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Boilerplates

To come! How the ASA communicates itself to broader audiences ...

Editorial Style Guidelines

Citation Style

The ASA website follows *American Quarterly* in adopting the Chicago Manual as its style. See - www.chicagomanualofstyle.org

The American Studies Association vs. ASA – and *association*

With first mention, spell out the American Studies Association. On successive mentions, use the ASA. Alternatively, *the association* can be used. In this case, association isn't capitalized.

The ASA vs. ASA Events

When referring to the ASA as an entity, organization, or proper noun, it should always be preceded by a definite article—i.e., the ASA. When ASA modifies another noun, drop the article—i.e., ASA Events, not the ASA Events.

The American Studies Association vs. American studies

When *American Studies* acts as a stable object or proper noun, as with the American Studies Association, capitalize “studies.” When *American studies* describes a field, “studies” isn't capitalized.

This applies to:

- American studies
- African American studies
- Asian American studies
- transnational American studies, etc.

2017 Annual Meeting vs. annual meeting

When referring to a specific annual meeting—i.e., the Denver Annual Meeting or 2017 Annual Meeting—*Annual Meeting* should be capitalized. When referring to more generally to the yearly program as an ongoing aspect of the ASA, *annual meeting* is not capitalized.

2015 White Papers vs. white papers

When referring to white papers as a general kind of publication, do not capitalize *white papers*. When referring directly to the *2015 White Papers*, capitalize.

Use of “We”

Use the 1st person plural with purpose. “We” and “us” work for clear call-to-actions: Contact Us. Outside of clear call-to-actions, use the 1st person plural when inviting others to join the membership in direct activities, actions, events, and engagements.

Acronyms

Spell out all abbreviations and acronyms on first reference; include the abbreviation or acronym in parentheses immediately following the full spelling if you will use it later on the same page. Exceptions: the ASA, the U.S., etc.

Bulleted Lists

List items should be grammatically parallel. Initial cap the first word of each item. Use terminal punctuation for all items if any single item is a complete sentence. Do not use semicolons after list items.

Numbered Lists

Use numbered lists in cases when the content refers to a set number of elements (or a series of elements). Similar to bulleted lists, use terminal punctuation for all items if any single item is a complete sentence. Do not use semicolons after list items.

Headings

Use initial caps or title case in headings, except articles, conjunctions, and prepositions of up to four letters. Avoid using more than three levels of headings. Do not skip heading levels—e.g., using a Heading 1 followed by a Heading 3. Do not number subheads.

Charts, Figures

Use lowercase when referring in text to “figure 1,” “part 5,” etc.

Numbers

Always spell out numbers that begin a sentence. In general, spell out numbers one through ninety-nine (if local consistency or ease of comparison requires, break this rule). Exceptions include ages, currencies, and percentages. For example: \$5,000, \$5 million, 25 percent, etc. Additionally, in cases where

designating US currency is needed, use US\$25. Use a comma for 4-digit numbers, except dates, page numbers, serial numbers, etc.

Time and Dates

8 a.m., eight o'clock, eight in the morning

Decades: 1920s, mid-1920s, twenties, midtwenties ('60s, '70s okay if century is clear but not preferred style). Additionally, centuries should appear with the number spelled out and not capitalized: nineteenth century, not 19th Century. When centuries appear as an adjective—e.g., nineteenth-century parlance—hyphenate the compound.

Compound Words

For compound words follow *Merriam Webster* 11 and *CMS* 15 (closed style preferred for words such as countersubversion, bureauwide, anticlericalism, and so on).

Punctuation

- Commas: Use the serial comma or Oxford comma—i.e., blue, green, and orange.
- Dashes: Use em dashes to indicate asides or abrupt changes in thought. Use en dashes with numerical ranges. (Exception: K-12.) Do not include a space before or after a dash.

Typographical Styles Notes

- When a word or term is referred to as the word or term itself, prefer italics: “the word *word* . . .”
- Use small caps for AD and BC. Also, note - no periods.
- No periods with PhD, MA, etc. (per *CMS* 15)
- Follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* for formation of possessives: e.g., Jones’s (*but* Euripides’).
- No commas around Jr., Sr., etc., per *CMS* 15: James Smith Jr.

