

Post-Publication Name Changes

By Jessica Mink

**Center for Astrophysics | Harvard & Smithsonian
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Changing our name represents a milestone, whether it's because of gender identity, religion, or relationship status. And changing names requires discretion and sensitivity, especially in the case of transgender (including non-binary) authors.

“Changing” Authorship Post-Publication: The Old Way

November, 2011

- When I transitioned professionally in November, 2012, I knew that my past publications would have a different name on them than my future publications, but I wanted them all to be found in one search, so I called Alberto Accomazzi at the Astrophysical Data System and asked him what I should do. It was easy, partly because he had known me for a long time and his office was just across the Center for Astrophysics office complex. I just added a different first name and initials in various combinations to my ADS identity, and it mostly worked. There was only one D. Mink in their database, but several J. Mink's, especially if you included Physics and not just Astronomy, but I could eliminate the misses and find my H-Index across identities.

Tying Identities Together With ORCID

July 29, 2013

- Or you can become a number instead of only one name... <https://orcid.org/>
- “ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier (an ORCID iD) that you own and control, and that distinguishes you from every other researcher.”
- The Smithsonian Institution (a member) keeps track of my publications for me and reminds me to make sure they’re related to my ORCID. The ADS (a member) lets you search by ORCID.

Beware of pretty faces that you find.
A pretty face may hide an evil mind.
Ooh be careful what you say.
Or you give yourself away.
Odds are you won't live to see tomorrow.

Secret Agent Man.
Secret Agent Man.
They've given you a number.
And taken away your name.

[Secret Agent Man by Johnny Rivers, 1966](#)

Jessica's Personal Disclaimer

June 7, 2021

Personally, I have no desire to change my past publications. Everyone in astronomy who wants to can find out my past, and people in my extended network all know, since I transitioned forty years into a half-century career. But I know of early-career astronomers who might wish to do this to keep a single identity in their career.

Towards A Trans Inclusive Publishing Landscape

September 9, 2020

What is at stake for trans authors?

- Harms of juxtaposition and inadvertent disclosure
- Mixing name changes with Errata gives a negative impression
- Inadvertent public disclosure of previous identity can be viewed as an act of violence
- Continued circulation of incorrect identity
- Institution addresses make the trans individual locatable
- There are people who want to erase our identity.

By Theresa Jean Tanenbaum, Robyn Speer, Irving Rettig, Teddy G Goetz, Z Touns, Katta Spiel, B.M. Watson

<https://tesstanenbaum.medium.com/towards-a-trans-inclusive-publishing-landscape-893339b9868d>

A vision for a more trans-inclusive publishing world

January 13, 2021

Five guiding principles and best practices

- 1. Accessibility:** Name changes should be available to authors upon request without legal documentation, unnecessary barriers, burdens, or labor placed upon the author making the request.
- 2. Comprehensiveness:** Name changes should remove all instances of an author's previous name from the records maintained and disseminated by the publisher.
- 3. Invisibility:** Name changes should not draw attention to the gender identity of an author, nor create a clear juxtaposition between the current name and the previous name.
- 4. Expediency and simplicity:** Name changes should be implemented in a timely manner, and with a minimum of bureaucratic overhead.
- 5. Recurrence and maintenance:** Publishers should regularly audit and correct new instances of changed names in order to prevent ongoing dissemination of incorrect information.

- By Theresa Jean Tanenbaum, Irving Rettig, H Michael Schwartz, BM Watson, Teddy G Goetz, Katta Spiel, Mike Hill

- <https://publicationethics.org/news/vision-more-trans-inclusive-publishing-world>

Not Just for Trans People!

By Katie Langin, Science, February 25, 2021

The changes will also likely benefit other groups, such as people who grapple with name changes because of marriage and divorce. “I didn’t change my name when I got married, not because I thought I was ever going to divorce my husband,” says Susan Morrissey, ACS’s director of communications. “I had already published, so I wanted to keep that record.” With the new name change policies, Morrissey wonders whether others in similar situations might feel freer to make a decision that’s right for themselves and their family—rather than one that revolves around their publication record. “My kids’ lives would be a lot easier if I had [changed my last name],” she says.

<https://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2021/02/new-more-inclusive-journal-policies-ease-author-name-changes-published-papers>

Some Current Policies

as of June, 2021

- **American Psychological Association** (August 2020)
- **American Society for Microbiology** (December 2, 2020)
- **Wiley** (January 15, 2021)
- **Science** (Feb. 25, 2021)
- **Elsevier** (March 29, 2021)
- **IOP Publishing** (April, 2021)
- **American Astronomical Society** (April 27, 2021)

American Psychological Association

August, 2020

APA is pleased to announce a policy on changing authors' names in the digital record on request. Respecting authors' autonomy and recognizing that authors' names may change after articles have been published, APA Publishing will update author names without publishing an accompanying correction notice. Changes will be made to the digital record for APA-published ebooks or journal articles that have already appeared in print.

