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Ooligan's Style Guide

At Ooligan Press, we strive to publish the very best version of each book we acquire, retaining each author's unique vision, voice, and writing style. We help authors express their views and ideas in ways that intrigue readers and capture their attention. With each book, we balance our knowledge as editors with the issues and guidelines specific to the project. That said, we maintain that each book project must follow a distinct set of stylistic guidelines. No single style guide is all-inclusive. The Ooligan Press Style Guide outlines the basics of our house style, but each book project will have its own special style preferences, exceptions, and guiding principles.

Ooligan Press uses the following reference materials to guide style choices:

[*The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition \(University of Chicago Press, 2017\)](#)

[*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition \(2004\)](#)

While not strictly followed, we also use these reference materials:

The Elements of Style by William Strunk, Jr. & E. B. White (MacMillan Publishing Co., 2000)

Fowler's Modern English Usage by H. W. Fowler (Oxford University Press, 2004)

Note to editors: Each book project should have its own style sheet to be used during the editing and design process, then archived with the manuscript for future reference. A blank style sheet is available on the [Editorial Trello card](#).

Abbreviations

Abbreviations are covered in depth in *CMOS* Chapter 10.

Lesser-known abbreviations should be spelled out in their first appearance in the text, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. (*CMOS* [10.3](#))

In cases where the meaning of an abbreviation is commonly known (e.g., DNA), it is not required to spell it out. (*CMOS* [10.3](#))

Usage rather than logic determines whether abbreviations other than those standing for proper names are given in upper or lowercase letters. Noun forms are usually uppercase (HIV, VP), and adverbial forms are usually lowercase (rpm, mpg). Acronyms, especially those of five or more letters, tend to become lowercase with frequent use (NAFTA/Nafta, WASP/Wasp). (*CMOS* [10.6](#))

Abbreviations of all lowercase letters should appear with either a period at the end or with periods separating the letters, while those in capital letters or small caps should not be punctuated with periods. (*CMOS* [10.4](#))

Initialisms, which are read as a series of letters, are often preceded by a definite article (“member nations of the EU”). Whether to include the article may depend on established usage. For example, one would refer to the NBA and the NAACP, but to W3C, PBS, and NATO—though all these organizations include the definite article in spelled-out form. If no established usage can be determined, use the definite article if it would be used with the spelled-out form. (*CMOS* [10.9](#))

A civil or military title preceding a full name may be abbreviated. When preceding a surname, the title should be spelled out (e.g., Lt. Col. Henry Dixon, President Kennedy). Social titles are always abbreviated (e.g., Dr. Livingston, Mrs. Jones). (*CMOS* 10.11–21)

The use of US as a noun is permitted, subject to editorial discretion and provided the meaning is clear from the context. (*CMOS* [10.32](#))

Ooligan's Conscious Style Guide

This guide is meant to serve as a supplement to our style guide. It contains resources and guidelines for consciously editing language around race, gender, sexuality, disability, and other potentially sensitive topics that may arise in Ooligan manuscripts. None of these guidelines should be taken as hard-and-fast rules that can be applied the same way in all cases: every manuscript is different, and there may not be a clear “right” way to word something. The key requirement of conscious writing and conscious editing is that they be done *consciously*. This means that words should be chosen thoughtfully and with an eye toward how the writing will be perceived by readers from a variety of backgrounds.

Ooligan editors are not expected to be subject-matter experts; rather, when editing manuscripts that engage with any of the topics addressed in this guide, editors should consult the appropriate resources to help them determine whether these manuscripts contain language that may be inaccurate, out of date, or unduly inflammatory or offensive.

The author’s background and intentions should be key considerations throughout the editorial process. Sometimes writers use inflammatory or controversial language intentionally; sometimes they do so unwittingly. While authors generally have the final say in regards to the words that appear in their books (and they can disregard editorial advice if they choose), it is the editor’s responsibility to bring potential sensitivity concerns to the author’s attention in a tactful way. If an editor is unsure about how to word a query or otherwise address a sensitivity issue, they can consult with the manuscript’s managing editor.

Language and resources are always changing and evolving, and this guide is, therefore, a living document that should be updated whenever necessary. If you would like to propose making a change to the guide or adding a new section, resource, or guideline—or if you notice that any links are broken or out of date—please contact the current Managing Editor (editing@ooliganpress.pdx.edu) or Copy Chief (copychief@ooliganpress.pdx.edu).

Ability and Disability

Resources

[Disability in Kidlit: Introduction to Disability Terminology](#)

[NCDJ Disability Language Style Guide](#)

[Autistic Hoya: Glossary of Ableist Phrases](#)

[CDC: Communicating with and about People with Disabilities](#)

Things to Keep in Mind

Deaf/deaf: Capitalized when referring to the Deaf community or a member thereof; lowercase when referring to a hearing-loss condition.

Avoid implying that some disabilities are better or worse than others.

Avoid these words and descriptions:

Confined/bound to a wheelchair

Cripple/crippled (note that the word *Crip* has been reclaimed by some people with disabilities.)

Deformed/deformity: It is better to describe the specific condition or appearance.

Invalid

Freak

Abnormal/abnormality

Afflicted with/stricken with/suffers from/victim of

Differently-abled, different abilities, diffability: Some consider this language condescending, offensive, or evasive—as some advocates observe, we are *all* differently-abled, which renders such terms meaningless. However, others prefer these terms to *disabled* or *disability* because they sound less negative.

Handicap(ped)/handicapable

Lame

Suffers from ____

Harelip

Hearing-impaired/hearing impairment: The World Federation of the Deaf has taken the stance that *hearing impaired* is no longer an acceptable term.

Mentally retarded/retard/mental retardation: These terms were once common but are now considered outdated and offensive.

Mongoloid: Always avoid the use of this term when referring to someone with Down syndrome.