CITE CHECKING AND PROOFREADING

A. Introduction

Legal publications, like *The Elder Law Journal*, are responsible for providing accurate sources and information to their readers. It is unsurprising, therefore, that the quality of a journal depends on the accuracy of its text and footnotes. *The Elder Law Journal* has a long history of excellence in this respect, and the journal depends on its new members to continue that tradition.

Careful proofreading and cite checking is essential in maintaining the high quality of *The Elder Law Journal*. Proofreading and cite checking, however, require close, often arduous, attention to detail. At times, proofreading and cite checking may feel tedious and unimportant. Every new member should keep in mind, however, that he or she has been entrusted with an important responsibility that not only determines the overall quality of *The Elder Law Journal*, but also the estimation of the journal in the eyes of our readers.

Intimate knowledge of *The Bluebook* (*"Bluebook"*) citation form is the mark of a seasoned journal member and a good lawyer. Early familiarity with the *Bluebook* will make the process of writing your note more efficient as there will be less citation mistakes to fix at a later time. It will also increase accuracy and speed during cite checks while you are a member of *The Elder Law Journal*. *Bluebook* skills that you learn on *The Elder Law Journal* also will assist you in your career. Attorneys, judges, academics and other sticklers pay attention to proper citation form. At the very least, accurate Bluebooking will increase your ability to pay attention to small details.

B. Administrative Matters

1. Scheduling

The Administrative Editors and the Managing Editor will try to distribute book pulling, cite checking and proofreading duties evenly amongst members. *The Elder Law Journal* has enough members and editors that no one should feel overburdened with these duties. However, members may speak to Administrative Editors or the Managing Editor if they feel they have been given an unfair amount of work, and these members may review the Editors' assignment records upon request. A good attitude toward all book pulling, cite checking and proofreading tasks is immensely helpful to everyone involved in the Journal.

Book Pull. The Administrative Editors assign book pull responsibilities. Book pull for a particular cite check will be assigned by email to a portion of the membership with two weeks notice. Though there is no set time or place in which to complete a book pull assignment, all sources must be located and acquired by the Friday before the assigned cite check. Be advised that if sources have to come on loan from other libraries, it may take up to a week, or longer, for the sources to arrive.

Cite Check. The Administrative Editors also plan all cite checking sessions. They will be held every Monday night from 6 to 10 P.M. unless you are notified otherwise. Though members are only required to remain at cite check until all work is completed, members should nevertheless expect to stay for the entire four hours. Journal tradition dictates that all members complete their cite checking responsibility before any member is dismissed from the session.

Proofreads. The Managing Editor assigns members to proofreading assignments, which is done after the cite check and text changes have been recorded to check for transcription errors. The Editors will notify you, via e-mail and/or Journal mailbox, of the times and deadlines for completing the work. Accordingly, it is essential that all members check their e-mail and Journal mailboxes *every day* to keep abreast of any and all notifications from the editors. Each proofreading session normally requires one hour to complete. Issues with scheduling, however, may require the Managing Editor to make assignments that require more time.

If you have any questions or encounter any problems, contact the respective editor(s) that assigned you a task.

2. Absences

Cite checking is permanently scheduled for Monday evenings and therefore should be accounted for before making any other plans. If you cannot attend a cite checking session or complete a proofreading or bookpulling assignment, you are responsible for notifying one of the Administrative Editors or the Managing Editor, who will assign you make-up work to account for the hours missed. If you fail to inform the Editors of your absence or inability to complete work on schedule, your absence or incompletion will be unexcused. One unexcused absence or missed deadline makes you eligible for extra book pulling, cite checking or proofreading. After two unexcused absences or incompletions, the Board will consider terminating your membership on *The Elder Law Journal*.

3. Quality of Work

Accuracy is extremely important for both proofreading and cite checking. The quality of the work published in *The Elder Law Journal* is a reflection on both the Journal and the College of Law. Therefore, proofreading and cite checking should not be taken lightly. If an author of an article or note, or any member of the Board, finds repeated errors or failures to catch and correct errors in an assignment, the member responsible for that assignment will not receive credit for the proofreading or cite checking. That member will be eligible for another assignment.

The Board also "spot-check" the proofreading and cite checking done by members. Any member whose work demonstrates a lack of care or inadequate understanding of citation form may be given additional proofreading and cite checking assignments. Therefore, careful, high quality proofreading and cite checking will benefit both *The Elder Law Journal* and the member.

