



$$(a+b)^2 = a^2 + b^2 + 2ab$$

HOW TO CITE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

Things to know



There is no single recognized standard for citing government publications.

Most citation styles, including APA, MLA, Chicago, and The Bluebook, provide sample government publication citations.

Examples here are based on Garner and Cheney's *The Complete Guide to Citing Government Information Resources*, and may be adapted to different citation styles.

First, review your assignment



Your instructor will provide guidance on his/her expectations for citations.

These instructions often specify the preferred citation style for the course, for example, APA, MLA, or Chicago.

Ask four key questions



Who = Author



What = Title



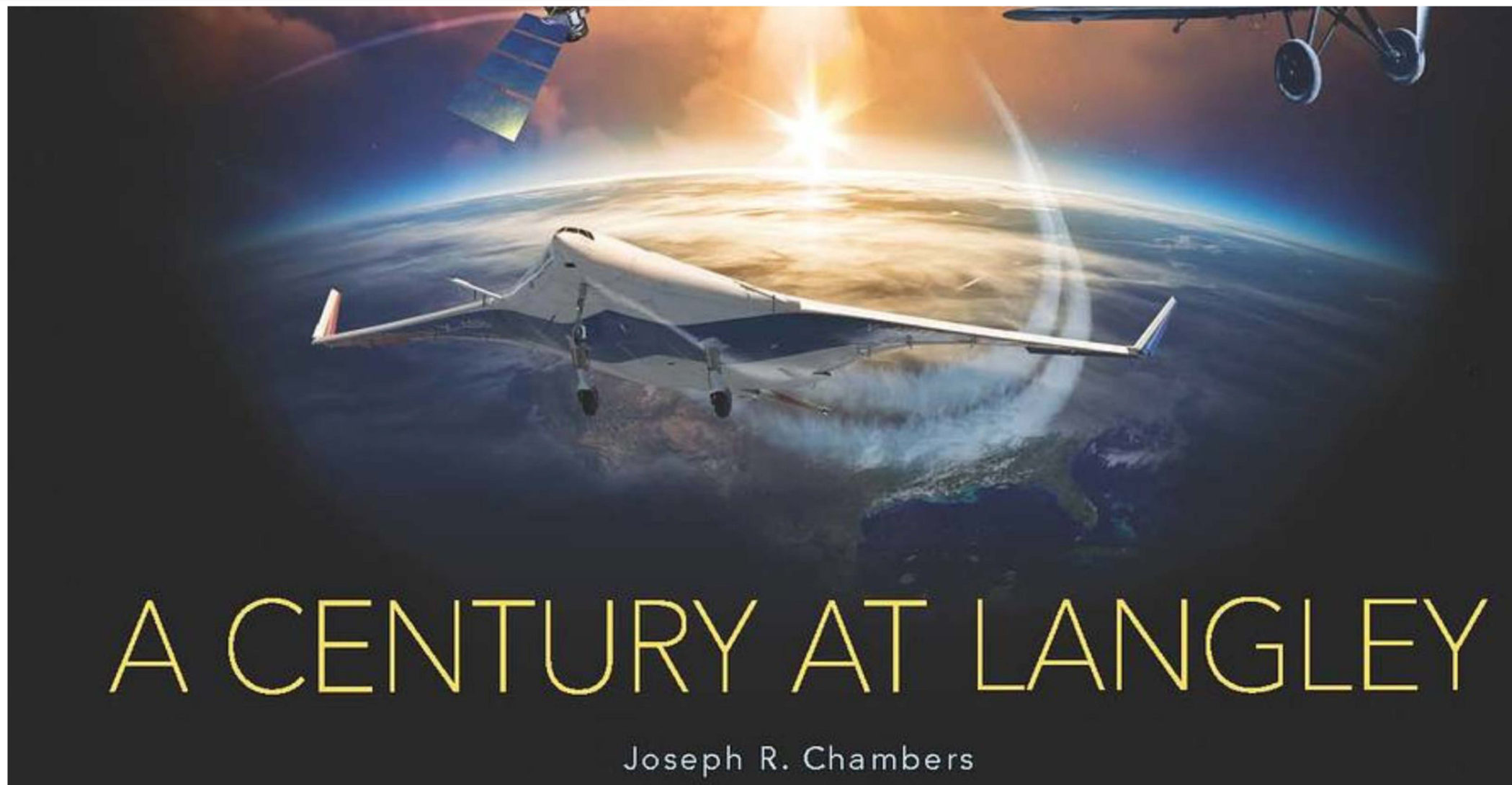
When = Date



Where = Geopolitical origin of the work and place of publication

These are the basic parts of a citation. Government publication citations may also include a few less familiar elements like **series names** or **agency publication numbers**.

Our complete citation- How do we get here?



U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration. *A Century at Langley: The Storied Legacy and Soaring Future of NASA Langley Research Center*. (SP-2017-07-100-LaRC). By Joseph R. Chambers. Hampton, VA: National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 2017.



