

EDITOR'S CORNER

Reflections on a Style Guide

The publication of a new style guide in Vol. 57, No. 4 of *American Antiquity* (October 1992) culminates many years of experience, primarily by the Managing Editor Teresita Majewski, in adjusting publication style and format to the major changes that have occurred in archaeological communication. Some procedures, as in the presentation of radiocarbon dates, are updated, while others, such as the treatment of personal communications, are new to this journal, though hardly novel elsewhere. The style guide does not address all of the issues relevant to contemporary scholarship and authorship because some of the most important of these require thorough examination and debate. This editor's corner touches on three problem areas to encourage experimentation and discussion by the full community of archaeological scholars before publication of the next style guide. These areas are: (1) in-text citations and references, (2) author responsibility and coauthorship, and (3) the proliferation and escalating cost of scholarly journals.

Archaeology has grown both in the number of practitioners and the different arenas—academic, government, private—where archaeology is practiced. While uniquely academic values may no longer pervade the discipline, the standards of scholarship at the core of this value system are universal and immutable. Old protocols are in need of reevaluation, perhaps overhauling, and in some instances new ones should be formulated to meet the needs of archaeological scholarship well into the future. The subject of professional scholarship overlaps with questions of ethics, and while ethics are an important issue, I seek here to disentangle scholarship from ethics. Developing an explicit, comprehensive code of professional conduct is, however, a concern of all responsible archaeologists.

The first problem area is in-text citations and references. Citations to existing scholarship serve to acknowledge previous work (often used in archaeology to evoke the power of a prominent authority), to credit others' ideas and data, and generally to build arguments in support of the author's thesis. Scholarship depends on the independent evaluation of source documents and data. Scholarship is not well served when crucial elements in a presentation are unpublished manuscripts that cannot be accessed without heroic efforts or when critical citations drawn from a sizable work omit the appropriate page, thus requiring a deep search by the concerned scholar. Though largely unintentional, I am certain, the net result of these practices is to hinder scholarship.

Also seen as a problem from the standpoint of journal production is inflating the number of references cited while being inattentive to correct bibliographic style. Our production staff spends an inordinate amount of time cleaning up errors in citations and references. A quick solution to all of these niggling citation-reference problems would be for authors to include only the essential works, be certain to reference relevant pages, and adhere exactly to bibliographic form as published in the new style guide.

A curious phenomenon for which I can suggest no immediate remedy is the lack of time depth in references cited. That is the publication dates of references do not go back much farther than about 10 years. In archaeological parlance they cluster like artifacts near the surface in a single-component site. This citation shallowness might be a product of the need to appear current, but it may also reflect a rush to publish, a superficial grasp of antecedent literature, or even the transitory, fadish nature of some archaeological inquiry.

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Punctilious attention to citations and references is a noncontroversial concern of editors who may rant and rave without offending much of anyone. I cannot recall any irate reader's letter on the deplorable state of references in American archaeology. Not so the second problem area—author responsibility and coauthorship. Furthermore, a number of letters have stated an expectation that past editors would have already developed relevant policy. Toward this end it is necessary first to propose guidelines for discussion and experimentation, which I do here by conveying statements of other editors in disciplines that have already addressed these problems formally. Many of these statements come from the biomedical journals.

The essence of authorship was put well by the head of the Section of Publications at the Mayo Clinic, Richard Hewitt (quoted by Edward Huth, *Annals of Internal Medicine* 97:614 [1982]).

Authorship cannot be conferred; it may be undertaken by one who will shoulder the responsibility that goes with it. To a responsible writer, an article, with his name on it, is the highest product of his mind and art, his property, as nearly flawless as he can make it, founded in his character and evidence of it. . . . The reader of a report issued by two or more authors has a right to assume that each author has some authoritative knowledge of the subject, that each contributed to the investigation, and that each labored on the report to the extent of weighing every word and quantity in it.

The problem in archaeology, I am informed, is not so much the responsibilities of the single author but the assignment and ordering of coauthors. Here I borrow from the guidelines on authorship from the American Chemical Society (quoted in Edward Huth, *Annals of Internal Medicine* 104:273–274 [1986]).

