Editing in style: A style sheet for conforming to APA editorial style

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A computer program is reviewed that allows the creation of a file of formatting characteristics, a style sheet, for modifying the appearance of text. By applying different style sheets to a paper, the writer is able to change instantly the style of the paper. Most importantly, once a style sheet has been created, the writer need not be concerned with formatting, because the paper can be reformatted according to the predefined parameters contained in the style sheet. Both an unfinished style and a finished style sheet conforming to APA editorial style are provided as examples.

In preparing a paper for publication, an author goes through a number of stages. There may be a creative stage in which the emphasis is on the recording of ideas, followed by other stages that refine the material for purposes of communication. Word processing frees writers from much of the drudgery of writing and allows the individual to concentrate on the creative aspects of communication. However, one of the later stages in writing, the formatting of the textual material in a form suitable for publication, still requires a good deal of mechanical effort. Also, presentation of the text in a particular style may require substantial reediting of the paper if the style required is later changed or if there is another style in which the writer wants to present the paper.

This reediting of the text is not required if the style requirements can be set up as a file and then applied to the raw textual material in such a way as to allow the computer to perform the mechanical work of reformatting the text to a particular style. Thus, there can be styles for the input of text and styles to match the requirements of particular publications. This allows the writer to create material without regard to style considerations and later, without going through the tedious process of reediting the paper, to apply a particular style format. Furthermore, if the paper is not accepted and the writer wants to submit the piece to another publication with different style requirements, all that is necessary is to apply a different style format to the text.

This paper describes a word-processing program and two example style formats or sheets created by that program. One is for the creative input of text, and the other is for conforming to the style specified by the American Psychological Association (APA) *Publication Manual* (APA, 1983). This manual sets forth standards of style for formatting articles submitted for publication

in APA-controlled psychological journals; these style guidelines are adopted by many other journals.

Recently, in keeping with the explosion of word-processing equipment, one word-processing software company released an IBM-compatible program entitled *Microsoft Word* (Microsoft, 1983). This program has been thoroughly reviewed (cf., Alperson, 1983; Goldstein, 1983a, 1983b; Microsoft Word, 1983) and is considered to be superior to the current standard, *WordStar* (MicroPro, 1983). Unique to this program is a style sheet for formatting text; this style sheet is of interest to all writers, but especially to those who are writing papers according to stylistic guidelines set forth in the *APA Publication Manual* (APA, 1983).

The *Microsoft Word* program allows the writer to ignore the mechanical constraints of formatting style and to concentrate instead on clear and coherent communication. After finishing with the input of textual material, the writer can, without editing, reformat the entire paper by attaching a previously created style sheet that contains the rules and formatting of a particular style. The transformation is screen oriented so that the effect of the reformatting can be seen as it occurs. In particular, a writer might input material in such a way as to be able to ignore style constraints such as paragraph or page formats, and instead to maximize the amount of material on the screen for creative purposes. With the use of style sheets, these different considerations that arise in the process of writing can be accomplished easily and with little concern for the mechanics of style.

In using the *Microsoft Word* style sheets, a writer might first open a new file for her/his paper and then set forth as many ideas as possible without regard to the format. The only constraint to the entering of text is to denote the end of paragraphs by using the enter or return key. Later formatting with the application of a style sheet to the paper takes care of correctly formatting paragraphs as well as pages for printing. Table 1 is an illustration of a style sheet for the input of text in the

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Table 1
A Draft Style Sheet for the Input of Writing

1	Normal division a	
	Page break. Page length 11"; width 8.5". Folios Arabic. Top margin 1"; bottom 1"; left 1"; right 1". Top running head at 0.5". Bottom running head at 0.5". Footnotes at end.	
2	U Emphasis c	Underlined
	Pica (modern a) 12 Underlined.	
3	S Superscript 1	Provides Superscript
	Pica (modern a) 12 Superscript.	

creative stage that maximizes the amount of material visible on the screen at any one time. Having as much material as possible on the screen, in this case the text in single space, allows the reader easily to see the recently written material without resorting to scrolling.