First, identify the author or authors: government, personal, or both.

Government publications usually have agency or department authors rather than personal authors; an organization author is often called a corporate author. The Department of State and FBI or Federal Bureau of Investigation are examples of government authors.

Who?



Government author names reflect organizational hierarchy. If an agency is well known, its parent organization isn't included in the citation. Less familiar agencies are identified with their organizational parents.

For example:

United States. Dept. of the Interior. Bureau of Indian Affairs.

United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Who and Where?



Most government publication citations begin with a country, community, state, or regional name...a geopolitical identifier.



United States. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations.

U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security.

Massachusetts. Department of Revenue.

Be aware of the conventions of your citation style. For example in MLA style, United States is spelled out, while APA uses the abbreviation, U.S.

Who and what?



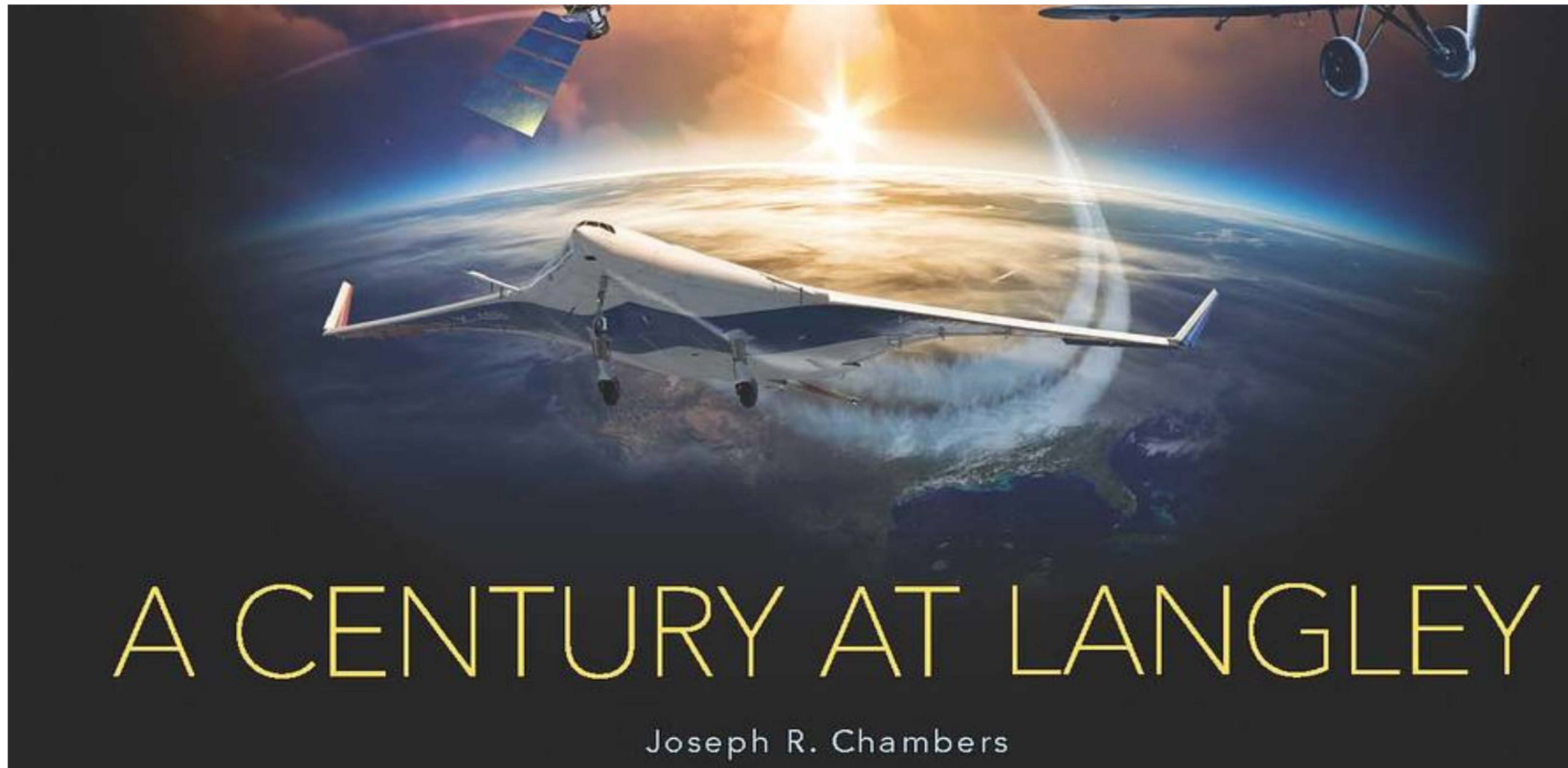
To recap, in our example, **WHO**, the agency author, is the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration. **WHERE**, the U.S., is spelled out in MLA style and abbreviated in APA.



