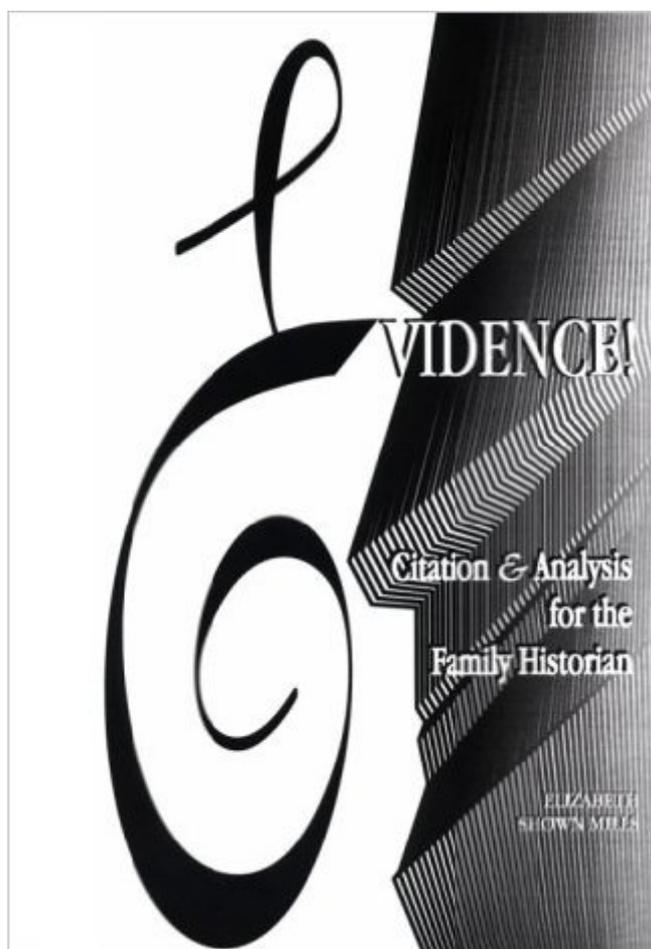


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Evidence! Citation & Analysis For The Family Historian



Synopsis

Every devoted genealogist is concerned with citations in their analysis for their genealogy. Accurate citations are necessary so that the evidence can be judged and if necessary allows for the research to be repeated. The author makes it easy to help genealogists (particularly the non-expert) to make sense out of citations and to improve their genealogy search. THIS BOOK IS CONSIDERED A GENEALOGY "MUST!"

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Customer Reviews

In this book, one of America's foremost genealogical scholars has taken on a Herculean task and accomplished it superbly. Every scholarly discipline has its own basic standards for the nitty-gritty of citational form--the sort of thing that we all hoped we had escaped after our term-paper days were over. In 1980, before genealogy was faced with the computer revolution, the late Richard S. Lackey, FASG, published *Cite Your Sources*, the first comprehensive guide to "Documenting Family Histories and Genealogical Records." Since Lackey's untimely death in 1983, the few attempts to update his recommendations have been Quixotic and (fortunately) unsuccessful, until the current work by Elizabeth Shown Mills, the editor of the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*. Elizabeth Mills takes on more than citations. She recognizes that citations and critical analysis are closely related. We have all seen genealogies that are promoted as thoroughly documented, but when we investigate the sources cited, we find that the author was unable to evaluate them or to draw sound conclusions from them. Citations by themselves do not guarantee the quality of a published work,

but they are essential so that the evidence can be judged and, if necessary, the research can be repeated. The discussion of genealogical analysis in this work is among the finest we have seen; studying it carefully will not only reward genealogists but also scholars in related fields. Evidence! provides careful and copious examples of each type of citation that the careful genealogist is likely to encounter, with charts indicating the first citation to the work, document (etc.), subsequent citations to it, and its entry in a separate bibliography.

Mills deserves the admiration and respect she has earned from her years of dedication to the field of genealogy. Her contributions are invaluable. And her knowledge of documentation methodology is exemplary. I wish genealogists were required to read this book before they start their endeavour. But her citation examples leave me dissatisfied. I was looking forward to getting this book for the examples. They're not exactly what one would call comprehensive. And many of them, like the late Mr. Lackey's book, are superfluous. I don't know if the publisher pressed her for space or what, but I would like to see several examples for each type of source--given genealogical sources' uniqueness, it's a must. And more, I'm dissatisfied at her deviations from long-standing citation practices in the field of history. It is this type of practice that still bars historians from accepting genealogists into their realm of study. As an avid genealogist and recent college graduate in history, I can attest to this personally. Documentation methods in the field of history are long-established and practiced in history departments the world over, as evidenced in the books and writings of scholars and in the many historical journals produced in this country. When will genealogy join the academic community on this matter? I can promise you it won't be on the part of scholars. Anyway, I'm most dissatisfied at the lack of comprehensive examples. It is too delicate a matter for the genealogist to have to substitute their own source data into one example, when they probably obtained the info. in quite a different matter, and therefore has to guess what to put.

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