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The Craft Of Research (Chicago Guides To Writing, Editing, And Publishing)



Synopsis

This manual offers practical advice on the fundamentals of research to college and university students in all fields of study. The Craft of Research teaches much more than the mechanics of fact gathering: it explains how to approach a research project as an analytical process. The authors chart every stage of research, from finding a topic and generating research questions about it to marshalling evidence, constructing arguments, and writing everything up in a final report that is a model of authority. Their advice is designed for use by both beginners and seasoned practitioners, and for projects from class papers to dissertations. This book is organized into four parts. Part One is a spirited introduction to the distinctive nature, values, and protocols of research. Part Two demystifies the art of discovering a topic. It outlines a wide range of sources, among them personal interests and passions. Parts Three and Four cover the essentials of argument—how to make a claim and support it—and ways to outline, draft, revise, rewrite, and polish the final report. Part Three is a short course in the logic, structure, uses, and common pitfalls of argumentation. The writing chapters in Part Four show how to present verbal and visual information effectively and how to shape sentences and paragraphs that communicate with power and precision. "A well-constructed, articulate reminder of how important fundamental questions of style and approach, such as clarity and precision, are to all research."—Times Literary Supplement

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Customer Reviews

Skillfully done, research can be the solid cornerstone of your term paper (or dissertation, essay, or article); inadequately executed, it can cause your whole project to crumble and fall. Yet essential as research is to the ultimate success of your work, performing it is not an innate talent. The precepts, steps, and skills of solid research are readily acquired if you spend some time with *The Craft of Research* before you start on your outlines and thesis statements. Written by three distinguished professors in 1995, published by the University of Chicago, and winner of the 1995-96 Critics' Choice Award, *The Craft of Research* teaches how to plan, carry out, and report on research for any field and at any level. Aimed at assisting student researchers, from raw beginners to accomplished graduate and professional students, the book shows how to choose a topic, plan and organize research, and how to draft and revise a report of findings such that a convincing solution is offered to a significant problem. *The Craft of Research* is more than just another instruction manual getting you from topic to outline to notes to report. Recognizing that good research is rarely a simple, sequential procedure, but is instead a complex and intricate process, it discusses the subtle ways in which asking questions about your topic can influence how you draft your report, how a quality introduction can send you back to the library, and how the process of drafting can highlight flaws in your argument that need to be addressed. Clear and explicit, sophisticated and practical, *The Craft of Research* encourages high standards of scholarly achievement, and spells out the steps by which to get there. --Stephanie Gold

Since 1995, more than 150,000 students and researchers have turned to *The Craft of Research* for clear and helpful guidance on how to conduct research and report it effectively. Now, master teachers Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams present a completely revised and updated version of their classic handbook. Like its predecessor, this new edition reflects the way researchers actually work: in a complex circuit of thinking, writing, revising, and rethinking. It shows how each part of this process influences the others and how a successful research report is an orchestrated conversation between a researcher and a reader. Along with many other topics, *The Craft of Research* explains how to build an argument that motivates readers to accept a claim; how to anticipate the reservations of thoughtful yet critical readers and to respond to them appropriately; and how to create introductions and conclusions that answer that most demanding question, "So what?" Celebrated by reviewers for its logic and clarity, this popular book retains its five-part structure. Part 1 provides an orientation to the research process and begins the discussion of what motivates researchers and their readers. Part 2 focuses on finding a topic, planning the

project, and locating appropriate sources. This section is brought up to date with new information on the role of the Internet in research, including how to find and evaluate sources, avoid their misuse, and test their reliability. Part 3 explains the art of making an argument and supporting it. The authors have extensively revised this section to present the structure of an argument in clearer and more accessible terms than in the first edition. New distinctions are made among reasons, evidence, and reports of evidence. The concepts of qualifications and rebuttals are recast as acknowledgment and response. Part 4 covers drafting and revising, and offers new information on the visual representation of data. Part 5 concludes the book with an updated discussion of the ethics of research, as well as an expanded bibliography that includes many electronic sources. The new edition retains the accessibility, insights, and directness that have made *The Craft of Research* an indispensable guide for anyone doing research, from students in high school through advanced graduate study to businesspeople and government employees. The authors demonstrate convincingly that researching and reporting skills can be learned and used by all who undertake research projects.