WHAT, the title, is *A Century at Langley*. Titles of government publications are *italicized*.

Next, check to see if the publication has a subtitle...this one does!

United States. National Aeronautics and Space Administration. *A Century at Langley: The Storied Legacy and Soaring Future of NASA Langley Research Center*.



Sometimes a government publication also has a personal author. When this is the case, the author's name is added to the citation, usually after the title.

Who and what?



We've continued to build our citation. Now we have our geopolitical location, agency author, title, subtitle, and personal author.

Sometimes, additional information precedes the personal author name, for example, **an edition**, a **publication or report number**, and a **format indicator** (microfiche or map). You can usually find this information in the publication itself or in a library catalog like Scholar OneSearch.

U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration. *A Century at Langley: The Storied Legacy and Soaring Future of NASA Langley Research Center. (SP-2017-07-100-LaRC)*. By Joseph R. Chambers.

Who and where?

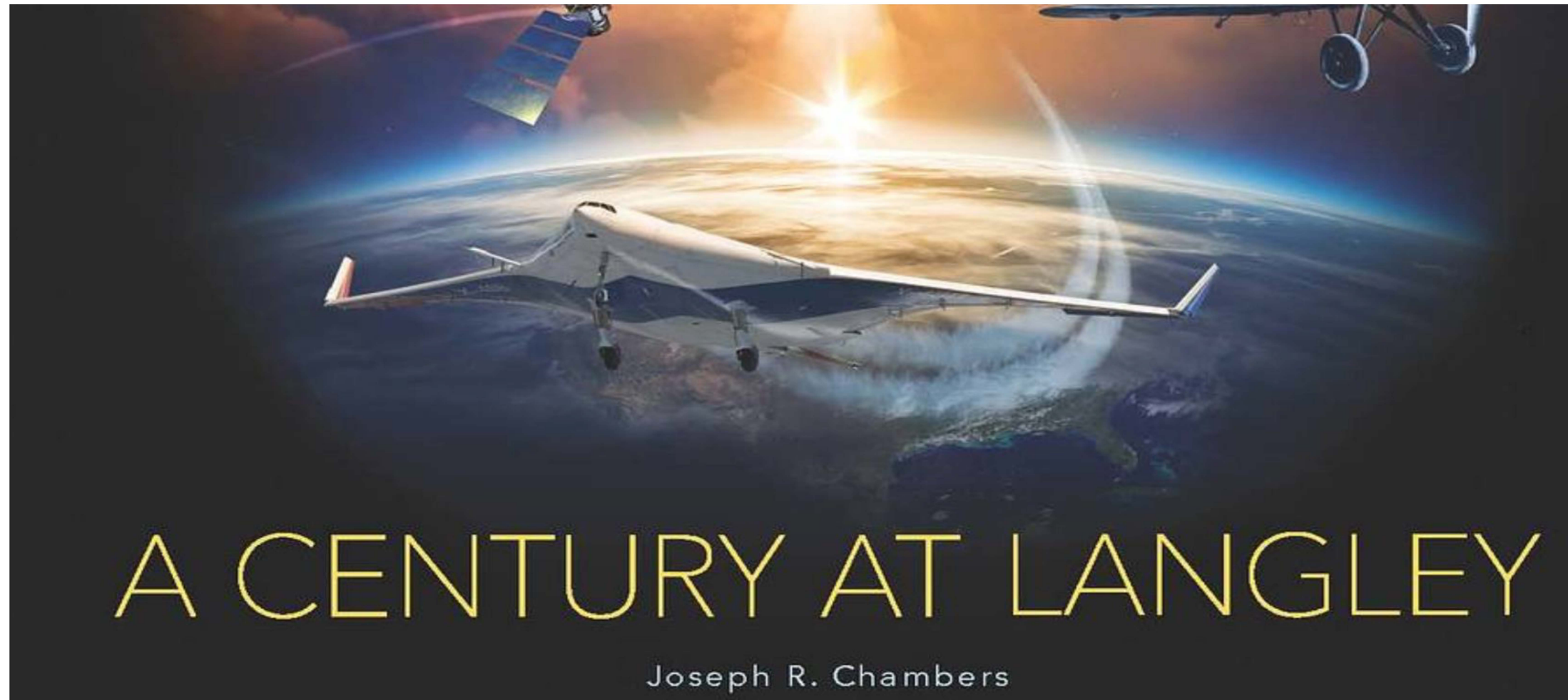


Often, a department or agency author is also the publisher. However, there are occasions in which this is not the case.

If not otherwise specified, it's generally assumed that the material was printed by the GPO or Government Publishing Office; use the GPO as the publisher.

