



# MLA Format

---

American Literature 1 and 2

SAN DIEGO  
CONTINUING  
EDUCATION

Accelerated High School Diploma Program



# MLA Research Paper Sample

---

Daly 1

Angela Daly  
Professor Chavez  
English 101  
14 March XXXX

## A Call to Action:

### Regulate Use of Cell Phones on the Road

When a cell phone goes off in a classroom or at a concert, we are irritated, but at least our lives are not endangered. When we are on the road, however, irresponsible cell phone users are more than irritating: They are putting our lives at risk. Many of us have witnessed drivers so distracted by dialing and chatting that they resemble drunk drivers, weaving between lanes, for example, or nearly running down pedestrians in crosswalks. A number of bills to regulate use of cell phones on the road have been introduced in state legislatures, and the time has come to push for their passage. Regulation is needed because drivers using phones are seriously impaired and because laws on negligent and reckless driving are not sufficient to punish offenders.

No one can deny that cell phones have caused traffic deaths and injuries. Cell phones were implicated in three fatal accidents in November 1999 alone. Early in November, two-year-old Morgan Pena was killed by a driver distracted by his cell phone. Morgan's mother, Patti Pena, reports that the driver "ran a stop sign at 45 mph, broadsided my vehicle and killed Morgan as she sat in her car seat." A week later, corrections officer Shannon Smith, who was guarding prisoners by the side of the road, was killed by a woman distracted by a phone call (Besthoff). On Thanksgiving weekend that same month, John and Carole Hall were killed when a Naval

Title is centered.

Opening sentences catch readers' attention.

Thesis asserts Angela Daly's main point.

Daly uses a clear topic sentence.

Signal phrase names the author of the quotation to follow.

No page number is available for this Web source.

Author's name is given in parentheses; no page number is available.

Marginal annotations indicate **MLA-style formatting** and **effective writing**.

Academy midshipman crashed into their parked car. The driver said in court that when he looked up from the cell phone he was dialing, he was three feet from the car and had no time to stop (Stockwell B8).

Page number is given when available.

Clear topic sentences, like this one, are used throughout the paper.

Expert testimony, public opinion, and even cartoons suggest that driving while phoning is dangerous. Frances Bents, an expert on the relation between cell phones and accidents, estimates that between 450 and 1,000 crashes a year have some connection to cell phone use (Layton C9). In a survey published by Farmers Insurance Group, 87% of those polled said that cell phones affect a driver's ability, and 40% reported having close calls with drivers distracted by phones. Many cartoons have depicted the very real dangers of driving while distracted (see Fig. 1).

Summary and long quotation are introduced with a signal phrase naming the authors.

Scientific research confirms the dangers of using phones while on the road. In 1997 an important study appeared in the New England Journal of Medicine. The authors, Donald Redelmeier and Robert Tibshirani, studied 699 volunteers who made their cell phone bills available in order to confirm the times when they had placed calls. The participants agreed to report any nonfatal collision in which they were involved. By comparing the time of a collision with the phone records, the researchers assessed the dangers of driving while phoning. The results are unsettling:

Long quotation is set off from the text; quotation marks are omitted.

We found that using a cellular telephone was associated with a risk of having a motor vehicle collision that was about about four times as high as that among the same drivers when they were not using their cellular telephones. This relative risk is similar

