

Wade Williams

Professor Brock-Cancellieri

ENG 109-03

20 Sept. 2016

### How to Avoid Making MLA Style Errors

*The Simpsons* is one of the most provocative sit-coms ever aired on television, and it has been surrounded in controversy since it first aired in 1989. Yet it is the longest running scripted TV show ever, with 589 episodes and counting (“13 longest-running scripted TV shows of all time.”). In her essay “We’re All Pigs: Representations of Masculinity in *The Simpsons*”, the author Karma Waltonen writes about the famous TV sit-com *The Simpsons*, and how it is a politically liberal show with feminist ideas. Waltonen argues that because *The Simpsons* uses a sit-com format, male characters are prevented from advancing from their piggish ways (Waltonen 1). Waltonen’s idea of a sit-com is based upon “unchanging characters” (Waltonen 5). Waltonen believes that due to examples from *The Simpsons*, men are the main focus of the satire in the sit-com. However, Waltonen does not present her argument effectively due to lack of persuasiveness, multiple writing errors, and failing to conform to MLA guidelines.

Waltonen is not persuasive because she does not consider opposing points of view in her paper. Waltonen argues that due to the sit-com format of *The Simpsons*, male characters are prevented from truly advancing out of their masculine rut. It is tempting to agree with Waltonen due to the examples she gives to support her argument. However, a couple of good examples from research cannot override the plentitude of writing errors throughout the paper. There is not even mention of a counter argument throughout the entire paper. A counter argument is important for a paper to be persuasive because readers want to be convinced, not just given

research from biased sources. People that read Waltonen's paper need to be aware about the errors she makes so that they do not make the same errors in their writing assignments.

Waltonen includes a lot of research to support her argument, but she makes many writing errors that reduce the effectiveness of her paper. People that support Waltonen claim that her research sufficiently supports her argument. Waltonen uses too much research to make her argument, and fails to include her own opinions in her paper. For example, Waltonen references a book by author David Grote seven times throughout her paper, instead of including her own personal thoughts and opinions about her argument. By relying heavily on sources, her paper is weakened because she rides on the thoughts and opinions of other people. Readers must be able to clearly identify the writer's own opinions, and the opinions of the opposing argument. Furthermore, Waltonen makes several MLA style errors throughout her paper which also reduces the effectiveness of her argument.

Waltonen's paper lacks persuasiveness due to MLA style errors she makes while presenting the research for her paper. A simple error such as underlining names of television shows instead of properly italicizing reduces the academic integrity of the essay. Waltonen also fails to indent her paragraphs and quotes, and she even improperly uses three footnotes at the end of the essay. Waltonen does not even include one of the most important sections of a paper, the conclusion. The conclusion is important because it restates the argument and ties the paper together. Additionally, the thesis statement is never restated in the essay. The thesis should be restated to remind readers of the argument.

Due to all of the writing errors in her paper, Waltonen's essay is unprofessional and not persuasive. Waltonen is unpersuasive because she does not include a counter argument or include her own opinions in her writing. Simple writing errors and improperly using sources

detracts from an effective argument. Scholars that read Waltonen's paper should use it as an example of how not to write an effective academic paper, and learn from Waltonen's mistakes.

#### Works Cited

"13 longest-running scripted TV shows of all time." CBS News.com.

[www.cbsnews.com/pictures/ncis-longest-running-scripted-tv-shows-of-all-time/12/](http://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/ncis-longest-running-scripted-tv-shows-of-all-time/12/).

Accessed 13 Sept. 2016.

Waltonen, Karma. "We're All Pigs: Representations of Masculinity in *The Simpsons*". *The*

*Simpsons Archive*, April 2000, [www.simpsonsarchive.com/other/papers/kw.paper.htm](http://www.simpsonsarchive.com/other/papers/kw.paper.htm)