You may have to search for publisher information since it's not always provided on the publication's title page.

Missing pieces?



I've looked everywhere...front cover, back cover, title page, contents...I can't find information for my citation. **Time to check Scholar OneSearch!**

Completing the citation

Title	A century at Langley : the storied legacy and soaring future of NASA Langley Research Center
Alternative Title	Century at Langley : the storied legacy and soaring future of NASA Langley Research Center
Author	Chambers, Joseph R. , >
	United States. National Aeronautics and Space Administration , issuing body. >
Subjects	Langley Research Center -- History > Langley Aeronautical Laboratory -- History > Aeronautics -- United States -- History > Astronautics -- United States -- History >
Related Titles	Series: NASA SP (Series) ; 2017-07-100-LARC.
Description	Plot 16: A difficult time (1915-1919) -- Birth and breakthroughs (1920-1929) -- Shaping the airplane (1929-1939) -- The war years (1940-1949) -- NASA is born (1950-1959) -- Glory days (1960-1969) -- Space exploration (1970-1979) -- Faster, higher, farther, and safer (1980-1989) -- A new direction (1990-1999) -- A new era (2000-2009) -- Toward the future (2010-2017) -- Epilogue.
Publisher	Hampton, VA : National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Creation Date	2017
Format	iv, 195 pages : illustrations (chiefly color), maps, portraits (some color) ; 27 cm
Language	English
Source	NUCat
Notes	"SP-2017-07-100-LaRC"--Back cover.

