use the abbreviation “N.p.” (for “No publisher”) in the sponsor position.
* If there is ***no date*** of publication or update, use “n.d.” (for “no date”) after the sponsor.
* For an article in an online journal or an article from a database, give ***page numbers*** if they are available; if they are not, use the abbreviation “n. pag.”

***Web site***

*Margaret Sanger Papers Project*. History Dept., New York U, 18 Oct. 2000. Web. 9 Feb. 2009.

***Article on a Web site (no date)***

Shiva, Vandana. “Bioethics: A Third World Issue.” *NativeWeb*. NativeWeb, n.d. Web. 22 Feb. 2006.

***Article from a database***

Johnson, Kirk. “The Mountain Lions of Michigan.” *Endangered Species Update*

19.2 (2002): 27-31. *Expanded Academic Index*. Web. 26 Feb. 2009.

HERE IS A PART OF THE PAPER YOU COULD USE:

The president's national security advisor recently asked television networks to refrain from broadcasting, verbatim, entire tapes containing lengthy statements by Osama bin Laden. The presidential press secretary, responding to contrarian comments by a television comedian, has said that all Americans should "watch what they say.''

**The question is not whether the media have a legal right to report whatever they find newsworthy. The First Amendment guarantees that they do.** The issue is how media managers should employ that freedom in their own decisions about what is ethical and professionally responsible.

When National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice asked, rather than demanded, that bin Laden's statements be more carefully and **tightly edited** by American networks, she made both the appropriate and the politically savvy choice. A demand would have **sparked a backlash by journalists**. A request, however, implicitly recognized that the media would make their own choices, while calling on them to use more restraint.

Some already have responded in dramatic ways. **Air time allocated for bin Laden's taped comments has greatly diminished**. At this writing, CNN has accepted an apparently genuine invitation to submit questions to bin Laden; what the network will do with his answers remains to be seen.

So there’s the info, now how do you use it. I have highlighted the stuff from the article I used above, so take note of that. Here is what some of your paper could look like:

Many of the machinations and actions of the media are now under the scrutiny of the government. While the United States was tracking down Osama bin Laden, the White House was keeping a close eye on how the media was reporting the story. While the media is protected under the First Amendment and may report anything they find to be newsworthy (Smith), the question becomes how ethics plays a role in such procedure. Should the media be allowed to go to print with information that may be disparaging to the government or might even place United States citizens at risk. It was apparent that the government was trying to created a bridge, rather than a chasm, between the media when National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice made a request rather than a demand that the media “tightly edit” all information from bin Laden. A demand, according to Smith, would have “sparked a backlash by journalists.”

Notice two things:

1. My parenthetical citation of (Smith) uses his name because I HAVE the name. If I didn’t. like many internet sources, I would have put some of the title in the parenthetical citation (“Media”).

2. I didn’t need to put a parenthetical citation in the second part because I said “according to Smith,” so the reader knows where I got that information.

Pay close attention the connection between source and paper as shown above.