HOT TIPS FOR HOW TO STRUCTURE AND WRITE YOUR JOURNAL ARTICLE

COMPONENT PARTS

- Title & Titlepage

- Abstract and Keywords

- Introduction

- Methods

- Results

- Discussion

- Conclusions

- References

- Declarations & Acknowledgements

Writer's block

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TITLE AND TITLE PAGE

- Title derives from your <u>study aim</u>
- Includes reference to <u>methodology</u>
- May initially have a 'working title'
- Short running title used as a header
- Agree on sequence of authorship
- Include:
  - Relevant qualifications
  - Affiliations
  - Corresponding authors contact details

Exploring the evidence-practice gap in the use of plain radiography for acute abdominal pain and intestinal obstruction: A systematic review and meta-analysis

Gary Denham, MMedRadSc (Computerised Tomography)
Staff Radiographer, Hunter New England Imaging, Manning Hospital

Tony Smith, PhD
Academic Lead – Research, University of Newcastle Department of Rural Health,
Faculty of Health and Medicine, The University of Newcastle

Daphne James, PhD
Senior Lecturer, School of Health Sciences, Faculty of Health and Medicine, The
University of Newcastle

Sharmaine McKiernan, PhD
Lecturer, School of Health Sciences, Faculty of Health and Medicine, The University of
Newcastle

Tiffany-Jane Evans, MMedStat
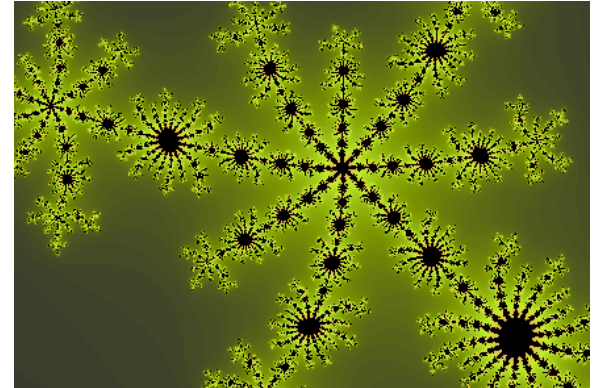Statistician, Hunter Medical Research Institute

Short running title: Plain abdominal radiography

Address for correspondence:
Associate Professor Tony Smith
University of Newcastle Department of Rural Health
69A High St
TAREE, NSW, 2430
Phone: +61 2 4055 1912, M: +61 (0)466 440 037
Email: tony.smith@newcastle.edu.au

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ABSTRACT AND KEYWORDS

- Abstract needs to stand alone
- Requires subheadings according to publishes guidelines
  - Background
  - Aim(s)
  - Methods
  - Results
  - Conclusions
- **MUST** reflect the content of the article
- Keywords
  - Use MeSH terms + relevant, familiar (clinical) terms
  - Use words other than those used in the title

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INTRODUCTION

- Begin with a strong, referenced statement that will catch the attention of your readers

- Go on to build the justification for your study or paper

- Explain the rationale that underpins the justification
  - Timeliness of the research
  - Why you or your team?

- **Background**
  - Provide definitions
  - Current status & relevance - incidence, prevalence, etc.
  - Use key references from authoritative sources (AIHW, WHO, etc.)

- **FINALLY** – State the aim of the study in clear terms

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METHODS (OR METHODOLOGY)

- May start with aim & hypothesis (varies)
- Ethics clearance and key requirements
- Structure chronologically (objectives)
- Setting of your study
- Population, sample and sample size
  - Type of sampling
  - Sampling frame & recruitment
- Data collection
  - 'Instruments' – eg. Equipment; Questionnaire(s); Interview schedule
- Data analysis
  - Software used (version, manufacturer, location)