United States

Spell out “United States” when using it as a noun. Abbreviate it as “U.S.” (including periods) when using it as an adjective.

Foreign words

Follow *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed., for spelling, hyphenation, and italicization of foreign-language words. Non-English words that are not in *Webster’s* are italicized throughout, not just at first occurrence.

URLs

Do not include “http://” in URLs. Render website addresses like this: www.theasa.org. Never hyphenate a URL at the end of a line. If unavoidable, break after a slash.

Content Entry CMS Guidelines

Links

For external links and for PDFs or other document files, create links to target a new (or_blank) window.

Heading format

Always use heading formats in their proper sequence—H2, H3, H4—as this impacts accessibility and search engine optimization. Never use H1 as that header is reserved for the page title.

Alt text for images

Always add descriptive content to the “alternate text” field for images, as this impacts accessibility.

Buttons

Button styles are reserved for user engagement or member actions that relate to key functions for the ASA. Examples: Register, Collaborate for a Panel, Become a Member, Renew.

Introductory style

Reserve introductory style for the lead paragraph of pages that extend beyond two scrolls, if the paragraph is written to orient users to the content on the page—i.e., as a kind of topic overview.

Horizontal rule

Limit uses of a horizontal rule to pages that have anchor links or for extensive directions that involve directing the user or member away from the ASA website to complete their action—as with submitting a proposal via All Academic.

Accessibility Guidelines

The following borrows from the World Wide Web Consortium's 2012 statement on accessibility. "How People with Disabilities Use the Web." Shadi Abou-Zahra, ed. Copyright © 2012 W3C® (MIT, ERCIM, Keio). Status: Draft Updated 1 August 2012. <http://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/people-use-web/Overview>

Guidelines for Content Development

Users can easily navigate, find content, and determine where they are.

- Pages have clear titles and are organized using descriptive section headings.
- There is more than one way to find relevant pages within a set of web pages.
- Users are informed about their current location within a set of related pages.
- There are ways to bypass blocks of content that are repeated on multiple pages.
- The keyboard focus is visible and the focus order follows a meaningful sequence.
- The purpose of a link is clear, ideally even when the link is viewed on its own.

Text is readable and understandable.

- Provide definitions for any unusual words, phrases, idioms, and abbreviations.
- Use the clearest and simplest language possible, or providing simplified versions.

Multimedia content format is accessible.

- Text transcripts and captions of audio content, such as recordings of people speaking
- Audio descriptions, which are narrations to describe important visual details in a video
- Sign language interpretation of audio content, including relevant auditory experiences

Guidelines for Content Upload and User Acceptance Testing

Provide text alternatives for non-text content.

- Use short equivalents for images, including icons, buttons, and graphics.
- Provide descriptions of data represented on charts, diagrams, and illustrations.
- Provide brief descriptions of non-text content, such as audio and video files.
- Apply labels for form controls, input, and other user interface components

Help users to avoid and correct mistakes.

- Provide descriptive instructions, error messages, and suggestions for correction.
- Give context-sensitive help for more complex functionality and interaction.

Guidelines for Site Design and Configuration

Functionality is made available for a keyboard.

- Ensure that all functionality that is available by mouse is also available by keyboard.

- Keyboard focus should not get trapped in any part of the content.
- Browsers, authoring tools, and other tools provide keyboard support.

Make sure content is easier to see and hear.

- Color is not used as the only way of conveying information or identifying content.
- Default foreground and background color combinations provide sufficient contrast.
- Text is resizable up to 200% without losing information, using a standard browser.
- Images of text are resizable, replaced with actual text, or avoided where possible.
- Users can pause, stop, or adjust the volume of audio that is played on a website.
- Background audio is low, or can be turned off, to avoid interference or distraction.

Make sure content appears and operates in predictable ways.

- Navigation mechanisms that are repeated on multiple pages should appear in the same place each time.
- User interface components that are repeated on web pages should have the same labelling each time.
- Significant changes on a web page do not happen without the consent of the user.
- Users have the opportunity to review, correct, or reverse submissions if necessary.

