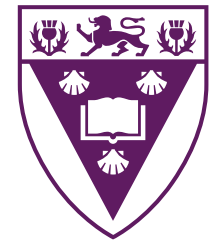


The importance of standardised referencing

Philip Machanick



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The nice thing about standards is there's so many to choose from.

–Andrew Tanenbaum

Why do we use references?

- Provide
 - authority
 - further reading
 - evidence of contribution
 - evidence of knowledge of the field
- Hence:
 - why standards?

South African Computer Journal experiences

Why standards?

- Paper:
 - Evidence of author's knowledge of the field
 - they reference the way others in the field do
 - Further reading and verification of their sources
 - References are findable
- Journal:
 - Consistency
 - Part of professional layout

Setting your standard

- Many variations
 - APA (now in 7th version)
 - Harvard
 - Chicago
 - ... etc. ...

- Our advice as editors to authors?
 - Use a reference manager

Variations

- References vs. bibliography
 - Only references cited or all your used?
- Citing with author and year or number?
 - If authors, do you list all, or use et al.? (APA particularly tricky)
- List in alphabetic order or order of first citation?

discipline-dependent

Why a reference manager?

- Editor:
 - Set to your style in one place
 - Pick and choose level of detail
- Author:
 - Get details of a reference right once for all your publications that use it
 - Change the style easily
 - Ensure that citations match the reference list

Examples

- Mendeley
- EndNote
- Zotero
- Jabref

Ideally: format-independent

Details

- Reference manager can store full details even if not used in a specific style
- Examples:
 - Full author names vs. initials only, or truncated list
 - Journal: volume, number, year, month, pages
 - Web: date published *and* date accessed
 - Use DOI wherever available

Writing tool

- MS Word is popular but not designed for scholarly writing
- LaTeX (markup language) has more learning curve but benefits:
 - Style changes easier
 - Can see how you did it
 - in MS Word: did you type it like that or use an automated tool?
 - Overleaf: a convenient online version allows collaborative editing

***SACJ* uses LaTeX for final production**

SACJ standard?

- APA v6
- Is this good?

Atrocious!

- Hard to manually check
 - Arcane rules for when to use et al.
- Busy style: cite as (Author, year) – the comma is superfluous
- Doesn't play nice with undated: gives year as n.d. but no standard for more than one like that

Solution: manuscripts for review use [number]

What works...

- We insist on DOIs wherever possible
- Great aid in verifying reference details
- A reference manager that stores or can export Bibtex is great

Summary

- As an editor: choose a standard and stick to it
- Author advice: use tools that are flexible and allow changes

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ASSAf Research Repository

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B. Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) Events

I. Other

2022-11

Annual National Scholarly Editors' Forum (NSEF) Meeting

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