

## ◆ SSF7: A Preview of the Next Edition of the CSE Style Manual

Moderator:

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Panelists:

**Karen Patrias**  
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**Jane Edwards**  
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**Gregory Shaner**  
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The sneak preview of the seventh edition of *Scientific Style and Format* lived up to its promise to present new recommendations on citing electronic resources, recent changes in the nomenclatural codes for organisms, and new guidelines for presenting genetic information.

Addressing a standing-room crowd, Style Manual Subcommittee Cochair Peggy Robinson opened with a brief history of the sixth edition, which was published in 1994 and was the first to have a wider scope of all sciences. That manual aimed at simplifying formats and style and reducing keyboard work. The seventh edition will continue to

have those goals and will contain new information or substantial revisions concerning general style of scientific reports, ethics in science and scientific communication, and the mechanics of publishing.

Karen Patrias described how to cite the Internet-published documents. The idea that the Internet is a new medium and therefore the old rules don't apply is a myth, said Patrias, as is the idea that a URL (with an average life of only 75 days) is all you need. Instead, Patrias emphasized that basic rules—including title and place of publication, corresponding author, publication date, and length—still apply. Internet citations do add unique problems, however. For example, there might be ambiguous or absent authors, absent dates, disappearing or changing site addresses (remember that 75-day URL), or changing date of publication. The list goes on, but the hard-working Style Manual Subcommittee hopes to clarify all in the seventh edition.

Major changes have been made in the chapters titled “Chromosomes, Genes, and Related Genetic Materials” and “Taxonomy and Nomenclature of Organisms”, which have been updated, reorganized, and expanded. The editor of the chapter on genetic materials, Jane Edwards, spoke of difficulties in distinguishing between different rules, or sometimes no rules, for genetic symbolization. Symbols might be unclear or inconsistent, or one will find “gene names” vs “gene symbols”. Edwards provided 14 rules for genetic symbolization and said that her role was “to find, collect, and summarize the rules, not to judge, change, or rearrange [them].”

Gregory Shaner then took us through the

new Chapter 22 (nomenclature of all life forms), pointing out that a uniform system of nomenclature is increasingly necessary. Chapter 22 will be organized thus: (1) species concept and background, (2) nomenclature across kingdoms, (3) nomenclature within kingdoms, and (4) plant and animal disease names.

In each group the chapter will name the governing body, matters of style and format for the group, subspecies, and cultivation lines or breeds.

Thor Kommedahl finished this segment by presenting a history of naming species, beginning with Linnaeus in the middle of the 18th century and carrying the idea through botanic, zoologic, bacteriologic, and virologic codes. For a more thorough discussion on this subject, see “Updates on Nomenclature of Viruses, Plants, and Animals” by Thor Kommedahl and Peggy Robinson, in *Science Editor* (May-June 2001; 24(3):86-7).

A question-and-answer period followed, leaving those who attended eagerly awaiting the expanded seventh edition of *Scientific Style and Format*, which is expected to be submitted and reviewed in the summer of 2002 (publication date not yet determined). If you have a correction or addition to the sixth edition that you'd like to see included in the seventh edition, now is the time to let the Style Manual Subcommittee know. Contact Peggy Robinson as soon as possible (but no later than December 2001) at 613-260-1852; fax 613-260-5696; e-mail [p-robinson@home.com](mailto:p-robinson@home.com). 