

# Author citations and the indexer

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*Sylvia Coates explores the potentially fraught matter of how to handle author citations in the index, looking first at the extensive guidelines followed by US publishers, and then briefly considering British practice where it is rare for an indexer to be given any such guidelines. In both situations the vital thing is to be clear from the very beginning exactly what your client's expectations are.*

As an indexing instructor for over 12 years, I have observed that most students assume that indexing names is an easy task. Unfortunately, as experienced indexers come to understand, this is not the case and there are a myriad of issues to navigate when indexing names. An examination of all of these issues is beyond the scope of this article, and my discussion will be limited to the indexing of name and author citations for US and British publishers.

I will define what is and is not an author citation, and briefly review the two major citation systems and style guides pertinent to author citations. Following that, I will review first the US practices, and then British practices, for indexing names/author citations.

## Definitions

A citation is a reference to a published or unpublished source that documents the use of an idea or concept from the work of others. A citation serves several functions. First, it is a way to avoid the charge of plagiarism. Second, it is to attribute and acknowledge the use of another's work. And third, it serves to support the author's arguments and lend credibility to the text. There are many different types of citations, including but not limited to scripture citations, legal case citations, and the focus of this article, author citations.

To further clarify, an author citation may appear in the text, footnotes, or endnotes, and is not to be confused with a bibliographic citation or other compiled references found in the back-matter of a publication.

We should also differentiate between a name and an author citation for the purpose of indexing. Though they are clearly often the same thing, and are generally treated the same way in the index, they do have one significant difference. An author citation is just that – a reference cited in the text as an acknowledgement of a specific idea or concept in relationship to a paper, study, seminar, or similar, from someone else's work used in the text. A name, in comparison, is in reference to an individual. The text may include a

discussion of this individual in relationship to their actions or to an event and not as a reference as is the case with a citation.

Editors rightly expect the subject of any text discussion to be included in the index. More problematic are the names 'mentioned in passing.' Some clients expect to see every single name included in the text, regardless of whether the name is a passing mention or not. Other clients thankfully allow the indexer to use their own judgement in following the customary indexing convention on what constitutes a passing mention and whether to exclude it from the index. This is an issue which the indexer should be aware of, most particularly when working with a new and unfamiliar client.

## Citation systems and style guides

It is also very useful for an indexer to understand that there are many style guides and citation systems used by publishers to determine the treatment of author citations. Here is a brief overview of some of the major citation systems and styleguides used by professional associations and publishers.

- AMA (American Medical Association) for its publications. Details at [www.amamanualofstyle.com/](http://www.amamanualofstyle.com/). Quick reference guide available at <http://www4.samford.edu/schools/pharmacy/dic/amaquickref07.pdf>
- ACS (American Chemical Society) for its publications. Available at <http://deephought.oc.chemie.tu-darmstadt.de/files/info/TheACSStyleGuide.pdf>
- APA (American Psychological Association Style) specified in *The publication manual of the American Psychological Association* which is used for the social and behavioral sciences. Details at [www.apastyle.org/](http://www.apastyle.org/). Summary of provisions at <http://library.concordia.ca/help/howto/apa.php>
- ALWD (Association of Legal Writing Directors) *Citation manual* is used for US legal citations. Details at [www.alwd.org/publications/citation\\_manual.html](http://www.alwd.org/publications/citation_manual.html)

