

## TA Referencing – Back to the Original Sources

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I was intrigued by Marco Mazzetti's (2017) article in *The Script* in April about how limited are the references to Berne in the *Transactional Analysis Journal*. It resonated with concerns I have frequently when I am assessing student submissions, including those for the CTA written exam but also others for the various qualifications provided by different training institutes including my own. There is a trend for students to reference recent books, such as *TA Today* (Stewart & Joines, 1987, 2012) where they often reference still the first

edition), Widdowson's (2010) book on 100 Key Points, and Tilney's (1998) *TA Dictionary*. The recent Cornell, de Graaf, Newton & Thunnissen (2016) fails to reference the originators of several concepts, in spite of claiming to be a textbook. In addition to Mazzetti's comments about referencing Berne in the *Transactional Analysis Journal*, I have noticed other examples such as in Joines (2016) where I was puzzled to see that he referenced rackets only to his own previous material in Stewart & Joines (2012).

Having become intrigued about this, I thought about the referencing in the *International Journal of Transactional Analysis Research & Practice* (IJTAR/IJTARP), particularly because I am of course

the Editor! It did not make sense to compare the same year as that used by Mazzetti because 2016 included one issue that was a series of case studies with similar referencing. In addition, because the papers in IJTAR have been research articles which due to their nature tend to include a wide range of references including non-TA ones, I would expect the percentage of Berne versus other authors to be low.

I looked across the span of issues since IJTAR was launched in 2010. I excluded one issue because it was the Research Conference Proceedings and therefore contained many short papers, although I noted that there were a total of 14 references to Berne contained within eight of those papers (the range being from 1 to 4).

Excluding that issue and the article in the first issue that was a list of TA research projects, 48 articles have now been published. Within 29 of these, there were 70 references to Berne. Within these articles, the number of references to Berne were 1 reference (12 papers), 2 references (8 papers), 3 references (in 4 papers), 4 references (in 2 papers), and one article each with 5, 6 and 9 references.

In addition, although I have not counted them, there are references to other authors where Berne is specifically mentioned in the title of their material.

As the TA qualifications have become increasingly recognised by academia, it seems to me to be important that we direct our students back to the original ideas. This may not matter when TA is being shared with laypersons but when someone is seeking recognition as a professional, it is disappointing when they believe that the original ideas came from whoever's material they have just read.

For my own students, and especially for those with insufficient knowledge of English language to be able to access easily the original materials, I have made a point of producing workbooks that summarise and credit the originators of the concepts. This has included summarising some of the early books; although I recognise that such summaries will inevitably be biased by my own interpretations, at least it means that the students know that the ideas are not my own.

As an afterthought, it has been pointed out to me (and I'm flattered to see it) that in the Cornell et al (2016) book there are nine constructs and 19 mentions of my material, compared to Berne who has 13 and 17, Clarkson with 10 and 12, Erskine with 7 and 10, Goulding & Goulding with 6 and 14, Steiner with 8 and 14, and of course Cornell who has 14 and 21 but is of course one of the authors . . .

## References

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