

[My 'top 5' are Gowers, Strunk & White, Booth Colomb & Williams, Le Guin & King, DH, 7th May 2003]

Writin' and Reportin' with Rigour
(a bibliography)

The findings suggest in unequivocal terms...¹

In written English, denying an initial capital to ethnic minorities...
has often been correlated with disparagement of them.
It was at the height of anti-semitism that the Jews lost their capital J².

What I had was gold, if I had enough sense not to gild it.
(Norman Mailer³)

The last thing one knows when writing a book is what to put first.
Pascal's *Pensees* (1670)

There are three major tasks in writing. First, to find words to express yourself; secondly, to communicate these words to a third party (your audience); and finally, to communicate what you want to say in a form that your audience finds acceptable, authoritative and persuasive. Above all, academic writing should be regarded as a form of communication, not as an instance of expression. Note: a Bibliography is not a reading list; nor is it the same as a citation list

Bell, J. *Doing your research project*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993. A recommended text for Open University Students.

BS 4821:1972 British Standard on thesis presentation. Interesting but out of date.

Collinson, D., Kirkup, G., Kyd, R. & Slocombe, L. *Plain English*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1992. The standard work for Open University students.

Fairbairn, G.J. & Winch, C. *Reading, writing and reasoning*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1991. Good on writing as a form of argumentation.

Gowers, E. *The complete plain words*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964. A major section on 'the choice of words'; valuable sections on grammar and punctuation.

Hart's rules for compositors and readers at the Oxford University Press (39th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983. Good source for spellings, abbreviations, capitalisation, foreign words.

Miles, J. *Design for desktop publishing*. London: Gordon Fraser 1988. A good introductory source to typesetting conventions as they apply to wordprocessing.

¹ N. Entwistle, in N. Bennett, *Teaching styles and pupil progress*. London: Open Books, 1976, p. x-xi.

² Letter, *Times Higher Education Supplement*, 22nd November, 1993.

³ Included in L. Menard's review of Mailer's *The Time of Our Lives*, *New York Review of Books*, October 22, 1998.

- Phillips, E. & Pugh, D.S. *How to get a Ph.D.* Buckingham: Open University Press, 1994. Includes sections on 'how not to get a Ph.D.' and 'how to manage your supervisor'.
- Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (4th ed.). Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 1983. Standard reference for US education journals. Includes convention for referencing electronic publications.
- Rudestam, K.E. & Newton, R.R. *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process.* London: Sage, 1992. Written for US students but, like Phillips & Pugh (1994), good on the emotional side of writing and research.
- Style book.* London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 1978. Worth consulting, particularly if you are doing a history dissertation.
- Turabian, K.L. *A manual for writers of term papers, theses, and dissertations* (5th ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. Detailed source - even a section on the alphabetization of Arabic and Chinese names.
- Walker, R. *Doing research: A handbook for teachers.* London: Methuen, 1985. Written for a specific audience: 'those teachers who attend courses which include an element of applied research' (p.1).
- Williamson, H. *Methods of book design.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983. Fascinating volume written by someone who began work in a professional milieu that Gutenberg would recognise; but who ended up working in the realm of computerised type-setting and book design.
- Butcher, J. *Copy-editing: The Cambridge handbook* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981. Copy-editing relates to the preparation of a manuscript for typesetting (e.g. headings, end/footnotes, quotations, tables, even spelling).
- The Chicago manual of style* (13th ed.). Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981. Exhaustive handbook for 'authors, editors and copywriters'.
- Gibaldi, J. & Achtert, W.S. *MLA handbook for writers of research papers* (3rd ed.). New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1988. Good, for example, on plagiarism (a serious university offence).
- Waterhouse, K. *Waterhouse on Newspaper Style.* London: Penguin, 1993.
- Waterhouse, K. *English our English.* London: Penguin, 1994. One of the best books on writing correct English. An excellent complement to Gowers' *The Complete Plain Words*.
- Keeble, R. *The newspaper handbook.* London Routledge, 1994. Written by a journalist (like Waterhouse). Helpful in writing clear, concise prose.
- Luey, B. *Handbook for academic authors.* (3rd. ed.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (I have not seen this text.)
- Luey, B. & Gorman, K. *Editing documents and texts: an annotated bibliography.* Madison: Madison House, 1990. (I have not seen this text.)