- The *ASA Style Guide*, published by the American Sociological Association, is used for the ASA journal and publications. Summary version at [www.asanet.org/students/Quick%20style%20guide.pdf](http://www.asanet.org/students/Quick%20style%20guide.pdf)
- *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citations* is used for US legal citations. Details at [www.legalbluebook.com/](http://www.legalbluebook.com/)
- *The Chicago manual of style* is the style guide generally followed by US university presses as well as many other publishers. *Chicago* and *APA* are the most widely used style guides in the United States.
- The CSE (Council of Science Editors) citation standard used for the sciences. Details at [www.resourcenter.net/Scripts/4Disapi07.dll/store/scientific-style-and-format-7th-edition/13693/](http://www.resourcenter.net/Scripts/4Disapi07.dll/store/scientific-style-and-format-7th-edition/13693/). *CSE Quick citation guide* can be found at [www.libraries.psu.edu/psu/11s/students/cse\\_citation.html](http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psu/11s/students/cse_citation.html)
- The Harvard referencing system, also called ‘parenthetical referencing’. There are two forms used. One is author–date, used in sciences and social sciences, and the other is author–title, used in the language arts and humanities. There are many guides to the system available online including that at [www.staffs.ac.uk/support\\_depts/infoservices/learning\\_support/refzone/harvard/](http://www.staffs.ac.uk/support_depts/infoservices/learning_support/refzone/harvard/)
- *MHRA Style Guide* of the Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA) for author citations by British publishers of the humanities. Free online PDF available at [www.mhra.org.uk/Publications/Books/StyleGuide/download.shtm](http://www.mhra.org.uk/Publications/Books/StyleGuide/download.shtm)
- *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, published by the MLA (Modern Languages Association), and used in the humanities and language arts for journals and magazines. Details at [www.mla.org/store/CID25/PID341](http://www.mla.org/store/CID25/PID341) A summary is available at [www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/mla](http://www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/mla)
- The *Canadian Guide to Uniform Legal Citation* is published by the *McGill Law Journal*. Details at <http://lawjournal.mcgill.ca/citeguide.php>
- *Oxford Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA)* serves as a legal citation standard for citation of UK and EU legal materials. There is also an *OSCOLA Ireland* for Irish legal materials and an *OSCOLA Guide to citing international law* (2006). All are freely available online at [www.law.ox.ac.uk/publications/oscola.php](http://www.law.ox.ac.uk/publications/oscola.php)
- The Vancouver system, in which each reference is assigned a number, is often used in the physical sciences. There are a number of detailed descriptions available online, including that at <http://www2.le.ac.uk/library/help/citing/vancouver-numbered-system>

These standards are not used consistently internationally or even by all publishers of any single country. But it is an advantage for an indexer to have a general understanding that these different style guides exist and how they might apply to a specific indexing project. Though it is certainly not the responsibility of the indexer to format author citations following a specific style guide in the text (something that should have been done prior to the text being given to the indexer), having an awareness of style guide differences and how they may impact on the text and index will enhance

the ability of an indexer to work proficiently for different publishers.

## Indexing names/author citations for US publishers

Because the bulk of US publishers follow either *Chicago* or the *APA* style guide I will limit the subsequent discussion to publishers following these two different style guides.

## Author citations: general information for US publishers

In the United States there are specific and different guidelines for indexing author citations dependent on the type of press and what style guide they follow. The different types of presses (for books that are likely to be indexed) are university presses, non-university scholarly presses, and textbook, tradebook, journals, and reference books publishers. These four different types of presses all have specific, but diverse, specifications for which name/author citations to include in the index and how to format them. It is worth noting that generally these specifications follow the *type of press and not the individual discipline*. So, in other words, the names/author citations in a philosophy text would be indexed in exactly the same way as a biology text for the same press. However, if the same philosophy text was being published for a university press and the biology text for a non-university scholarly press, then the indexing specifications for the names/author citations for both books would be different from the university press specifications.

## US university presses

University presses in the United States generally require that all names in the text be included in the index but not the names or author citations listed in footnotes, endnotes, or any of the parenthetical citations to be found in the text pages. US university presses typically follow the *Chicago manual of style* guidelines and, as such, follow the *Chicago* recommendations for indexing names:

- Do include author citations listed in the regular text in the index.
- Do not include parenthetical citations in the index.
- Do not include et al names in the index.<sup>1</sup>
- Author citations may or may not include spelled-out first name or first initials. Always check with the editor on their press preference.
- Do not include author citations from either footnotes or endnotes. Recently, this practice has sometimes been modified by the *Chicago* 16th edition. If there has been a decision to exclude the bibliography of the book, a recent practice by some US university presses, an indexer may be asked to include the endnote author citations in the index. This is not a common practice but does occur on occasion.