After entering the raw material, the writer can proceed to the editing stage, to correct misspelling, rearrange the textual material, or even delete material. In any event, the writer, when finished with this stage, may wish to reformat the material so that it conforms to the finished style for submission to the editor. Of course, the writer can skip these intermediate steps and attach the finished style sheet before writing, which formats the text as it is entered and allows for the finished writing to appear properly formatted on the screen. No matter which procedure an individual writer uses in creating a finished paper, the ability to attach style sheets to the paper frees the individual from the mechanical constraints of style formatting and instead allows her/him the opportunity to concentrate on communicating and writing creatively.

To reformat the paper in the finished style, a formatted style sheet is attached to the material. Table 2 is an example of such a style sheet, as it appears in the "Gallery" section of the *Microsoft Word* program. This

sheet provides certain margins in the division section, a paragraph layout in the normal paragraph section, an alternative paragraph style required for abstracts, and a quotation style with variations for the two types of block paragraphs for quotations, all of which conform to APA editorial style. For headings, there are five styles that conform to the five different levels of headings required in the APA editorial style.

Most of the major formatting characteristics of the paper are applied automatically. For other formatting characteristics, the style sheet redefines some of the keys of the keyboard for individual formatting. For example, APA editorial style requires a block-indented flush-left paragraph for the first paragraph in an extended quotation, with the following paragraphs in the quotation having an indented first line. After the style sheet is attached to the text, all paragraphs appear as defined in "a normal paragraph" (cf., Table 2). To properly format the extended quotation, the writer scrolls down to that text, selects it, and then types several keys, prefaced by the "Alt." key, to properly format the material. The example file in Table 2 indicates that "Q1" will properly format the first paragraph of an extended quote, and "Q2" will format the remaining paragraphs of an extended quote. Similarly, the unindented paragraph for

Table 2
A Style Sheet for Conforming to APA Editorial Style

1	G Normal division a	Page Layout, APA Style
	No break. Page length 11"; width 8.5". Folios Arabic. Top margin 1"; bottom 1.5"; left 1.5"; right 1.5". Top running head at 0.5". Bottom running head at 0.5". Footnotes at end.	
2	P Normal paragraph	General Text, Double Space
	Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left (first line indent 0.42").	
3	A Other paragraph a	Abstract Style
	Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left.	
4	E Other character a	Elite, 12 Characters Per In.
	Elite (modern c) 10.	
5	H1 Heading 1	Level 1 Heading
	Elite (modern c) 10/24 Uppercase. Centered.	
6	H2 Heading 2	Level 2 Heading
	Elite (modern c) 10/24. Centered.	

Table 2 Continued

7	H3	Heading 3	Level 3 Heading
		Elite (modern c) 10/24 Underlined. Centered.	
8	H4	Heading 4	Level 4 Heading
		Elite (modern c) 10/24 Underlined. Flush left.	
9	H5	Heading 5	Level 5 Heading
		Elite (modern c) 10/24 Underlined. Flush left (first line indent 0.42").	
10	U	Emphasis c	Underlined
		Elite (modern c) 10 Underlined.	
11	S	Superscript 1	Provides Superscript
		Elite (modern c) 10 Superscript.	
12	F	Footnote a	Footnote
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left (first line indent 0.42").	
13	R	Author a	Reference List
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left, Left indent 0.25" (first line indent -0.25").	
14	Q1	Quotation a	Blocked First Paragraph
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left, Left indent 0.42".	
15	Q2	Quotation b	Following Paragraphs
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left, Left indent 0.42" (first line indent 0.42").	
16	L	Running head 1	Short Title Label
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush right, right indent 1.5".	
17	T1	Table 1	Columns: One
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 3" (dec. aligned).	
18	T2	Table 2	Columns: Two
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (dec. aligned), 4" (dec. aligned).	
19	T3	Table 3	Columns: Three
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (dec. aligned), 3" (dec. aligned), 4" (dec. aligned).	
20	T4	Table 4	Columns: Four
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (dec. aligned), 2.75" (dec. aligned), 3.5" (dec. aligned), 4.25" (dec. aligned).	
21	T5	Table 5	Columns: Five
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (dec. aligned), 2.75" (dec. aligned), 3.5" (dec. aligned), 4.25" (dec. aligned), 5" (dec. aligned).	
22	T6	Table 6	Columns: Six
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (dec. aligned), 2.5" (dec. aligned), 3" (dec. aligned), 3.5" (dec. aligned), 4" (dec. aligned), 4.5" (dec. aligned).	
23	T7	Table 7	Columns: Seven
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (dec. aligned), 2.5" (dec. aligned), 3" (dec. aligned), 3.5" (dec. aligned), 4" (dec. aligned), 4.5" (dec. aligned), 5" (dec. aligned).	
24	T8	Table 8	Columns: Eight
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 1.5" (dec. aligned), 2" (dec. aligned), 2.5" (dec. aligned), 3" (dec. aligned), 3.5" (dec. aligned), 4" (dec. aligned), 4.5" (dec. aligned), 5" (dec. aligned).	
25	TA	Table a	Heading: One
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 3" (centered).	
26	TB	Table b	Heading: Two
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (centered), 4" (centered).	
27	TC	Table c	Heading: Three
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (centered), 3" (centered), 4" (centered).	
28	TD	Table d	Heading: Four
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (centered), 2.75" (centered), 3.5" (centered), 4.25" (centered).	