Content should be able to be presented in different ways.

- Headings, lists, tables, and other structures in the content are marked-up properly.
- The primary language is identified by a language attribute on the html tag.
- Sequences of information or instructions are independent of any presentation.
- Browsers and assistive technologies provide settings to customize the presentation.

Ensure that content is compatible with current and future user tools

- Ensuring markup can be reliably interpreted, for instance by ensuring it is valid
- Providing a name, role, and value for non-standard user interface components

General Tips for Online Writing

Write for the medium.

Keep user expectations in mind—and incorporate these considerations when crafting online content.

- The first question to ask when approaching a page: *Where have users likely come from?*
- A good second question to ask is: *Where might they want to go from here?*

Last year, people spent an average of two minutes on the ASA website—and within those 120 seconds, they visited an average of 2.5 pages. Less than a minute per page is most users' bandwidth.

Scanning is how we take in information online.

- Keep to one idea per paragraph.
- Make things interesting: vary sentence structure, punctuation, and paragraph length.
- Topic sentences are crucial. Online readers often “bump” the first line of a paragraph with their eyes and jump down to the next.
- Subheads matter. They make points stand out—and they break down a long scrolling page into something more manageable. If a page has more than 6-8 paragraphs, consider a subhead.
- Links are visual: they pop on the page. Like conventional citations, readers can grasp a topic and its treatment by seeing what's linked.
 - Capitalize on links by matching the hyperlinked text to the page you're referring to users—i.e., Read more about [proposal submission guidelines](#).
 - For accessibility, maintain a consistent format for links. “Read more” or “Visit” are standard leads for links. If “click here” is used, be sure to anchor the link to the information or page name, not “click here” (which won't help users visually survey the page).

Be clear, concise, and direct.

Clear writing doesn't mean dumbed-down writing. Clear writing makes complex ideas easier to consider, and it doesn't require the reader to first work to understand the ideas (which online readers rarely do). Writing succinctly is also more difficult: it takes longer to write something shorter.

Some strategies for condensing content:

- Ask how you might conversationally convey the same thought in-person to a colleague.
- When in doubt, count the verbs. If there are more than three verbs in a sentence, break it down.
- Look out for helping verbs. Cutting “trying to” or “helping to” can sharpen your focus.
- Keep an active voice. In many cases, it eases comprehension.
- Look for unnecessary adverbs, adjectives, or other modifiers.
- Smart punctuation can tighten a turn of phrase; it brings ideas forward with precision and clarity.

American Quarterly Terms List

A

aboveground
absentmindedly
abstract expressionism
Abu Ghraib
the administration, the Carter administration
African American
aforementioned
airplay
Al Jazeera
all-out (adj)
Al Qaeda
American Civil War
American studies
ancien régime *but* Old Regime
anglicize
Anglophile, -phone
anti-abolitionist
anti-Catholicism
anticapitalist
anticolonial
anticommunist
antidemocratic
antifascist
anti-lynching activist
anti-oedipal
antiremoval
antislavery
antiunion
apiece (adv)
art form
artifact
Auburn System
avant-garde (n, adj)

B

baby boomer
backbreaking
backstory
backwater
battlefront
battle line
best seller (n)
best-selling (adj)
bioarchitectural
biracial
black (or Black, if author prefers)
Black Arts Movement (or black arts movement, if author prefers)
Black Atlantic
black heritage
black nationalism
blacklisted
Black Marxism
Black Panther Party
Black Power movement
Black Protestant Project
Black Youth Empowerment Project
blind spot
bloodline
blueprint

B movie
boardinghouse
build up (vt)
buildup (n)
built-up (adj)
buyouts
buzzword
by-product

