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Invited Program Workshop

Writing for a Non-Academic Audience: Underlying Assumptions and Strategies



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Abstract. When trying to impart knowledge to others, it's vitally important to understand who those others are and the ways in which they are used to receiving information. Although APA Style is highly effective for communicating social science to other researchers who share the same background training, the format's assumptions do not translate well to blog-style posts written by academics for a general audience.

APA style provides a format where a study's information is easily located and allows technical jargon regarding concept, procedures, and implications. Journalists and bloggers typically rely on a style that sequences the information based on its importance or interest to the audience, from most to least important, with little to no jargon. In this hands-on session, I briefly summarize these underlying assumptions and structures, while providing strategies researchers can employ when writing for a general audience. Attendees will have several structured opportunities to practice.

Biography. Andrew Smiler, PhD, is SRA's Editor-in-Chief for Online Publications, as well as a therapist in private practice and author. His therapeutic practice focuses on teens and young adults, serving natal males, male identified, and transgender clients. Dr. Smiler is the author of the award winning "Dating and Sex: A Guide for the 21st Century Teen Boy" (2016, Magination Press) and co-author, with Chris Kilmartin, of the best-selling Introduction to Men's Studies text "The Masculine Self" (5th ed). He is the author of more than 25 academic publications, focused primarily on male sexual development and measurement of masculinity. Through his research consultancy, he has published in the Journal of Dental Education and the International Journal of ePortfolio. Dr. Smiler attend the University of New Hampshire and completed a post-doc at the University of Michigan.