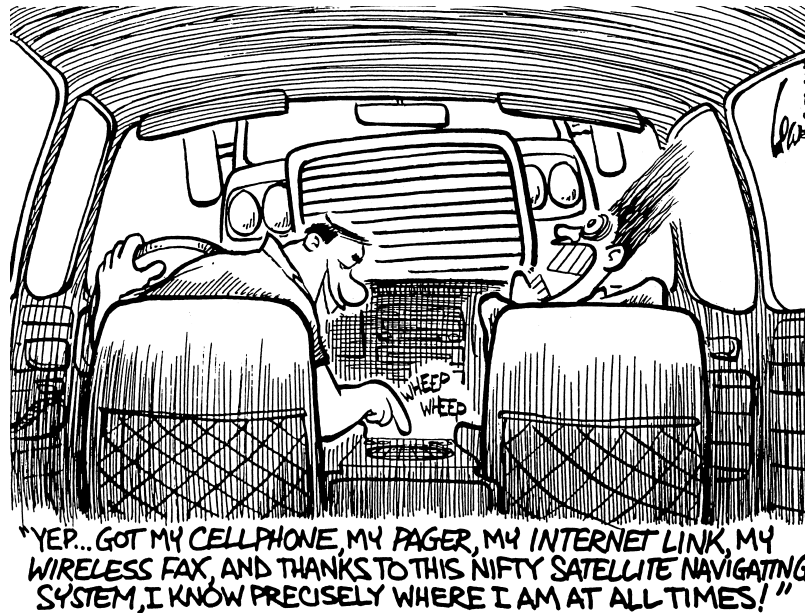


Fig. 1. Chan Lowe, cartoon, Washington Post 22 July 2000: A21.

Illustration has figure number, label, and source information.

to the hazard associated with driving with a blood alcohol level at the legal limit. (456)

The news media often exaggerated the latter claim ("similar to" is not "equal to"); nonetheless, the comparison with drunk driving suggests the extent to which cell phone use while driving can impair judgment.

A 1998 study focused on Oklahoma, one of the few states to keep records on fatal accidents involving cell phones. Using police records, John M. Violanti of the Rochester Institute of Technology investigated the relation between traffic fatalities in Oklahoma and the use or presence of a cell phone. He found a ninefold increase in the risk of fatality if a phone was being used and a doubled risk simply when a phone was present in a vehicle (522-23). The latter statistic is interesting, for it suggests that those who carry phones

Summary begins with a signal phrase naming the author and ends with page numbers in parentheses.

in their cars may tend to be more negligent (or prone to distractions of all kinds) than those who do not.

Daly counters an opposing argument.

Some groups have argued that state traffic laws make legislation regulating cell phone use unnecessary. Sadly, this is not true. Laws on traffic safety vary from state to state, and drivers distracted by cell phones can get off with light punishment even when they cause fatal accidents. For example, although the midshipman mentioned earlier was charged with vehicular manslaughter for the deaths of John and Carole Hall, the judge was unable to issue a verdict of guilty. Under Maryland law, he could only find the defendant guilty of negligent driving and impose a \$500 fine (Layton C1). Such a light sentence is not unusual. The driver who killed Morgan Pena in Pennsylvania received two tickets and a \$50 fine--and retained his driving privileges (Pena). In Georgia, a young woman distracted by her phone ran down and killed a two-year-old; her sentence was ninety days in boot camp and five hundred hours of community service (Ippolito J1). The families of the victims are understandably distressed by laws that lead to such light sentences.

Facts are documented with in-text citations: authors' names and page numbers (if available) in parentheses.

Daly uses an analogy to justify passing a special law.

When certain kinds of driver behavior are shown to be especially dangerous, we wisely draft special laws making them illegal and imposing specific punishments. Running red lights, failing to stop for a school bus, and drunk driving are obvious examples; phoning in a moving vehicle should be no exception. Unlike more general laws covering negligent driving, specific laws leave little ambiguity for law officers and for judges and juries imposing punishments. Such laws have another important benefit: They leave no ambiguity for drivers. Currently, drivers can tease themselves into

thinking they are using their car phones responsibly because the definition of “negligent driving” is vague.

As of December 2000, twenty countries were restricting use of cell phones in moving vehicles (Sundeen 8). In the United States, it is highly unlikely that legislation could be passed on the national level, since traffic safety is considered a state and local issue. To date, only a few counties and towns have passed traffic laws restricting cell phone use. For example, in Suffolk County, New York, it is illegal for drivers to use a handheld phone for anything but an emergency call while on the road (Haughney A8). The first town to restrict use of handheld phones was Brooklyn, Ohio (Layton C9). Brooklyn, the first community in the country to pass a seat belt law, has once again shown its concern for traffic safety.

Laws passed by counties and towns have had some effect, but it makes more sense to legislate at the state level. Local laws are not likely to have the impact of state laws, and keeping track of a wide variety of local ordinances is confusing for drivers. Even a spokesperson for Verizon Wireless has said that statewide bans are preferable to a “crazy patchwork quilt of ordinances” (qtd. in Haughney A8). Unfortunately, although a number of bills have been introduced in state legislatures, as of early 2001 no state law seriously restricting use of the phones had passed--largely because of effective lobbying from the wireless industry.

