

FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR

Attentive readers of *RADIOCARBON* will notice some differences in the format of this issue. Beginning with Volume 41, we have decided to base our journal style on the current edition of the CBE Manual (CBE 1994) issued by the Council of Biology Editors.

In so doing, we hope to make life a bit simpler for authors, readers, and editors alike. Mastering intricate and idiosyncratic “instructions for authors” documents that differ widely from journal to journal must rank close behind writing grant applications as a bane of the scientist’s existence. (And when authors simply ignore the instructions and use whatever conventions they are most familiar with, they become a bane of the editor’s existence.) Although no general-purpose publication manual will cover every single requirement of a specialized journal like *RADIOCARBON*, we hope to collaborate in standardizing scientific communication where we can. In the words of the CBE Manual:

Many minor differences in style among scientific disciplines seem pointless. The scientific world needs to take more steps toward a uniform and complete international system of scientific nomenclature and symbols.

We chose the CBE Manual for several reasons. First, because *RADIOCARBON* is an interdisciplinary journal, we wanted a guidebook that would represent the shared practices of the scientific community rather than of a single field. The CBE Manual originated in 1960 as a style guide for journals in life sciences and medicine, but the 6th edition aims to cover all disciplines in experimental and observational science. (To whatever extent that it retains its roots in biosciences, it occupies a safe neutral ground between our 2 major groups of contributors, archaeologists and physical scientists.) Second, the CBE Manual anchors its recommendations in internationally adopted standards documents wherever possible, and synthesizes usages from the entire English-speaking scientific world. Finally, the CBE Manual is issued by a major university press with worldwide distribution, and is readily available through local libraries and bookstores or Internet vendors.

Our new “Information for Authors” document is published on our website at the following URL:

<http://www.radiocarbon.org/Authors/>

In addition to presenting the new style guidelines and special conventions for reporting ^{14}C dates and formatting date lists, it outlines the scope of the journal and our publication process in general. It will be updated and extended from time to time as necessary. We welcome feedback on the document to help us keep it as useful as possible to our readers and contributors.

David R Sewell

REFERENCE

[CBE] Council of Biology Editors, Style Manual Committee. 1994. *Scientific style and format: the CBE manual for authors, editors, and publishers*. 6th ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 825 p.