4. An Important Note on Snacks

In lieu of paying membership dues (as other publications often require), *The Elder Law Journal* instead requests that its new members provide snacks to fuel cite checking efforts. Early in the fall semester, the Managing Editor will break members up into small groups and assign them cite check dates for which they will be expected to provide snacks. This schedule will be provided to the new members at some point prior to the second cite check (when the schedule will begin). There is no minimum or maximum value that members are require to spend, however, as most cite checks involve around 40 people, it would be prudent that the aggregate amount of snacks can reasonably feed at least 40. Also, if you are baking or otherwise providing homemade fare, please be mindful of common dietary restrictions/hazards.

C. Cite Checking

Because proper citation is essential to the quality of a journal, Journal members must carefully check all footnotes in each article that will be published in *The Elder Law Journal*. Prior to each cite check, members will be assigned the task of collecting the necessary reference materials for the article or note to be cite checked that week; this is known as a book pull. All members, and the assigned Associate Editors, will then gather in the library on Monday evening to perform the cite check.

NOTE: A cite check, because of its nature and the number of people involved, generates noise. We should try, however, to keep the noise down to a minimum so that we do not disturb other students.

During cite check, members examine and correct each footnote, under the guidance of the Administrative Editors, adhering strictly to *Bluebook* form. Before each cite check, an Administrative Editor will compile a packet for each member that include a portion of an article or note's text, the corresponding footnotes, and a form to record corrections and comments. The cite check is a crucial step in the publication process because *the cite check is the only time we carefully check each footnote in the article*. Therefore, inform the Administrative Editors if you have any questions or problems. When cite checking, always check:

SUBSTANCE: Make sure the footnote supports the author's proposition in the way introduced by the signal. Make sure the source says what the author claims it says.

SPELLING: Check spelling, especially of author and case names.

QUOTES: Check all quotes in the text and footnotes carefully to make sure that the source is quoted correctly. Pay particular attention to omissions from quoted material, the correct use of ellipses, and paragraph structure.

CASES: Be sure the citation includes the name, volume, correct reporter, page (first and pinpoint), court, and date.

SECONDARY   Check the volume, author (if book, include first name and middle
MATERIALS   initial, author's name should appear in the cite just as it appears on the source), title, section(s), page(s) (first and specific), edition (if applicable), editor(s) (if applicable), and year.

STATUTES: Check compilation, title, article, chapter, section, supplement, and date (use supplement date or, if bound, use date on outside cover or copyright date).

STYLE: Cite checkers should be sure that all footnotes conform to proper *Bluebook* style. If you have problems determining proper *Bluebook* style for a particular footnote, consult the Administrative Editors.

Please be sure to bring a copy of *The Bluebook* to the cite check. You will find that if you forget your *Bluebook*, you will invariably receive endnotes that cite selections from an anarchist's manifesto or some other obscure source. In performing cite checks, do not

rely on the author's supposed expertise—double-check *everything*, especially whether *Bluebook* form has been followed.

The following tags are used on manuscripts during the editing process, so that when the piece is formatted as a printed page, the proper styles can be applied. **It's important that cite checkers pay close attention to the tags indicating indented extracts and the paragraph structure of long quotations.**

=xt	means the indented extract begins at the indented margin
=xtp	means that the first line of the quote should be indented, that is, it begins a new paragraph
=p	means that the next paragraph of the indented quote is also indented
=p	is also used to indicate a new paragraph in a footnote
=indent2	means that within the indented material the following material needs to be indented to the next level
=bullets	means that a bulleted list follows
=ft	means that the material following the indented quote is not a new paragraph
=ftp	means that the first line following the indented quote should be indented, that is, a new paragraph begins after the quotation.

D. Proofreading

Careful proofreading is essential to maintaining the high degree of technical accuracy that distinguishes a top journal from others. You will be paired with another member for your proofreading assignments. The purpose of a proofreading session is to check whether all corrections made during the Monday cite checking sessions have successfully made it into the newest version of the article. Though Administrative Editors try their best to transfer all corrections into the new version, the sheer number of them means that there may be a few that the editors have missed. There may also have been errors made by other members during the cite checking sessions. Proofreading is another way of verifying that *The Elder Law Journal* maintains its high standards for accurate citation of sources and other substantive information

For your proofreading session, you will be given two copies of the article you must proofread: One will be a "dirty" copy with handwritten citation corrections made during Monday cite checking sessions. The other will be a "clean" copy; this is the newer version of the article, it should include all transferred citation corrections. During proofreading, one member will read aloud from the edited manuscript while the other follows along on the clean copy, checking for differences/mistakes between the two transcripts.

