

## WRITERS' STYLE SHEET:

### How to submit books, articles and chapters to Midnight Marquee Press

We ask that writers send us their manuscript as a MICROSOFT WORD file (or comparable software file). Sending it to us as an email attachment is preferred, but we accept manuscripts on CDs or DVDs as well. A hard copy print out is *not* necessary, unless we request one.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS

If your manuscript requires the use of a **CAST and CREDITS list**, please format these lists using the example below:

**CREDITS:** Producer: Michael Balcon; Director: Robert Stevenson; Screenplay: L. Du Garde Peach and Sidney Gilliat; Cinematographer: Jack Cox; Editors: R.E. Dearing (notice there is no space between 2 initials)

**CAST:** Boris Karloff (Dr. Laurience); Anna Lee (Dr. Clare Wyatt); John Loder (Dick)

Use the tab stop to do all **paragraph indentations**. Indentations should be set at 1/4 inch (.25 inch). Do not use the space bar to do indentations!

Always send your manuscripts **single-spaced using 12-point type, Times-Roman** preferred.

Do not send your manuscript with any headers, footers or page numbers embedded in the text. **Avoid special formatting gimmicks** that your word processor software uses, such as forcing text to fit on one page or a specific “leading” measurement that sets the spacing between lines. The more fancy formatting you use, the more complex it is for us to de-format your text.

Remember to place **titles** of movies, plays, TV shows, novels, etc. **in italics** using upper and lower case letters (never all capitals). Do not format titles in bold! Surround song titles, individual episodes of a TV show, etc. in **quotation marks**.

Do not waste too much space **quoting** what other critics/genre writers have said about the movie under discussion. A little of this goes a long way. If quoting use major sources (*Variety*, *New York Times*, etc.). Keep this to a minimum. Writers want to read *your* opinions.

Bob, Fred and Ted: We now **drop that final comma** before “and/but/or” in a **list of three**.

When using dashes in your text, do not type “--” or “ - “; instead, use an **Em Dash**. Your word processing program should show you how to create them. Thus, this is the proper format: “Bela Lugosi—on the comeback in *Son of Frankenstein*—reminded his fans of the great talent he was.” Do not place a space before or after the Em Dash.

When using an **ellipsis** in your text, do not put any space between the three periods. Do not use a space between the ellipsis and the last or first letter when the ellipsis comes at the end or beginning of a sentence. Thus, this is wrong: “when Jack and Fred . . .” This is also wrong: “when Jack and Fred ... come alive in the last reel.” This is correct: “when Jack and Fred...come alive.” Notice, no space between “Fred” and the dots, or no space after the dots before the word “come.”

We follow the style rule that **capitalizes the first letter** after a **colon**, if what follows can stand alone as a complete sentence. Example: According to Gary Svehla: Horror films are adult fairy tales (not: horror movies are adult fairy tales).

When sending us back **proofread copy**, please mark the copy in **red or black pen** and make any changes big, bold and noticeable. Always draw a line to the right or left hand margin (or put an “X” in the margin) to alert us that a change has been made within the body of the text. Never ever use Wite-Out to make proof changes!

Too many writers like to use little **slang terms** that they put into quotes. Don’t do this: Dick Tracy “flattens” the “flunky” with a good “right” to the “noodle.” Instead: Dick Tracy flattens the flunky with a good right to the noodle.

Create a sense of “**writer’s voice**” that reflects your personality in whatever you write. Avoid a dry, academic tone. Avoid using words found in the Thesaurus and foreign phrases. Write succinctly.

**Footnoting** for documentation and crediting outside sources is accepted but should not be overdone. Please put all footnotes at the end of the chapter or article, NOT at the bottom of each page. Too much footnoting most likely means too much of your information was not original research and came from other published sources. This is considered a flaw. Try to put such documentation in the body of the manuscript, thus reducing or eliminating the use of end of chapter notes. But always give credit to any outside sources referenced in your copy.

When including **long quoted passages** (4 or more sentences), skip a line and indent (1/2 inch, both right and left margins) to separate these longer quoted sections from the rest of the text. Skip a line before continuing with regular text. Do not use quotation marks to surround these indented quoted sections. And always identify your sources where the quoted section is from.

**Numbers** one-nine spell out; 10, 11, 12, etc. 22 us number keys.

If you are submitting a **manuscript to be published as a book**, the length should be around 125 single-spaced text, set in 11-point Times-Roman. Longer manuscripts can be accepted on a case-by-case basis, but we try to keep our books to the 300-page range and try to include a photo on every page.

It is always helpful, not required, if the writer can provide photos, ads, lobby cards, etc. to help illustrate your article, chapter or book. Authors do not need to send us the original photos or lobby cards, etc. You may scan them to our specs and send them to us on a CD or DVD. **Scan at 300 dpi** (no larger) and make sure the width of your object is 5.5 inches wide or slightly wider. Save as a TIFF file (for the Mac preferred, although PC TIFS are okay). If you wanted to clean up the photos, remove scratches, that is perfectly acceptable. Authors should caption all photos, ads, graphics submitted, so no confusion exists.

Once a manuscript is submitted as a **final draft**, we may not be able to alter text or layout if, miraculously, some interview or graphic material becomes available suddenly at the last moment. Final Draft means final draft, okay for layout and printing. So, take your time, please be sure what you send is actually a final submission

Always use a **Spell Check** on your manuscript before submitting text. ALWAYS!!!! And look up words that Spell Check does not recognize!

American style puts periods and commas inside **quotation marks**, even if not a whole sentence or at the end of a sentence. “She went to the movies,” he said. Not: “She went to the movies”, he said. The British do it the other way (and sometimes use only single quotes, but we aren’t Brits, and our British writers should Americanize their writing for U.S. audiences, as much as possible!).

Be sure to read your article for **common sense** when it’s done. Have a friend read your manuscript, and see if s/he understands everything. Some authors use extremely obscure words and that slows the reader down. It’s okay to be creative and use uncommon words sometimes, but some writers sprinkle lots of foreign terms and extremely arcane words or phrases in there, and meaning can be lost. Create a rhythm in your writing by varying sentence length and style. Arcane words and foreign phrases often disrupt that rhythm and should be avoided. Remember to think of your audience!

Check your manuscript for **consistency**! If you refer to the movie *Some Like It Hot* five times, do not refer to the movie three times as *Some like It Hot* and two times as *Some Like It Hot*. If you refer to the US and the U.S. within the same article, this demonstrates lack of consistency. Re-read, and have a friend re-read your manuscript for common sense and clarity of thought. What makes sense to you might not be clear to the general reader. Remember, you are writing for your audience, not yourself. Always consider your audience!

Remember, the editing/copywriting staff at **Midnight Marquee edits** and **alters text**, if necessary, to make the author’s writing better. If you are an author who thinks your manuscript is sacrosanct and should not be touched, please consider another publisher.

Thank you for your close attention to the Style Sheet rules above!