C

camp
caregiver
Cartesian
cartoonlike
caseworker
catch-22
cease-fire (n)
cha-cha-chá
checklist
check mark (n)
checkmark (v)
checkout (n)
checkpoint
cherry-pick (v)
Chicago school
childbearing
child care
childlike
child rearing
Chinese massacre of 1871
church, *but* St. John's Catholic Church
citywide
civil rights movement
clear-cut (n, adj)
clearinghouse
cliché
close-up (n)
clothesline
coauthor
cochair
co-congregant
co-conspirator
Code Noir
codex
coeditor
coexist
codefendant
cofounder
Cold War
color-blind (adj)
color blindness (n)
common sense (n)
commonsense (adj)
Communion (sacrament)
communism, -st (ideology)
Communist (of or having to do with the party)
congressional
contra (prep)
cooperate
co-opt
co-optation
copublisher

coreligionist
counterhegemonic
counterhistorical
the court, unless Supreme Court, then the Court
co-worker
co-writer
Creole
crosscutting
cross fire
cross-gender
crossroads
crybaby
culture maker
cutout (n, adj)

D

Dada, -ism, -ist
dead end (n)
dead-end (adj)
decision making
decision-making (adj)
deep South
de jure
Democratic Party, the party
denaturalizing
Department of English, English department
depoliticization
deregulation
die-hard (adj)
diehard (n)
double bind (n)
Du Bois, W. E. B.

E

early modern
the East; East Asia; Eastern cultures *but* eastern seaboard; easterner
East Los Angeles
Eastern Hemisphere
Edenic
e-mail
emancipation
Emancipation (as a specific historical event)
émigré
emplotting
ensure (make sure)
Epicurean
Equal Rights Amendment
ethnic studies
everlasting
Euro-American or Euroamerican
ex nihilo

F

face-to-face (adv, adj)
far-fetched
farmworker
fault line
fellow traveler

field-test (v)
field test (n)
fieldwork
field-worker
filmmaker
filmstrip
fine-tune (v)
firebreak
firefighter
First Amendment
firsthand
First of August (celebration), the First
Five Year Plan
folklore
folk song
folktale
Foucauldian
Fourth of July, the Fourth, July Fourth
Francophile, -phone
Frankfurt school
freedman, freedpeople
freestanding
frontline (adj)
front man
full time (n)
full-time (adj)
full-timer
fundraiser (n)
fundraising (n)

G

gangbanging, gangbanger
gender studies
global North
global South
globe-trotter, globe-trotting
grass roots (n)
grassroots (adj)
great-grandmother
groundbreaking
Gulf Coast, Louisiana Gulf Coast,
Louisiana and Mississippi Gulf Coasts
Gulf War

H

half-deck (n)
halfhearted
Halttunen
hand in hand (adv)
hand-in-hand (adj)
handmade
hand to hand (adv)
hand-to-hand (adj)
handwritten
hard-core (adj)
hard core (n)
hardheadedness
hard-heartedness
headhunting (n, adj)
head shots
health care
highbrow
hip-hop
Hispanicized
home builder

home buyers
the home front
homegrown (adj)
home owners
housekeeper

I

impressionism, -ist
in-between
indigenous (or Indigenous, if author
prefers)
in-migration
insure (underwrite)
Internet
interracial

J

jump-start (vt)
jump start (n)

L

landowner
late nineteenth century (n)
late nineteenth-century (adj)
lavender scare
the Left, the Far Left, the left wing
life force
life-form
lifeline
lifelong
lifestyle
lifeworld
like-minded (adj)
Listserv
long-standing (adj)
long-term (adj)
longtime
Los Angeles City Council, the city council
lowrider
lovemaking

M

manifest destiny or Manifest Destiny
man-made, human-made (adj)
Mass (service)
memory-image
metaphorical
Mexican Revolution, the revolution
micromanagement
midcentury
middle class (n)
middle-class (adj)
Middle Passage
midsixties (age)
mid-twentieth century (n)
mid-twentieth-century (adj)
the Midwest, midwestern,
midwesterner
millwork
mind-set
mine worker
modern-day (adj)
monied or moneyed
monolingual

multifaceted
multigenerational
multilayered
multimedia
multinational
multipronged
multiracial
mythmakers

N

naive
naively
naïveté
nation building (n)
nation-state
native (or Native, if author prefers)
natural-born (adj)
neoconfederate
neoconservative
neofascist
neo-Gothic
New Democrat
New World
New-York Historical Society
nightclub
no-man's-land
nonadaptive
noncomparable
nondiachronic
nonfiction
nongovernmental
nonindigenous
nonprofessional
nonprofit
nonquantitative
nonspecialist
nonunion
nonwhite
the Northeast
northeastern
northern, northerner
Northern, Northerner (in Civil War
contexts)
the Northwest
northwestern