Naturally, you may want to read the articles quickly, but you should read at a pace that allows for careful and accurate proofreading. While reading, you must indicate the presence of capitals, punctuation, paragraphs, footnote numbers, spacing, and typeface out loud. For example, "He is proofreading" should be read aloud as "Capital H He space is space proofreading period." If an Editor finds more than two proofreading errors in the section of the article that you proofread, you will not receive credit for your proofreading. You should look for errors of any sort, not just typographical errors. For example, please correct any *Bluebook* errors you spot, in addition to misspellings and cases of subject-verb disagreement.

Mark journal errors in blue and in the left margin. A journal error is one that the writer or editors have made, such as subject-verb disagreement or improper typeface in the manuscript. Mark typist's errors in red and in the right margin. A typist error is one made by the typist, that is, anything different from the manuscript. Included in this packet is a proofreading sheet showing the proper correction marks and examples. Some common errors are:

1. Misspelled words

2. Transposed letters

3. Dropped letters, words, and lines

4. Dashes, quotations, and hyphens not closed up

5. Failure to indent paragraphs or quotations

6. Run-on footnotes (this occurs when a new footnote does not drop down to the proper line)

7. Reversed quotation marks

8. Incorrect syllabification of words

Pay special attention to spacing (particularly in footnotes), spelling, and typeface. When in doubt, consult your copy of *The Bluebook* or a dictionary. Finally, when reading the footnotes, check the text to determine whether each footnote matches up to the sentence in the text. Although this is time-consuming, it may be the only way to tell whether a footnote has been accidentally omitted.

NOTE: When proofreading is completed, each proofreader should <u>initial each page</u> he or she proofread and return the manuscript and proofread copies to the Managing Editor.

NOTE: When making edits during either a cite check or a proofread, please use the Proofreaders' Marks found in Section IX (pages 65 – 67) of this Members' Packet, as well as on the inside back cover.

E. Conclusion

The technical accuracy of *The Elder Law Journal* depends upon how hard its members are willing to work at proofreading and cite checking. The Board will do everything in its power to make assignments as convenient as possible and to make certain no member is unduly burdened. In return, we ask each member to take pride in his or her work and take responsibility for what he or she has been assigned. The importance of technical accuracy to *The Elder Law Journal*'s reputation cannot be overstated. Finally, as Robert White points out in *The Official Lawyer's Handbook*, a member's experience is significant to prospective employers if only because "nothing else offers so much tedious, petty grunt work. Anyone who can put up with it has real potential for success in private practice." Editor's Note: Or the public sector.
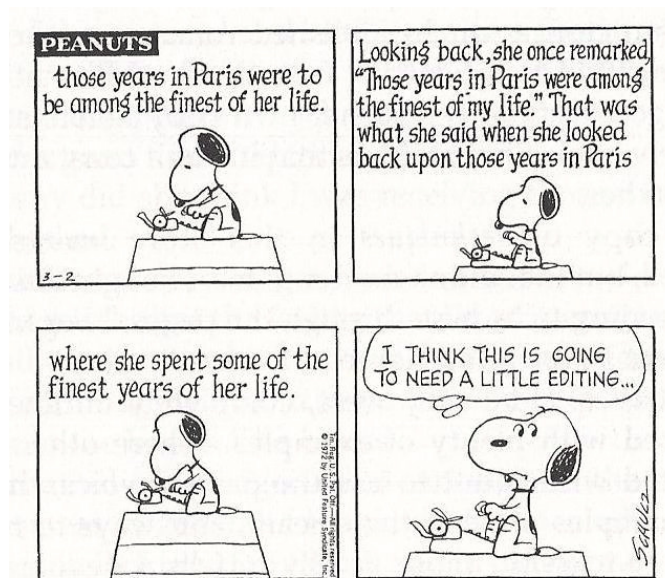
Charles Schulz, *Peanuts*, UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE (Mar. 2, 1972).
*Note: *The Bluebook* does not currently have a rule on citing comic strips.