

# Informal Citation

## WRITING SKILLS HANDOUT

### Techniques and Correct Punctuation

Perhaps the best way to learn the skills of informal citation will be to practice them by example.

#### **GOOD TECHNIQUE**

In the Newsweek article, “Tragedy in Detroit,” author Bill Paxton says that Mayor Bill Green shows “an advanced case of amnesia” regarding the corrupt practices of his administration.

#### **HOW’S THIS ONE LOOK?**

In Dan Kennedy’s article, “Faces of Death,” he states Susan Sontag, a writer on photography and war, “A photograph—or a filmed document—is judged a fake when it is deemed to deceive the viewer.”

#### **GOOD TECHNIQUE**

What the tape does not include is Einstein’s familiar remark about the likelihood that nature is whimsical or ruled by pure chance. “God does not play dice,” he is reported to have said.

#### **HOW’S THIS ONE LOOK?**

What the editor did not add to the scene was Sites’ explanation for the Marine’s reasonable fear, “I’m well aware that wounded prisoners are often booby-trapped.”

#### **GOOD TECHNIQUE**

Sites starts by posting in his blog exactly what he saw “without imposing on the Marine guilt or innocence or anything in between.”

#### **HOW’S THIS ONE LOOK?**

As Sites states in his blog to the Devil Dogs, he knew and everyone knew that the story was complex and needed to be handled with care.

#### **GOOD TECHNIQUE (Continued from the Devil Dogs citation above)**

Sites says the Marines knew that they “...should have checked for weapons and explosives after disabling them instead of leaving them where they were and waiting outside for the squad to arrive.”

#### **HOW’S THIS ONE LOOK?**

A person like Dr. Rusty Shackelford, who “searched the soul” of Kevin Sites, uses harsh words on his blog to describe Sites as a traitor and hopes that he “rots in hell.”