Despite the claims of some lobbyists, tough laws regulating phone use can make our roads safer. In Japan, for example, accidents linked to cell phones fell by 75% just a month after the country prohibited using a handheld phone while driving (Haugh-

Daly explains why US laws need to be passed on the state level.

Transition helps readers move from one paragraph to the next.

Daly cites an indirect source: words quoted in another source.

Daly counters a claim made by some opponents.

ney A8). Research suggests and common sense tells us that it is not possible to drive an automobile at high speeds, dial numbers, and carry on conversations without significant risks. When such behavior is regulated, obviously our roads will be safer.

Because of mounting public awareness of the dangers of drivers distracted by phones, state legislators must begin to take the problem seriously. "It's definitely an issue that is gaining steam around the country," says Matt Sundeen of the National Conference of State Legislatures (qtd. in Layton C9). Lon Anderson of the American Automobile Association agrees: "There is momentum building," he says, to pass laws (qtd. in Layton C9). The time has come for states to adopt legislation restricting the use of cell phones in moving vehicles.

For variety Daly places a signal phrase after a brief quotation.

The paper ends with Daly's stand on the issue.



Works Cited

- Besthoff, Len. "Cell Phone Use Increases Risk of Accidents, but Users Willing to Take the Risk." WRAL Online. 11 Nov. 1999. 12 Jan. 2001 <<http://www.wral-tv.com/news/wral/1999/1110-talking-driving>>.
- Farmers Insurance Group. "New Survey Shows Drivers Have Had 'Close Calls' with Cell Phone Users." Farmers Insurance Group. 8 May 2000. 12 Jan. 2001 <[http://www.farmersinsurance.com/news\\_cellphones.html](http://www.farmersinsurance.com/news_cellphones.html)>.
- Haughney, Christine. "Taking Phones out of Drivers' Hands." Washington Post 5 Nov. 2000: A8.
- Ippolito, Milo. "Driver's Sentence Not Justice, Mom Says." Atlanta Journal-Constitution 25 Sept. 1999: J1.
- Layton, Lyndsey. "Legislators Aiming to Disconnect Motorists." Washington Post 10 Dec. 2000: C1+.
- Lowe, Chan. Cartoon. Washington Post 22 July 2000: A21.
- Pena, Patricia N. "Patti Pena's Letter to Car Talk." Cars.com. Car Talk. 10 Jan. 2001 <<http://cartalk.cars.com/About/Morgan-Pena/letter.html>>.
- Redelmeier, Donald A., and Robert J. Tibshirani. "Association between Cellular-Telephone Calls and Motor Vehicle Collisions." New England Journal of Medicine 336 (1997): 453-58.
- Stockwell, Jamie. "Phone Use Faulted in Collision." Washington Post 6 Dec. 2000: B1+.
- Sundeen, Matt. "Cell Phones and Highway Safety: 2000 State Legislative Update." National Conference of State Legislatures. Dec. 2000. 9 pp. 27 Feb. 2001 <<http://ncsl.org/programs/esnr/cellphone.pdf>>.

Heading is centered.

List is alphabetized by authors' last names (or by title when a work has no author).

First line of each entry is at the left margin; extra lines are indented 1/2" (or five spaces).

Double-spacing is used throughout.

The URL is broken after a slash. No hyphen is inserted.

Daly 8

Violanti, John M. "Cellular Phones and Fatal Traffic Collisions."

Accident Analysis and Prevention 30 (1998): 519-24.

# Style Guides MLA Format

## FIRST PAGE

### FORMAT

Double space, and use a standard typeface and type size, such as 12-point Times New Roman.

### TITLE

The title should be 12-point font and centered, but *not* underlined, italicized, bolded, or put in quotation marks.

### BLOCK QUOTATIONS

Block quotations are quotations longer than four lines. Indent 1" from the set margin when using a block quotation. Do not use quotation marks, and put the period before the citation.

### MARGINS

Use 1-inch margins on all 4 sides of each page.