O

officeholder
offshoot
offshore
offspring
Old Regime *but* ancien régime
Old World
online
onshore
open-ended
orientalism, -ist
other
out-migration

P

pace (prep)
panindigenous
Panopticon
pantribal

pathbreaking
peacebuilder
peacemaker
the Pentagon
photo-essay
place-name
plotline
point-blank (adj/adv)
policymaker
policymaking
pop art
Popular Front
postcolonial (adj)
post-emancipation
postindependence (adj)
postmodern
postmodernity
postnationalist
post-race
postracial
postslavery
poststructuralism, -ist
postwar
precontact
predate
preemptively
preestablished
preexisting
preindustrial
premodern
pre-oedipal
Pre-Raphaelite
prerevolutionary
pretest
Progressive Era
pro-choice
proindustrial
pro-life
promarket
pro-segregation
proslavery
proto-poststructuralist
pseudoscience
psycho-ideological
put-down (n)

Q

quarterdeck

R

ragtag
real-life (adj)
rearrest
recenter
record keeper
re-create (to distinguish from recreate)
red-baiting
Red Power movement
red scare
Red Summer of 1919
reemerge
reenslave
research and development, R&D
re-sound (v.; sound again)
re-vision (n; new vision)

the Revolution (American, French, Russian); revolutionary America, France, Russia
the Revolutionary War
revolutionary times
the Right, right-wingers, on the right, religious Right, radical Right
right-hand (adj)
rhythm and blues, R&B
rhythm-and-blues (adj)
roller coaster (n)
roller-coaster (adj)
Romantic, -ism (historically specific period)
romantic (mood)
rubber stamp (n)
rubber-stamped (v)
Rust Belt

S

sardinelike
satirical
sawmill
Scholastic, -ism
school board
schoolbook
schoolchildren
school grounds
schoolhouse
schoolmistress
schoolteacher
secretary of state, Secretary of State
Powell
seedpod
second line (n, adj), second lining
Senate (US)
September 11
setup (n)
shadowlands
shipbuilding
short circuit (n)
short-circuit (v)
shortsighted
shortsightedness
slaveholder
slaveholding (n, adj)
slave owner
smoke screen
smokestack
social Darwinism
sociocultural
socioeconomic
sociohistoric
sociolinguistic
sociopolitical
socio-technical
soul-searching
sound bite (n)
sound-bite (adj)
the South
South Los Angeles
southern
Southern (in Civil War contexts)
Southern California
the Southwest

southwestern
Speaker of the House
stand-alone (adj)
standoff
state building
State Department, the department
status loss (n)
stepping-stone
still life
stocktaking
storefront
storied
story line
storytelling
straitjacket
subhumanity
subpart
sui generis
Sun Belt
superseded
symbolism, -ist

T

tagline
take over (v)
takeover (n)
third world or Third World (n)
third-world or Third-World (adj)
timeline
toward
T-shirt
transatlantic
transcendentalism
trick or treat (n)
trick-or-treater
trick-or-treating
troublemaker
turn-of-the-century (adj)
turn of the century

U

unburial
underwater (adj, adv)
underway (adj, adv)
university-wide (adj)
up-to-date (adv, adj)

V

Vietnam War
viewpoint
vis-à-vis
voice-over

W

war on drugs
war on terror
website
weeklong
the West, western, westerner
West Coast
Western Hemisphere
white
whitewash
women's studies

workday
working class (n)
working-class (adj)
work in progress
World War I, II

World Wide Web, the Web

zoot-suiter (n)

Z

zoot suit
Zoot Suit Riots

Political left and right terms

the Left, the Right
left-wingers, right-wingers
members of the left wing, right wing
on the left, on the right
leftist
right-wing group
the radical Right
the Christian Right
the Far Left, Far Right
the religious Right
the political Left, political Right
left-leaning people
the academic Left
the New Right