Table 2 Continued

29	TE	Table e	Heading: Five
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (centered), 2.75" (centered), 3.5" (centered), 4.25" (centered), 5" (centered).	
30	TF	Table f	Heading: Six
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (centered), 2.5" (centered), 3" (centered), 3.5" (centered), 4" (centered), 4.5" (centered).	
31	TG	Table g	Heading: Seven
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 2" (centered), 2.5" (centered), 3" (centered), 3.5" (centered), 4" (centered), 4.5" (centered), 5" (centered).	
32	TH	Table h	Heading: Eight
		Elite (modern c) 10/24. Flush left. Tabs at: 1.5" (centered), 2" (centered), 2.5" (centered), 3" (centered), 3.5" (centered), 4" (centered), 4.5" (centered), 5" (centered).	

the abstract is formatted with the touch of the "A" key. Table 2 also illustrates a running-head format for formatting the short title used to label sheets for submission for publication.

The writer types each reference as a paragraph, and then, after attaching the style sheet, selects all of the references and attaches the reference style by pressing the "R" key. As an alternative, the reference style can be attached first; then each reference as it is typed automatically conforms to APA editorial style and appears on the screen correctly formatted. For the creation of tables, there are different table commands that depend upon whether the writer is typing table headings, with the headings centered around the tab column, or the contents of a table, with the entry aligned on the decimal. Each variation of table command creates a different number of tab stops to aid in the preparation of tables with different numbers of columns. Finally, there is a footnote section that formats footnotes. Although the individual writer might wish to modify this particular style sheet, it conforms to APA editorial style and creates a properly formatted paper.

This style sheet, in conjunction with the *Microsoft Word* program, has been used for the submission of a number of articles, including the present one, and for the preparation of tables. Other style sheets or files can be created rather easily with this word-processing program. It is also possible to take the material contained in Table 2 and apply it to other word-processing programs in conjunction with a macroeditor to create formatting parameters that comply with the requirements of APA editorial style.

SUMMARY

In using this program with the sample style sheet, the writer can ignore the mechanical constraints inherent in formatting a paper and concentrate instead on the writing of the paper. Although the instant example of style sheets is applicable only to the program *Microsoft*

Word, the relative ease of creating and modifying style sheets makes this program worthwhile for writers wishing to conform to the APA editorial style. It should be relatively simple to take the example file sheets of Tables 1 and 2 and create style sheets or files for formatting in accord with APA editorial style. Then, at some later time, but without editing, the writer can attach her/his style sheet to the paper and change the appearance of the paper instantly. If that particular appearance does not meet with the writer's approval, another style sheet can be attached, again without editing the manuscript. This program and the style sheet should be very valuable to individuals wishing to comply with style requirements but not wishing to become enslaved by the requirements. Organizations such as psychology departments will find this program useful in creating manuscripts that meet APA editorial style and in creating other style sheets for internal reports, graduate papers, and other papers requiring a particular style.

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