Jones 1

Davy Jones  
Professor Mills  
English 2010  
7 July 2004

Understanding Whitman's Poetry

By examining sectional divisions in Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself*, we can show that 1891 revisions underscore the function of each section as a unit of meaning governed by its own rhythm (Strauch 64). Fred Mitchell calls this "group size pattern":

Whitman is doing more than simply distributing a pattern of groups in some sensible fashion over the lines of a poem, creating what some critics are calling a group/line pattern.

Whitman is also conscious of the size of his groups and of their progression in terms of size pattern. (16)

Such an analysis demonstrates the method governing Whitman's formation of stanzas and the meter governing the lines and verses of

### PAGE HEADER

A page header includes the last name of the paper's author and the page number. Headers should appear in the top right corner of every page.

### IN-TEXT CITATIONS

In-text citations should be used after quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing. State the author's last name and the page number in parentheses without a comma. If the author is named in the text, only cite the page number. If the author is unknown, use the first few words from the title. The period is placed after the citation. If there is no page number, include the author and title within the text rather than using a parenthetical notation.

## WORKS CITED

### TITLE

The title "Works Cited" should be centered, but not underlined or punctuated.

### HANGING INDENT

Use a hanging indent for entries longer than one line. Indent 1/2" from the set margins after the first line of each entry.

### SOURCES

List only the works you used, not everything you read.

### ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Alphabetically arrange works cited entries according to the first word in the entry, ignoring *a*, *an*, and *the*.

Jones 8

Works Cited

Asay, Ronald. "How the Americans Made Transcendentalism." *Journal of American History* 23 (1978): 345-357.

Frank, Sarah. *The Man Who Invented Poetry*. New York: Nerd Press, 2001.

Harvard, Neil and Allen Gregory. *The Literary Executioners*. London: Oxford UP, 1954.

Mitchell, Fred. "Understanding Poetry." *Daily News* 5 May 1987, late ed.: F1, F9.

Strauch, Ronald. "Leaving Cambridge." *Whitman: The Man*. Ed. Taylor Roger. New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1998. 123-134.

### CITING INDIRECT SOURCES

To cite information that your source has taken from a different source, put the original author of the information in the text and write "qtd. in" in your in-text citation followed by the author and page number of the work you found the material in. Example: (qtd. in Asay 352).

### QUOTATIONS

If you need to make additions to a quotation, put your own words in square brackets [ ]. To omit words, use ellipses (three periods, with a space after each). Example: "She was . . . unhappy."

### ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations in works cited entries are acceptable if they are clear (University Press=UP).

# Style Guides **MLA Format**

The following list includes some of the most common sources included in a *Works Cited* page. For more information, see pages 144-235 of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition.

## **BOOK BY A SINGLE AUTHOR**

Last Name, First Name and Initial (if given). *Title*. Location: Publisher, Year.

Wilson, Frank R. *The Hand: How Its Use Shapes the Brain*. New York: Pantheon, 1998.

## **BOOK BY TWO OR MORE AUTHORS**

Last Name, First Name and Initial (if given), and First Name Last Name. *Title*. Location: Publisher, Year.

Welsch, Roger L., and Linda K. Welsch. *Cather's Kitchens*. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P. 1987.

NOTE: If a reference has more than three authors, give the first author's name and "et al." Example: Jones, Bob, et al.

## **TEXT IN AN ANTHOLOGY OR EDITED BOOK**

Last Name, First Name (of author of the article). "Article Title." *Anthology Title*. Ed. First Name Last Name (of editor). Location: Publisher, Year. pages.

Gomez, Isabel. "From Within." *Stories from the South*. Ed. Thomas Nitsche. New York: Plume, 1992. 82-92.

## **ARTICLE IN A REFERENCE BOOK**

"Article Title." *Book Title*. Edition Number. Publication Year.

"Noon." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989.

## **ARTICLE IN A MAGAZINE**

Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Magazine Title* Day Month Year: pages.

Mehta, Pratap Bhanu. "Exploding Myths." *New Republic* 6 June 1998: 17-19.

## **ARTICLE IN A JOURNAL**

Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Journal Title* Volume Number (Year): pages.

Craner, Paul M. "New Tool for an Ancient Art." *Computers and the Humanities* 25 (1991): 303-13.

