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# Foreword

From its inception as a brief journal article in 1929, the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* has been designed to advance scholarship by setting sound and rigorous standards for scientific communication. The creators of the 1929 manuscript included psychologists, anthropologists, and business managers who convened under the sponsorship of the National Research Council. They sought to establish a simple set of procedures, or *style rules*, that would codify the many components of scientific writing to increase the ease of reading comprehension. This goal was subsequently embraced not only by psychologists but also by scholars in other social and behavioral sciences who wished to enhance the dissemination of knowledge in their respective fields.

Uniform style helps us to cull articles quickly for key points and findings. Rules of style in scientific writing encourage full disclosure of essential information and allow us to dispense with minor distractions. Style helps us express the key elements of quantitative results, choose the graphic form that will best suit our analyses, report critical details of our research protocol, and describe individuals with accuracy and respect. It removes the distraction of puzzling over the correct punctuation for a reference or the proper form for numbers in text. Those elements are codified in the rules we follow for clear communication, allowing us to focus our intellectual energy on the substance of our research.

Today, APA Style sets a standard that is realized in APA journals, books, and electronic databases. In my tenure as APA publisher, the APA Journals program has grown from one that publishes 17,700 pages a year to one that publishes 37,000 pages a year. The APA Books program has grown from 12 books to over 1,214 books as well as 160 psychotherapy training videos. APA electronic products have grown from one database to five databases that offer users immediate connection to abstracts, books, journals, reviews, and quality gray literature. This profusion of scholarship has been supported and defined by the guidance provided in the *Publication Manual*. Together with the *APA Dictionary of*

*Psychology and Encyclopedia of Psychology*, it establishes a sound foundation for the advancement of the field.

The *Publication Manual* is consulted not only by psychologists but also by students and researchers in education, social work, nursing, business, and many other behavioral and social sciences. Its standards are available in English as well as Spanish, Portuguese, Korean, Chinese, and many other languages. A central focus of deliberation for this edition has been the way in which web-based technological innovations have altered the way we conceptualize, conduct, and consume scientific research. The sixth edition of the *Publication Manual* is devoted in large part to interpreting these advances and incorporating them into the style lexicon. It is my hope that, in concert with our other reference products, it will serve as a solid base for all of your scientific communications.

*Gary R. VandenBos, PhD*  
*Publisher, American Psychological Association*



# Preface

To better understand the complex changes in scientific publishing and address them in this edition, many experts and professional groups were consulted. We began the revision process in 2006 by looking closely at the fifth edition, analyzing more than five years of accumulated user feedback; evaluating published criticism; and commissioning reviews from senior editors in psychology, education, nursing, history, and business. After deliberation and debate about these comments, the APA Publications and Communications Board set broad parameters for the revision and appointed a panel of experienced editors and scientists from diverse specialty areas to collaborate with dedicated staff on the revision.

The six-member *Publication Manual* Revision Task Force met for the first time in February 2007. They determined that revisions were needed in seven key areas: ethics, journal article reporting standards, reducing bias in language, graphics, writing style, references, and statistics. Working groups of experts were established to support the work of the task force in each area.

As the revision progressed, APA staff continued to solicit recommendations for revision from the APA Council of Editors, from *Publication Manual* users at the [www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org) website, from APA members at professional meetings, and from APA boards and committees. Those recommendations were passed along to working group and task force members for consideration.

Thus, this edition of the *Publication Manual* is the result of creative collaboration with many groups and individuals. We must first thank the members of the *Publication Manual* Revision Task Force. They devoted many hours to analyzing reviews, considering the scholarly publishing climate, identifying topics in need of greater coverage, meeting with working group members to generate and revise text, critiquing and discussing new drafts, and poring over the final draft with a persistent commitment to getting it right. We are fortunate to have benefited so thoroughly from their enthusiastic and generous support of this project.

We are also grateful for the contributions that came from the working groups of experts who helped shape this edition. They dialed in faithfully to join Webex conference calls, collaborating to ensure accurate and comprehensive coverage for their respective areas. We benefited from the welcome blend of tact, humor, and insight that they brought to this project.

Early in the revision process, we solicited critiques from selected core users, that is, from senior editors and writers in the areas of psychology, nursing, education, and business. The overall recommendations gained from those individuals greatly influenced the approach taken in planning this edition of the *Publication Manual*. For sharing their insights and suggestions, we thank Barney Beins, Geoff Cumming, Janet Shibley Hyde, Judy Nemes, Kathryn Riley, Henry Roediger III, Peter W. Schroth, Martha Storandt, and Sandra P. Thomas. On a related note, we are indebted to Linda Beebe and the PsycINFO staff for their invaluable guidance on how evolving technologies continue to affect the reading, storage, and retrieval of scholarly work.

To guide us in our commitment to provide sound and timely instruction on scientific reporting, we solicited comments from several APA boards and committees. We are grateful for recommendations received from the APA Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs; the APA Board of Scientific Affairs; the APA History Oversight Committee; the APA Committee on Disability Issues in Psychology; the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students; the APA Task Force on Gender Identity, Gender Variance, and Intersex Conditions; and the APA Committee on Socioeconomic Status.

Several writing instructors and coaches contacted us with suggestions for making APA Style more accessible for students. For taking the time to share their recommendations, we are most grateful to Dee Seligman, Wendy Packman, Scott Hines, Geeta Patangay, Mylea Charvat, and Jeff Zuckerman.

Last, we thank the APA Office of Publications and Databases staff for their many contributions to this edition, including Paige Jackson, Susan Herman, Annie Hill, Harriet Kaplan, Edward Porter, Shenyun Wu, Amy Pearson, Ron Teeter, Hal Warren, Beverly Jamison, Susan Harris, and Julia Frank-McNeil. Nora Kisch, Julianne Rovesti, Peter Gaviorno, and the entire sales and marketing team have worked tirelessly to inform the broad social science community about the new edition. We are particularly grateful to Jennifer Macomber for her skilled and meticulous care in shepherding the manuscript through production. Finally, we thank Anne Woodworth Gasque, who managed the process with ingenuity and grace, for her superb stewardship of this project.

*Mary Lynn Skutley*  
*Editorial Director, APA Books*

*Gary R. VandenBos, PhD*  
*Publisher, American Psychological Association*