<https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/resources/policy-author-name-changes>

American Society for Microbiology

December 2, 2020

As part of our ongoing commitment to promote diversity, equity and inclusion, ASM Journals has created a pathway for authors to request name change updates to their published record. Authors may update their name on ASM publications to reflect name changes made for personal reasons including, but not limited to, marriage, divorce, religious conversion and gender identity changes. These changes can be made retroactively to any site within the body of a paper, author byline and /or email address. The ASM Journals team will work confidentially with authors and will not require evidence of legal name change or identification.

<https://asm.org/Press-Releases/2020/December/ASM-Journals-Supports-Author-Name-Changes-Post-Pub>

Wiley

January 15, 2021

We are proud to announce that Wiley has updated its author name change policy to support the anonymity of authors who wish to change their name on already-published research. We are removing two standard and historical processes when an author submits a name change. We will no longer publish a correction notice to the updated paper when there is a name change, and we will no longer notify co-authors of their colleague's name change. We will update and republish the paper, and redeliver the updated metadata to indexing services. We also will not require that authors provide proof or documentation of their name change. The policy change is effective immediately for all of our 1,700 research journals.

Science

Feb. 25, 2021

New, more inclusive journal policies ease author name changes on published papers

By Katie Langin

Many scientific publishers—including the American Chemical Society (ACS), the Royal Society of Chemistry, PLOS, Wiley, and AAAS—established policies that make it easier for authors to change their first or last name on published papers. (AAAS is the publisher of Science Careers.) Springer Nature, which publishes more than 2500 journals, expects to announce a new name change policy “in the near future,” according to a statement emailed to Science Careers.

<https://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2021/02/new-more-inclusive-journal-policies-ease-author-name-changes-published-papers>

Elsevier

March 29, 2021

- A trans-inclusive policy for author name changes serves to redress the personal and professional risks that many trans researchers have faced when correcting their publication record. We pledge our commitment to making name changes: accessible, without placing unnecessary burdens on authors; comprehensive in their implementation across platforms; and invisible, to help protect authors from harassment, in accordance with the Committee on Publication Ethics Working Group's principles.

<https://www.elsevier.com/about/press-releases/corporate/elsevier-launches-a-trans-inclusive-name-change-policy>

IOP Publishing

April, 2021

- IOP Publishing recognises that people change their name for a variety of reasons (including but not limited to gender identity, marriage, divorce, or a change in religion), and we support our authors' rights to update their previously published work accordingly.
- Changes covered by this policy include names, pronouns, author photographs and email addresses (where the address reflects the name of the person). This policy does not cover changes to correct spelling errors or job/affiliation details.
- This policy applies to all content published by IOP Publishing, including journal articles, conference proceedings and eBooks.
- IOP Publishing will only consider requests from the author named in the change request. Requests to change the name of another individual without their consent will be considered ethical misconduct

<https://publishingsupport.iopscience.iop.org/questions/name-change-policy/>

American Astronomical Society

April 27, 2021

- The policy covers changes to names, pronouns, author photographs, and contact details. People change their name for a variety of reasons, including gender identity, marriage, divorce, or a change in religion. In many cases, particularly for trans and non-binary authors, changing names needs to be approached with discretion and sensitivity. Respecting authors' right to privacy is a key tenet, with assurance of full confidentiality and the option to change a name with or without a public notice. The new policy offers a simple and seamless approach, with no requirement to disclose the reason for the request nor the need to provide proof of a legal name change.

<https://aas.org/posts/news/2021/04/new-name-change-policy-supports-greater-inclusion-publishing>

COPE guidance regarding author name changes

13 January 2021

COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) is committed to educating and supporting editors, publishers and those involved in publication ethics with the aim of moving the culture of publishing towards one where ethical practices become a normal part of the publishing culture.

Working through the complexities associated with post-publication name changes takes time, as the journals and publishers that have developed their own policies in the interim can likely attest. Beyond drafting guidance that makes the process easier, the COPE working group has the additional goal of making the process more consistent for authors, journals/publishers, and relevant third parties. To that end, we have been liaising with staff at the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) and the US National Library of Medicine, among other organisations.

<https://publicationethics.org/news/update-cope-guidance-regarding-author-name-changes>

ADS will be following COPE guidance regarding author name changes

June 7, 2021

The director of the Astrophysics Data System, which is used by most astronomers and astrophysicists as our standard reference system states:

“We support the COPE policy for name changes and have already implemented two name modifications at the request of users. So whether the original publisher agrees to change a name or not on the fulltext paper hosted by them, ADS will do so in its own database when requested.”

<https://publicationethics.org/news/update-cope-guidance-regarding-author-name-changes>

Already a Problem

June 7, 2021

As a trans person, I've already run into an issue getting indexed in a book of history which covers things I did under each name/gender. The indexer returned separate entries for each name, but the author decided that wasn't really accurate and asked me for a preference which ended up being

<current first name> (<old first name>) <last name>

Conveniently I now use <old first name> as <current middle name>.

This is pretty much the same as any person who changed their name at marriage would do, but it only works if one is comfortable with both names, which not all trans people are.