- Always remember the ‘it depends’ rule of indexing. Each project may be subject to special instructions by either the press or the author.

## US non-university scholarly presses

Many US non-university scholarly presses follow the *APA* guidelines while a few follow *Chicago*. The non-university scholarly publishers following *Chicago* comply with the same general guidelines as the university presses referred to in the above section. Turning to the presses that follow the *APA* style guide, it should be noted that the *APA*, unlike *Chicago*, does not include any written guidelines specifically for indexing. However, in spite of the lack of written *APA* indexing guidelines, these presses generally require that all names in the text and also the parenthetical author citations be included in the index. Names and citations from endnotes and footnotes are excluded from the index regardless of whether *Chicago* or *APA* is followed. There are times when an editor will request that et al names be included in the index.

- Presses that follow *Chicago* generally follow the same guidelines as those listed under the university press information above.
- Presses that follow the *APA* style guide require author citations from both in the regular text and the parenthetical citations to be included in the index.
- Et al names may be included in the index though this is not a typical request.
- Author citations tend to use first initials instead of spelled-out first names. But again, check with your editor on the preferred format.
- Do not include author citations from either the footnotes or the endnotes.
- Always remember the ‘it depends’ rule of indexing. Each project may be subject to special instructions by either the press or the author.

## US textbooks and trade books

Textbook and trade book publishers may follow either *Chicago* or *APA* guidelines and, by extension, follow the appropriate specification for indexing name/author citations as explained in the above sections.

At the risk of repetition, an important caveat to the above is always to check with the editor regarding any of the indexing specifications preferred by their press. I have found that even within the same press some editors may have their own personal preference, and it is always prudent to double-check specifications with a new client instead of making assumptions. And of course, authors may also have their own ideas of what they want to see in the index, so this is also something which needs to be considered for each project.

## US journals

Journals can have a lot of variation regarding how names and author citations are included or excluded in the index.

Most of my journal clients want both names found in the text and parenthetical citations included in the index. However, I have other clients who request that only the article authors be listed as index entries and require that no other names or citations be included in the index.

As noted previously, the *LMA style manual and guide to scholarly publishing* is used in the humanities and language arts for some journals and magazines. The *ASA style guide* is used for the *ASA* journal and publications. I also index journals for clients who follow the *APA* styleguide.

Because there can be so much variation in journals this is definitely a case where you will want to inquire and follow your editor’s instructions.

## US reference books

Reference books are also subject to press specifications. They may include only names found in the text or the parenthetical citations as part of the index. So be sure to ask. However, it is with reference books that you are more likely to be asked to include the et al citations.

As previously stated, et al. is the abbreviation for the Latin *et alii* (and others) and is used as part of a parenthetical citation to indicate that there are additional authors not named in the citation. These additional authors will be listed in their entirety in the references or bibliography but not on the text page or as part of the parenthetical citation, or typically included in the index. To include ‘et al’ authors is not a small request as potentially this can add hundreds of entries to an index.

## Indexing names/author citations for British publishers

As an indexer working primarily with US publishers, my experience with British publishers has been limited to UK university presses. When working for UK university presses, I have been asked to index name citations as in the US university press specifications. Given this limited familiarity with British publishers, I thought it only prudent to contact a variety of British indexers regarding their own experience. I made inquiries with several British indexers<sup>2</sup> of note who graciously provided comprehensive answers to my queries. Their answers were completely consistent with one another, and it quickly became evident that British practices for indexing name citations are not as formalized as are the US practices.