## **ARTICLE IN A NEWSPAPER**

Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Newspaper Title* (omit beginning articles) [Location (if newspaper is not national and the location is not named in the title)] Day Month Year, Edition Information: pages.

Jones, Anna. "Deadly Change." *Daily Post* [Billings] 1 June 2002: B3+.

## **PERSONAL INTERVIEW OR COMMUNICATION**

Last Name, First Name (person being interviewed). Interview type (Personal, Telephone, E-mail). Day Month Year.

Takyrbashev, Lewis P. E-mail interview. 8-12 June 2003.

## **DOCUMENT FROM AN INTERNET SITE** (Include all information that is available and applicable.)

Last Name, First Name. "Document Title." If applicable, information about print source that the document comes from, following the format for that specific source type (see above examples). *Site Title*. Editor's name. Version or edition number. Date of electronic publication or last update. Name of sponsoring organization. Day Month Year (of access) <Network Address>.

"Orphaned Cossacks." 1 July 2002. Association for the Worldwide Advancement of Humanities. 1 May 2003 <<http://www.awah.humanity.org/>>.

## **WORK FROM LIBRARY SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE**

(The first part of the citation will vary, depending on whether the work comes originally from an online book, periodical article, etc. [See *MLA Handbook*, pages 216-224]. For works from print sources, give all standard information for such a source that is provided.)

Specific source information (see above). *Database Name* (if known). Name of Service. Library Name. Date of Access <Network Address if known>.

Wakefield, Lawrence. "Cooling Trend in Antarctica." *Futurist* May-June 2002: 15. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. City U of New York, Graduate Center Lib. 22 May 2002 <<http://www.epnet.com/>>.

Source: Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003.

# MLA Practice Test

---

1. Where should I put the page number?
  - A. Top left corner
  - B. Bottom center
  - C. Top right corner
  - D. Bottom right corner
2. Starting at the top, in what order should the items in the header be listed?
  - A. Student's name, teacher's name, class, and date.
  - B. Date, student's name, class, and teacher's name.
  - C. Student's name, date, teacher's name, and class.
  - D. Student's name, class, date, and teacher's name.
3. The title should be centered and bolded.
  - A. True
  - B. False
4. How should I structure a block quotation?
  - A. Indent the left side of the first line only, single-space the quotation, and include the in-text citation at the end.
  - B. Indent the left side of all lines, double-space the quotation, and include the in-text citation at the end.
  - C. Indent both sides of all lines, double-space the quotation, and leave out the in-text citation.
  - D. Indent both sides of all lines, single-space the quotation, and include the in-text citation at the end.
5. How do I add or omit information from a quotation?
  - A. Add or omit without marking your changes because readers can go to the source if they really want to see the original.
  - B. Use parentheses around the information you add and ellipses for information you omit.
  - C. Bold the information you add, and insert ellipses for information you omit.
  - D. Use brackets around the information you add and ellipses enclosed in brackets for information you omit.
6. For in-text citations, both the author's last name and the page number need to be listed.
  - A. True
  - B. False
7. I should end my sentence with a period before using a regular in-text citation.
  - A. True
  - B. False
8. If I include the author's last name in my sentence, then I do not need to include it in the parenthetical citation.
  - A. True
  - B. False

9. What should I do if no author is given for the work I am citing?
- A. Omit the author's name and list only the page number.
  - B. Use "anonymous" in place of the author's name.
  - C. Use the year of publication in place of the author's name.
  - D. Use an abbreviated form of the title in place of the author's name.
10. In the works cited, I should include all the sources I read, regardless of whether I cited them in the paper or not.
- A. True
  - B. False
11. Sources listed in a works cited page should be alphabetized.
- A. True
  - B. False
12. How do I format the works cited pages?
- A. The first line of each source should be flush against the left side, while the second line (if any) should be indented one-half inch. The entire page should be double spaced.
  - B. All lines of each source should be flush against the left side. The entire page should be double spaced.
  - C. All lines of each source should be centered and single spaced.
  - D. The first line of each source should be flush against the left side, while the second line should be indented one-half inch. There should be two spaces between each entry; the entries themselves should be single spaced.
13. In the works cited list, how should I cite a work that has more than three authors?
- A. List only the first author's name.
  - B. List all authors' initials.
  - C. List all authors' names in alphabetical order.
  - D. List the first author followed by *et al.*
14. What is wrong with the following citation? Jupiter, Janie and Suellen Powers. *The Nitty Gritty Lit Book*. New York: Banter Press, 1991.
- A. The title of the book should be underlined or italicized.
  - B. Initials should be used for the authors' names.
  - C. Page numbers need to be listed for a book.
  - D. Instead of a colon, there should be a comma.
15. What is wrong with the following citation? Allan, Joseph. "How the Americans Made Sugar in the West." *Journal of American History* (1986) 23: 245-257.
- A. Initials should be used for the author's name.
  - B. Page numbers do not need to be listed for an article.
  - C. The year should come after the volume number.
  - D. There needs to be a period immediately after the journal title.

