

Supplemental Activity for Writing an Op-ed Essay: Acknowledging Sources in an Op-ed

Purpose: To acknowledge sources used in the construction of an op-ed essay using strategies beyond MLA-style citation.

As you have noticed, op-eds in major periodicals do not use MLA-style citation (or APA-style citation, etc.). But it's still necessary to let your readers know where you got your facts from! Therefore, you do not need MLA-style citation, parenthetical references, footnotes, or a list of works cited for your op-ed; instead, follow these guidelines and the example below. Bring any questions to class.

You will acknowledge sources used in the process of constructing this assignment in two ways:

1. **Use in-text links** to statistics, reports, other articles, etc. right from the body of your op-ed. These are common in op-eds. They let your readers know that you have, in fact, "done your homework" and that they can follow the link if they want to know more about where you found a specific piece of information.
2. **Craft a "fact-checking memo"** and turn that in along with your op-ed. This memo is casual, uses the first person, and assumes no larger audience than yourself and your instructor.

Fact-Checking Memo Guidelines

1. Acknowledge **every source** you looked at, consulted, reviewed, checked, read, etc. in the process of gathering information for your op-ed.
2. Write a paragraph-long narrative (see example below) explaining the sources of the different parts of your paper.
3. Include any additional URLs (beyond those used as in-text links in your op-ed itself) that you looked at.
4. Submit this memo when you submit the final version of your op-ed.

Fact-Checking Memo Example *(written by a previous student, used with permission)*

Paragraph 1 of my Op-Ed is based on the experience of a friend of mine from high school. She told me about her experiences a few months ago, and I'm summarizing them here as best I can. I'm not using her real name to give her some privacy. Paragraphs 2-4 are my own ideas. I think Roxane Gay from our class reading informed some of my thinking about privilege, but I'm not directly paraphrasing any of her views here. Maybe I should mention her? It didn't seem to fit well, but I guess some of what I say comes from her too. In Paragraph 5 I mention a statistic about sexual assault that I got from this page: <https://www.bestcolleges.com/resources/preventing-sexual-assault/> The rest of the Op-Ed is my own thinking, logically connecting the statistics to my friend's story to what I know about resources for sexual assault at BU just from my own experiences at orientation. In the last paragraph I quote Kimberle Crenshaw from her TED talk, which was one of our class sources. I also looked at the following links but didn't really use them in my final version:

- <https://www.babble.com/entertainment/amber-tamblyn-op-ed-sexual-harassment/>
- <https://www.womenshealth.gov/relationships-and-safety/sexual-assault-and->