The consensus of the British indexers was that because there is no widespread adherence to a single style guide among UK publishers, equivalent to the way that the majority of US book publishers follow either *Chicago* or the *APA* style, there is considerably more flexibility related to indexing names and author citations. Due to the more independent style approach taken by UK publishers, there is no consistent standard, or standards, for indexing author citations. Instead, the UK publishers place more reliance on the judgement and discretion of the indexer to index names and author citations compared with the more formalized expectations of US publishers.

Interestingly given that this is the case, British university websites are rich with citation guidance for students, drawing heavily, and very firmly, on the style guides listed at the beginning of this article, so perhaps that way will lead to a degree of consistency amongst British publishers.

These are interesting differences, and given the increasing globalization of publishing, differences which indexers need to be aware of in order to work across international boundaries.

## Conclusion

Indexers are hired by clients on the assumption that they are familiar with publishing standards and competent enough to write a well-organized and complete index using the best practices of indexing. Sadly this is not always the case, and as professionals, it is our responsibility to learn and practice proficiency in indexing depending on the needs of the client and project.

We have all heard indexer 'horror stories' relating a bad experience with a client. Each of these stories has one common theme: that is, mismatched assumptions and expectations of the client and the indexer. Ensuring that you and your client have the same assumptions, expectations, and

vision of the indexing project will help you to avoid having any 'horror stories' of your own.

It is a relatively easy task to find out what style guide your client publisher follows, and to then ascertain if the client has any special instructions regarding when and how to index names and author citations. If the client does have specific expectations, you will know it and be able to meet those expectations. Should the client prefer to leave the decisions to your own discretion and judgement, then you will be able to proceed with the project confident that you performing within the parameters of the client's expectations. Either way, you will end up with a happy, and it is hoped, repeat client.

## Notes

1. Et al is the abbreviation for the Latin *et alii* (and others), and is used as part of a parenthetical citation to indicate that there are additional authors whose names have not been included as part of the parenthetical citation.
2. The author would like to thank the following individuals for their generous assistance with this article: Philip Aslett, Geraldine Beare, Susan Bobbis, Drusilla Calvert, Caroline Diepeveen, Auriol Griffith-Jones, Maureen MacGlashan, and Linda Sutherland.

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# Tips for newcomers: Wellington 2013

*Compiled by Jane Douglas*

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*Jane Douglas brings together 12 top tips for newcomers to indexing, offered by speakers and participants at the 2013 ANZSI Conference in Wellington, New Zealand.*

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I am a complete newcomer to indexing. But earlier this year, some indexing friends convinced me that attending a conference would be a valuable experience, even at this early stage. So I made the investment and travelled from Brisbane, Australia to Wellington, New Zealand to attend the 2013 ANZSI conference.

How right my friends were! Wellington is a beautiful city, and Tordis Flath and her team pulled off a slick and entirely glitch-free event. I learned more than I would have imagined possible and made some wonderful new friends and professional contacts. I even found a generous soul willing to act as my mentor as I make my first forays into indexing. I am very glad I made the trip.

As one of the handful of newbies at the conference, I took every opportunity to corner experienced indexers and pump them for information. I asked each the same question: If you were starting out in indexing today, what three things would you most wish to know? What follows is a collection of the wisdom gleaned from those conversations in Wellington and from email correspondence since. Most of the tips come from conference speakers, but I have collected some from relatively new indexers who are in the process

of putting this advice into practice. One publisher and one software developer were also kind enough to contribute.

The contributor's initials appear after each tip (a list of contributors appears at the end). Where a tip was offered by more than one contributor, that has been noted.

## Tip #1: Learn the fundamentals

- Read all the indexing books you can get your hands on. Build a library of reference works. (TF, SQ)
- Attend training courses and professional development events. Immersion into new techniques with peers gets you up to speed more quickly than learning on your own. (SQ, DS, DR)
- There is not just one way to index 'correctly'. Beyond the 'basic rules', each indexer works differently. Gradually develop your own style of working. Consistency within each index is the primary aim. (DS)