- Stake, R.E. *The art of case study research*. London: Sage, 1995. Includes a case study report and a series of marginal comments to explain its content, form and purpose.
- Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., & Tight, M. *How to Research*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1996. Good general introduction to all aspects of research at the masters' level.
- Chamber's Biographical Dictionary*. London: Chambers, 1961. Invaluable source on births, deaths, publications etc.
- Latour, B. *Science in Action*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987. Chapter one discusses, among other things, 'writing texts that withstand the assault of a hostile environment'.
- Benedict, E. *The Joy of Writing Sex*. Cincinnati: Story Press, 1996. I have not seen this text. On paper, it is likely to be a good way to check the difference between a thesis and other forms of writing. According to the advertisement, it 'answers all the questions you were afraid to ask'.
- Lodge, D., *The Practice of Writing*. New York: Penguin, 1997. (I have not seen this text.)
- Mills. P. *Writing in Action: A resource book for writers*. London: Routledge. (I have not seen this text.)
- Ely, M. *et al. On writing qualitative research*. London: Falmer, 1997. An excellent review of the craft of writing.
- R. Berry. *The Research Project* (3rd Ed.) London: Routledge, 1994. Useful for students in the history of education.
- Salmon, P. *Achieving a PhD: The student experience*. Stoke: Trentham Books, 1992. Informative account of the experiences of a group of mature social science students. Unfortunately, however, written before increased pressure to raise completion rates.
- Cryer, P. *The Research Students' guide to success*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1996. Good source of ideas and consolation. Has a chapter on 'interaction with your supervisor', and a short piece on music to play while writing a thesis.
- Delamont, S. Atkinson, P. Parry, O. *Supervising the PhD: A guide to success*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1997. Written for supervisors, but also full of advice for students.
- Collinson, D., Krikup, G., Kyd, R., & Slocombe, L. *Plain English* (2nd ed.). Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993. Based on a set of workbooks created in the Open University (UK), this volume can be seen as a follow up to Gowers (1964). It contains exercises that may also be useful for students whose first language is not English.
- Booth, W.C., Colomb, G.G., & Williams, J.M. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995. This excellent book, written by professors of English, focuses on communication; that is, the reporting of research. Its chapters include 'connecting with your reader', 'making good arguments', 'warrants [the connection between claim and evidence]',

'revising your organization and argument' and 'intruductions'. If required to teach a 'methods' course on writing, this would be my text.

- King, S. (2000) *On Writing: A memoir of the Craft*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. A good book which looks back, for instance, to one of the best books on writing, W. Strunk Jr. And E.B. White's *The Elements of Style*. (New York: Macmillan, 1959) and its essential message: 'omit needless words'.
- Rose, M. & McClafferty, Karen A. (2001) A call for the teaching of writing in graduate education. *Educational Researcher*, 20, (March), 27-32. Useful bibliography.
- Becker, H.S: (1986) *Writing for Social Scientists: How to start and finish your thesis, book or article*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Rose & McClafferty (2001) suggest that this work is an 'exception' to the general absence of 'professional discussion of what we can do to help our students write more effectively' (p. 27).
- Leonard, Diana (2001) *A Woman's Guide to Doctoral Studies*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
A reflective analysis that has some relevant material.
- Timothy Garton Ash (2002) On the frontier. *New York Review of Books*, vol. 49, no. 17 (Nov. 7th).
A short article on 'witness literature' which Ash distinguishes from 'literature of fact'. (The article will appear in H. Engdahl (ed.), *Witness Literature*, Singapore: Scientific World Publishing).
- Ursular K. Le Guin, (1998) *Steering the Craft: Exercises and discussions on story telling for the lone navigator or the mutinous crew*. Portland, Oregon: Eighth Mountain Press.
An excellent discussion of 'points of view' and various parts of speech. Acknowledges, like Stephen King, the pioneering work of Strunk & White.
- Reeves, J. (2002). *Writing Alone, Writing together: A guide for writers and writing groups*. Novato, CA: New World Library.
Contains some excellent quotations and maxims about writing (e.g. 'a writer is someone who writes')

Websites

Fight the Fog <http://europa.eu.int/comm/translation/en/ftfog/index.htm>

Plain English Commission www.clearest.co.uk

Clarity www.clarity-international.net