

## Ch. 4: MLA IN-TEXT DOCUMENTATION

MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation format is most commonly used for English classes. APA style (American Psychological Association) is widely used for psychology, sociology, anthropology, etc.). This section deals with MLA. See pp. 43-49 for specific information on APA in-text documentation.

Originals used in this section:

Finally, there are certainly more physicians, maladies and melancholies than those which bear on love. None of this should be construed as debunking claims for a medieval commonplace regarding love sickness. John Livingston Lowes has admirably established just such a commonplace and traced Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* reference to "lovers maladye / Of Hereos" to Latin, Arabic and Greek antecedents.

~ Taken from p. 36 in John M. Hill, "The *Book of the Duchess*, Melancholy, and That Eight-Year Sickness," *Chaucer Review* 9 (1974), p. 35-50.

Lowes suggests that the central Arabic contribution can be represented by a translated passage of *Hayat al-Hayawan* on the Arabic doctrine of *al-'isq*: "ardent and ecessive love . . . is excessive love beyond bounds to such extent that the imagination of the ardent lover is never free from the object of his ardent love, . . . the mind is diverted from the promptings of sensual energies, and the lover is prevented from eating and drinking . . . and also from thinking, remembering, imagining, and sleeping. . . ."

~ Taken from p. 36 in John M. Hill, "The *Book of the Duchess*, Melancholy, and That Eight-Year Sickness," *Chaucer Review* 9 (1974), p. 35-50.

Initially, the narrator is depicted in a general, unfathomable state of *melancholia* which follows a classic pattern as later set forth in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. As Lowes indicates, both Chaucer and Burton were conversant with a number of medical treatises in common. For simplicity of discussion, then, I will use Burton's remarks rather than quoting Avicenna or Gaddesden or any other medieval authority.

~ Taken from p. 38 in John M. Hill, "The *Book of the Duchess*, Melancholy, and That Eight-Year Sickness," *Chaucer Review* 9 (1974), p. 35-50.

## When Do You Use Quotation Marks (“”)?

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**When you use word exactly as they appear on the original, enclose these words with quotation marks.**

Original section from Hill, p. 36:

Finally, there are certainly more physicians, maladies and melancholies than those which bear on love. None of this should be construed as debunking
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Incorrect quotation:

As Hill points out, there are certainly more physicians, maladies, and melancholies than those which bear on love (36).

Quotation with proper tick marks:

As Hill points out, “there are certainly more physicians, maladies, and melancholies than those which bear on love” (36).

You must be 100% accurate. The above quotation has an error in it. Can you spot it? Compare it exactly with the original.

Corrected quotation:

As Hill points out, “there are certainly more physicians, maladies and melancholies than those which bear on love” (36).

When placing page numbers in parentheses at the end of the quotation, be sure to place the ending period after the parentheses (see example above).

NOT:

As Hill points out, “there are certainly more physicians, maladies, and melancholies than those which bear on love.” (36)

## **Ellipses Marks in Square Brackets for Omitting Words**

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**When you omit words, signal the omission with ellipses marks enclosed in square brackets.**

Original section from Hill, p. 36:

Finally, there are certainly more physicians, maladies and melancholies than those which bear on love. None of this should be construed as debunking

Your quotation:

As Hill points out, “there are certainly more [. . .] melancholies than those which bear on love” (36).

**When you make a change to the quotation (by adding words or by changing parts of a word already there), enclose the changed part in square brackets.**

As Hill points out, “[f]inally, there are certainly more physicians, maladies, and melancholies than those which bear on love” (36).

As Hill points out, “[f]inally, there are certainly more physicians, maladies, and melancholies than those which bear on [Chaucer’s version of] love” (36).

**Don’t place ellipses marks at the beginning or end of your quotation.**

Your quotation:

As Hill points out, “there are certainly more [. . .] melancholies than those which bear on love” (36).

NOT:

As Hill points out, “[. . .] there are certainly more physicians, maladies, and melancholies than those which bear on love” (36).

NOT:

As Hill points out, “there are certainly more physicians, maladies, and melancholies than those which bear on love [. . .]” (36).

It is always understood that you will be dropping words from the beginning and the end of the quotation because you are lifting the quoted words out of a source. In the source, there are words and sentences that come before the quotation, and words and sentences coming after it.

## Signal Tags

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Original section from Hill, p. 36:

Finally, there are certainly more physicians, maladies and melancholies than those which bear on love. None of this should be construed as debunking

**When you introduce the quotation by putting the author before it (this is called a signal tag), do not place the author's last name in the parenthesis with the page numbers.**

As Hill points out, “there are certainly more [. . .] melancholies than those which bear on love” (36).

But if you decide not to place the author's name in the front of the quotation, you should place it in the parenthesis with the page number:

As one writer points out, “there are certainly more [. . .] melancholies than those which bear on love” (Hill 36).

For the first time you use an author in your text, it would be well to provide a very brief introduction in the signal phrase along with the author's full name. Subsequent references can use only the author's last name.

As John M. Hill states in a *Chaucer Review* article, “there are certainly more [. . .] melancholies than those which bear on love” (36).

Using “says” or “said” in the signal phrase gets old very quickly. It would be good for you to have at your disposal a list of other terms that express the idea of making a claim. Each one of the following terms has helpful nuances—learn them by looking them up in a dictionary if you do not already know these nuances. This is far from an exhaustive list:

John M. Hill	states	argues	suggests
	intimates	urges	notes
	alleges	confirms	claims
	points out	explains	highlights the fact that
	thinks that	sums up	interjects
	insists	believes	writes
	maintains	informs	reports

## Quotations within Quotations

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**When your quotation has quotes within it, start and end your quote with double-tick marks (“ ”), and enclose the internal quotation with single-tick marks (‘ ’).**

Original section from Hill, p. 36:

None of this should be construed as debunking claims for a medieval commonplace regarding love sickness. John Livingston Lowes has admirably established just such a commonplace and traced Chaucer’s *Knight’s Tale* reference to “lovers maladye / Of Hereos” to Latin, Arabic and Greek antecedents.

Your quotation, which also drops out a few words:

“John Livingston Lowes has [. . .] traced Chaucer’s *Knight’s Tale* reference to ‘loveres maladye / Of Hereos’ to Latin, Arabic and Greek antecedents” (Hill 36).

What if the embedded quotation ends up being the last part of the larger quotation you are making. The following example is a tad awkward, but it illustrates how the tick marks should look when the embedded quotation ends a larger quotation:

Hill writes that John Livingston Lowes has studied “Latin, Arabic and Greek antecedents” to the “medieval commonplace regarding love sickness,” to which he “traced Chaucer’s *Knight’s Tale* reference to ‘lovers maladye / Of Hereos’” (36).

Consider also how this example quotes snippets from the original and rearranges them so that the end result reads better than a quotation full of [. . .]s would.

Note: Some publishers do things differently from the usual way. Instead of starting off a quotation with double-tick marks (“ ”), these publishers follow their own style (this privilege of doing one’s own thing in these matters is called “house style” and it works only if you have a publishing house!) by starting off the quotation in single-ticks, or inverted commas (‘ ’). If you are required to use MLA or APA formatting, then regardless of how the publishing house starts quotations, you should start them with double ticks and use single ticks for any embedded quotations.

Note: Sometimes the quotation marks within a quotation are surrounding commonly used phrases. They do not signify that the author you are quoting is quoting someone else. In this case, simply use single-tick marks for the embedded quotation:

“Maybe a friend will lend an ear or your lawyer will talk with you ‘off the clock’ or your family is sympathetic most of the time to your concerns” (Parson xii).