Library catalogs provide information needed to cite government publications. In this example from **NU's Scholar OneSearch**, we can find basic citation information including the title, government and personal authors, series name, publisher, place of publication, and date.

Completing the citation

CATALOG OF U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS (CGP)

Catalogs to Search:
[Congressional Serial Set](#) [Historic Shelflist](#) [FDLP Web Archive](#) [Serials](#)
[Congressional Publications](#) [Electronic Titles](#) [Gov eBooks](#)

My Options:
[Bookshelf](#) [Results List](#)
[Preferences](#) [Previous Searches](#)

Title	A century at Langley : the storied legacy and soaring future of NASA Langley Research Center
Format	volume
Author	Chambers, Joseph R., author.
Published	[Hampton, VA] : National Aeronautics and Space Administration, [2017] ←
SuDoc Number	NAS 1.21:2017-07-100-LARC
Item Number	0830-I
Variation of Title	Century at Langley : the storied legacy and soaring future of NASA Langley Research Center The storied legacy and soaring future of NASA Langley Research Center
Description	iv, 195 pages : illustrations (chiefly color), maps, portraits (some color) ; 27 cm
Content Type	text
Series	(NASA SP (Series) ; 2017-07-100-LARC.) ←

Also, try the **Catalog of U.S. Government Publications** to find information about missing elements for your citations. Like Scholar OneSearch, the CGP provides the title, personal and government author names, place of publication, publisher, and date of publication.



UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE www.usip.org

SPECIAL REPORT

1200 17th Street NW • Washington, DC 20036 • 202.457.1700 • fax 202.429.6063

ABOUT THE REPORT

As the international community reflects on the tragedy in Rwanda ten years ago, the question of how societies should attempt to heal the wounds from past virulent conflicts has recently received renewed interest by members of the press, policy, and NGO community around the globe. How effective are truth and reconciliation commissions? How can they build on grassroots practices of reconciliation, reintegration, and healing to develop a new generation of commissions that are more locally effective in dealing with the aftermath of conflicts?

Building on findings from her extensive field research on

Rosalind Shaw

Rethinking Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Lessons from Sierra Leone

Print and online citations are often quite similar. Here, a URL and access date are added to the citation.

U.S. Institute of Peace. “*Rethinking Truth and Reconciliation Commissions: Lessons from Sierra Leone*” (Special Publication 130). By Rosalind Shaw. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2005. Available at: <https://www.usip.org/publications/2005/02/rethinking-truth-and-reconciliation-commissions-lessons-sierra-leone>. Accessed: June 8, 2018.

Cornell University Law School

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Introduction to Basic Legal Citation [Table of contents](#)

WHAT AND WHY? <

HOW TO CITE ... <

EXAMPLES - CITATIONS OF ... ▾

- Electronic Resources
- Judicial Opinions**
- Constitutions & Statutes

§ 3-210. Case Citations - Most Common Form

Illustrations

Wilson v. Mar. Overseas Corp., 150 F.3d 1, 6-7 (1st Cir. 1998).

Meier v. Said, 2007 ND 18, ¶ 22, 726 N.W.2d 852.

For short form examples see § 6-520.

Additional Examples

Full Range of: [Federal Court Decisions](#) | [State Court Decisions](#)

Federal Case Citations:

Most standard documentation styles recommend The Bluebook for citing legal and legislative documents. The Legal Information Institute at Cornell University provides an online guide to commonly used legal citations; this work is based on The Bluebook.

Citation management software



Citation management software packages like RefWorks, Zotero, or EndNote don't generally work well with government publications. Expect to do a lot of editing!



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ASK A LIBRARIAN

library.northeastern.edu/ask