New to this edition:

- Extensive coverage of how to do research on the internet, including how to evaluate and test the reliability of sources
- New information on the visual representation of data
- Expanded bibliography with many electronic sources

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I have used *Craft of Research* in my undergraduate and graduate research methods courses for several years. The writing is clear and direct. The examples are plentiful. The organization is perfect for instruction. It opens with the question "Why do we do research?" Because everything we know of the world outside of our own experience is based upon the reports of research by others. Chapters 1 and 3 are essential. Why write up research reports? To understand, remember, and test our thinking. What is the researcher's purpose in sharing results: I found some new and interesting information, I found a solution to a practical problem, and here's something that might entertain you.

The book opens with the exploratory phase of moving from a general interest to problems, topics, and research questions. This isn't a methods book, so I usually pause at that point as we experiment with a variety of methods, but we return to *Craft of Research* as we begin writing up the results, creating visual displays of data, and assembling the report. Chapters 7-11 are particularly important in understanding how to write persuasive, convincing arguments, support them with data, and address potential rebuttals from resistant readers. The only criticism that I have is that the discussion of ethics is in an appendix rather than a featured chapter. Otherwise, I wholeheartedly recommend this book.

This book was an essential element during my five years of doctoral study and the dissertation process. I found it to be one of the "must haves" for my reference library and would strongly recommend it to any grad student, but especially for doctoral students.

This text was required for my thesis class during my masters' program. Parts of it are redundant to folks who have already done a few research projects, and the authors could have done a better job of maintaining two or three illustrations throughout the book. (Instead, they jump around between various theoretical topics, which undercuts the point of explaining how to develop on topic from concept to completion.) Still, it is full of tips and useful advice. As a student with some experience conducting research, it was pleasant to see the various habits I had developed either confirmed or corrected. If you're just starting out in the Academy, this is a helpful resource.

We all respect scientists--even budding science students--for their commitment to accuracy and objectivity. Sometimes our strengths are also our weaknesses. Beginning scientists can naively believe that their writing only needs to report the facts, that anything further is bias, sophistry or even dishonesty. This book lays out the path to a better writing style. Readers will learn how to arrange and present their facts and evidence as coherent arguments. As a result, they will better serve their own readers. The table of contents, outlined below, shows that the authors cover more than putting fingers to keyboard. Introductory chapters discuss the perspective and information needs of readers and how to connect with them. The authors address development of one's own authentic authorial "voice"--a topic often neglected in books about research writing. The next four chapters teach us how to conceptualize a research question, then find relevant and credible sources of information to answer it. The third edition contains a needed revision of the authors' earlier avoidant stance on the credibility of web-based information, containing good guidance for weeding flakey from factual online sources. Chapter 7, "Making Good Arguments: An Overview," is the keystone chapter and a relatively quick read at eleven pages. It's where to focus when deciding whether to read the rest of the book. The authors define their working vocabulary of arguments, reasons, evidence, claims and warrants. In this and the following four chapters they show us how to use these concepts to present our points and how to acknowledge and respond to positions with which we disagree. They demonstrate how to do this with integrity as well as skill. The final six chapters address the actual writing of a research report. Much of the advice on planning, drafting and revising is standard and consistent with other writing guides. Some, such as advice on

graphical presentation of data, is an overview of information covered more thoroughly in other books (e.g., Tufte's *Envisioning Information*). But there is also a great deal of guidance on revising and fine-tuning arguments that is unique to these authors and their framework of written arguments. The closing chapter on style will help writers create clear and understandable structure while following their own authorial style. Recognizing they have presented only an introductory measure of what good writers need to know, the authors close with a comprehensive bibliography of readings, both online and in print. This book, thoughtfully read and put into practice, is as good as a course in professional writing. Read it, underline in it, bend back the page corners, and keep it nearby when you write your next report.

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I got this book because it was required for my class, but after reading the assigned readings, I decided im going to keep this book to help me write papers for the rest of my career as a student and even after. There are so many tips to help from forming a research topic all the way through the finished product. Highly recommended. not too mention, it doesn't cost an arm and a leg ;)

Thoughtful. Detailed. Practical. Scholarly executed. This book teaches the craft to both teachers and students. This edition is ordered in a logical systematic way that artfully engages the reader. From a word choice to a warrant complex idea this book helps researchers make intelligent decisions in the process of perfecting the craft of research.

Just what my daughter needed for her class.

This was additional reading for a class. I don't really read these books but I must say this book was great. It shows you step by step how to write a research paper. It made it so easy I wasn't intimidated in writing one, and it shows you sentence and paragraph structure.

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