The co-authors of a paper should be all those persons who have made significant scientific contributions to the work reported and who share responsibility and accountability for the results. Other contributions should be indicated in a footnote or an "Acknowledgements" section. An administrative relationship does not of itself qualify a person for co-authorship (but occasionally it may be appropriate to acknowledge major administrative assistance). Deceased persons who meet the criterion for inclusion as co-authors should be so included, with a footnote reporting date of death. No fictitious name should be listed as an author or co-author. The author who submits a manuscript for publication accepts the responsibility of having included as co-authors all persons appropriate and none inappropriate. The submitting author should have sent each living co-author a draft copy of the manuscript and have obtained the co-author's assent to co-authorship of it.

A simple test for determining validity of coauthorship is provided by the editor-in-chief of the National Research Council of Canada Research Journals (quoted in Edward Huth, *Annals of Internal Medicine* 104:273 [1986]):

The authors of scientific papers clearly bear the full responsibility for the veracity of the work reported therein. . . . who warrants coauthorship? . . . Since authorship implies responsibility, one simple guideline could be that all authors should be capable of participating in a discussion or defense of their paper.

But how does one determine coauthorship at the onset of manuscript preparation? Again, guidelines developed in other disciplines provide discussion points for archaeologists. Five principles for authorship include (Edward Huth, *Annals of Internal Medicine* 104:269 [1986]):

1. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work represented by the article to take public responsibility for the content.
2. Participation must include three steps: (1) conception or design of the work represented by the article, or analysis and interpretation of the data, or both; (2) drafting the article or revising it for critically important content; and (3) final approval of the version to be published.
3. Participation solely in the collection of data (or other evidence) does not justify authorship.
4. Each part of the content of an article critical to its main conclusions and each step in the work that led to its publication (steps 1, 2, and 3 in Principle 2) must be attributable to at least one author.
5. Persons who have contributed intellectually to the article but whose contributions do not justify authorship may be named and their contribution described. . . . Such persons must have given their permission to be named. Technical help must be acknowledged in a separate paragraph.

From our cousins the geologists comes the recommendation that journal editors "require, at the first submission of a manuscript, that *all* coauthors sign a form indicating the allocation of responsibility for the contents of the paper. If at all possible, such data should be indicated in the manuscript" (E-an Zen, *Geology* 16:292 [1988]).

Although the above thoughts and guidelines generally target papers submitted to scholarly journals, archaeologists must expand consideration to include contract reports and chapters therein as well as uses and abuses of unpublished documents and data.

The third problem area is the proliferation and escalating costs of scholarly journals. Here I report problems of university libraries that will impact the future of scholarly communication and research. Data and discussion points presented below are provided by Dean of Libraries Carla J. Stoffle and Assistant University Librarian Sara C. Heitshu, both of the University of Arizona.

After nearly a decade of limited budgets the University of Arizona Library will further reduce its serials budget by almost \$700,000 (25 percent of the serials budget for 1992–1993) or approximately 3,000 titles, and these reductions are occurring at major research universities across the country. In addition to economic conditions requiring the tightening of university budgets, the other major reason for the reduction in serials is their escalating cost to institutions. Stoffle and Heitshu developed a list of actions that faculty might implement to slow rapidly inflating serials prices, a number of which are presented below.

1. Evaluate critically the need for initiating new journals especially when others of good quality already exist in the field.
2. Support more rigorous refereeing of submissions to journals so that libraries can collect quality, not just quantity.
3. Support only good quality publications. Refuse to purchase or ask the library to purchase materials of questionable value.
4. Reduce the volume but not the quality by resisting opportunities to write articles in fragments. Refrain from submitting similar materials to more than one publication.
5. Say no to serving on editorial boards or as reviewers for journals with records of indefensible price increases. Refrain from publishing in these journals as well.
6. Urge universities to reexamine current promotion and tenure practices with the goal of emphasizing quality of research in a few key articles over quantity of published research.
7. Pressure publishers to discontinue the practice of subscription pricing differentials that adversely affect institutional subscribers.
8. Use your university press for not-for-profit publishing.

Archaeological scholarship is too diverse to be forced into standard academic molds. Guidelines of appropriate scholarship, therefore, cannot be borrowed uncritically from other disciplines. It is the responsibility of all archaeologists, especially senior researchers secure in their tenure havens or contract overhead, to work to codify principles of archaeological scholarship that will guide young scholars in the achievement of professional goals.

J. Jefferson Reid
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