# MLA Practice Test

---

1. Where should I put the page number?
  - A. Top left corner
  - B. Bottom center
  - C. Top right corner
  - D. Bottom right corner
2. Starting at the top, in what order should the items in the header be listed?
  - A. Student's name, teacher's name, class, and date.
  - B. Date, student's name, class, and teacher's name.
  - C. Student's name, date, teacher's name, and class.
  - D. Student's name, class, date, and teacher's name.
3. The title should be centered and bolded.
  - A. True
  - B. False
4. How should I structure a block quotation?
  - A. Indent the left side of the first line only, single-space the quotation, and include the in-text citation at the end.
  - B. Indent the left side of all lines, double-space the quotation, and include the in-text citation at the end.
  - C. Indent both sides of all lines, double-space the quotation, and leave out the in-text citation.
  - D. Indent both sides of all lines, single-space the quotation, and include the in-text citation at the end.
5. How do I add or omit information from a quotation?
  - A. Add or omit without marking your changes because readers can go to the source if they really want to see the original.
  - B. Use parentheses around the information you add and ellipses for information you omit.
  - C. Bold the information you add, and insert ellipses for information you omit.
  - D. Use brackets around the information you add and ellipses enclosed in brackets for information you omit.
6. For in-text citations, both the author's last name and the page number need to be listed.
  - A. True
  - B. False
7. I should end my sentence with a period before using a regular in-text citation.
  - A. True
  - B. False
8. If I include the author's last name in my sentence, then I do not need to include it in the parenthetical citation.
  - A. True
  - B. False

9. What should I do if no author is given for the work I am citing?
- A. Omit the author's name and list only the page number.
  - B. Use "anonymous" in place of the author's name.
  - C. Use the year of publication in place of the author's name.
  - D. Use an abbreviated form of the title in place of the author's name.
10. In the works cited, I should include all the sources I read, regardless of whether I cited them in the paper or not.
- A. True
  - B. False
11. Sources listed in a works cited page should be alphabetized.
- A. True
  - B. False
12. How do I format the works cited pages?
- A. The first line of each source should be flush against the left side, while the second line (if any) should be indented one-half inch. The entire page should be double spaced.
  - B. All lines of each source should be flush against the left side. The entire page should be double spaced.
  - C. All lines of each source should be centered and single spaced.
  - D. The first line of each source should be flush against the left side, while the second line should be indented one-half inch. There should be two spaces between each entry; the entries themselves should be single spaced.
13. In the works cited list, how should I cite a work that has more than three authors?
- A. List only the first author's name.
  - B. List all authors' initials.
  - C. List all authors' names in alphabetical order.
  - D. List the first author followed by *et al.*
14. What is wrong with the following citation? Jupiter, Janie and Suellen Powers. The Nitty Gritty Lit Book. New York: Banter Press, 1991.
- A. The title of the book should be underlined or italicized.
  - B. Initials should be used for the authors' names.
  - C. Page numbers need to be listed for a book.
  - D. Instead of a colon, there should be a comma.
15. What is wrong with the following citation? Allan, Joseph. "How the Americans Made Sugar in the West." *Journal of American History* (1986) 23: 245-257.
- A. Initials should be used for the author's name.
  - B. Page numbers do not need to be listed for an article.
  - C. The year should come after the volume number.
  - D. There needs to be a period immediately after the journal title.