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RESULTS

Do …

- Be concise!
- Describe characteristics of your sample (demographics)
- Use tables (Table 1, Table 2, etc.) & figures (Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.)
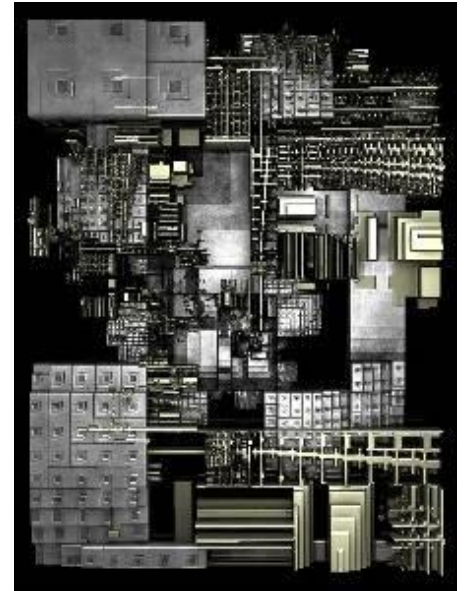- Refer to your tables & figures in the text

Do not …

- Repeat the contents of your tables in the text
- Wander into discussion of results

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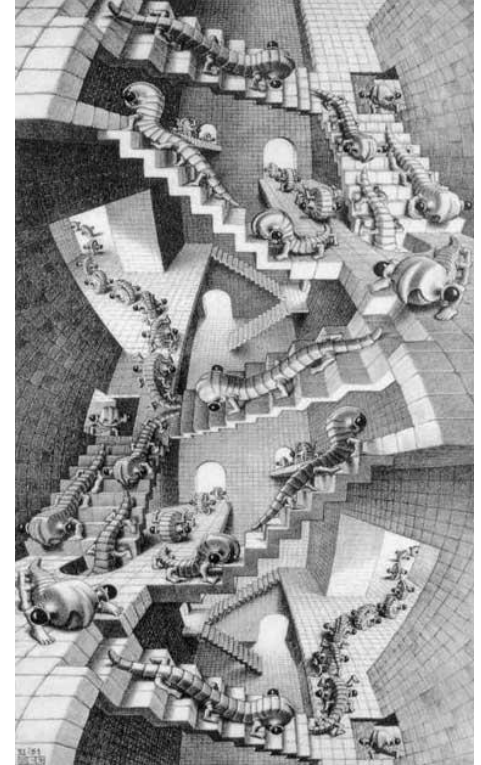
DISCUSSION

- Often difficult to write & maintain the readers interest
- State key the finding(s) of your study
- How do the findings relate to previous studies?
  - Link back to your **Introduction** via key literature
- Relevance of your results:
  - Relate to previous studies
    - Similarities & differences
    - Compare & contrast
- Implications for future practice
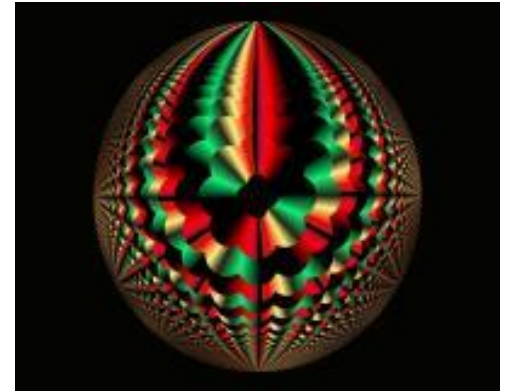- Strengths and limitations of your study

CONCLUSIONS

- Link back to the <u>justification</u>, <u>rationale</u> and <u>aim</u>

- Close the loop!

- <u>NB</u>. You cannot add new references in the conclusion

- Make a well-founded, evidence-based recommendation (or two)

- Be definitive but not closed - Suggest further research directions

- **DO NOT** become editorial-like

- Leave the reader with something to think about

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REFERENCES (& CITATIONS)

- Adhere to the required style
- Use <u>most recent</u> research and reports
- Use relevant references from the journal you are writing for
- If using Endnote …
  - Be sure referencing is complete
  - Make sure style is accurate, including punctuation (check guidelines)
  - Delink Endnote prior to submission
- Check and <u>double-check</u> all citations and references

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DECLARATIONS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Contributions of authors
  - Responsibility & accountability
- Source(s) of funding
- Competing interests
  - Stakeholder bias, pecuniary benefits
- Acknowledgements
  - Non-author contributors
  - Paid contributors (eg. statistical analysis)
  - Study participants

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AUTHORSHIP GUIDELINES

- **Universal requirements …**

- Australian Government Publishing Service Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers, 6th Edition, 2002
https://www.australia.gov.au/about-government/publications/style-manual

- International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE)
http://www.icmje.org/

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