`Script`TEX:
A TEX Macro Package for Screenplays and Scripts

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Contents

Chapter 1

Preface

The purpose of this document is to describe `ScriptTeX` 1.04, a package of TeX macros for formatting scripts and screenplays. The tone here is informal, but this is intended to be complete documentation. The first part of this document is aimed at those who wish to use the macros as they are, and the second is for those who wish to understand the details of how the macros operate.

The purpose of this document is *not* to be an all-encompassing how-to-write-scripts tutorial; the bibliography at the end of this document should point you in the right direction if that's what you're looking for. On the other hand, this document does have some stylistic details presented as a justification of why `ScriptTeX` behaves certain ways when a "better" way may seem to exist.

`Typewriter text` is used to indicate file names, macro names, user-typed input, and computer output. *Slanted text* is used for the names of television series, movies, and books. In this document, punctuation is always placed outside quotation marks unless it is to be considered part of the "quoted material". My bias for the modern spellings of *dialog, prolog,* and *epilog* are evident in this document, but the macros allow the traditional *-gue* spellings, too.

Chapter 2

Overview

I would like to begin this overview by stating the motivation and goals of the package. If you find yourself thinking, “Why in the world did he design `ScriptTeX` this way?”, please read this section again.

In some regards, a script is a script is a script. All scripts have acts, scenes, stage directions, and dialog. It would be nice, therefore, to have a consistent set of TeX macros for scripts. The format of a script, however, varies depending upon the target media — stage, screen, published. Yet, the basic elements do not change. The first release of `Script`TeX supported manuscript-style screenplays; this version has support for simple stageplay format.

And therefore my design goals for `Script`TeX were:

- There should be a simple set of macros which can format to the strict manuscript requirements expected by agents and producers.
- The macros should be general enough to support other sorts script formats without changing the source file. Other script formats considered included: shooting scripts, stageplays, and published screenplays.
- In the same vain as LaTeX, the macros should be geared toward describing the chunks of text rather than formatting them, so `Script`TeX macros like `\scene`, `\dialog`, and `\stage` are roughly analogous to LaTeX’s `\chapter`, `\section`, and `\subsection` macros.

Since I am also a programmer with an interest in tools to help writers, I added the requirement that the files should be easy to parse, so that other script-specific tools could be designed to read them.

With these goals in mind, `Script`TeX began to take shape. Rather than starting from scratch, `Script`TeX relies on several facilities of plain TeX. A later version may become a TeX format in its own right.

Chapter 3

Writing a script with ScriptTEX

The macros for preparing a script with TEX are now presented in what the author hopes is a logical order. To best understand these, it is recommended that you read along with a copy of the `stdemo.tex` source and a formatted copy of the demo file.

First of all, you need the command to include the `Script`TEX macro definitions. Assuming you want the standard screenplay definitions, put "`\input scrnplay.tex`" at the beginning of your file. Stageplays should begin with "`\input stagplay.tex`". To format your file, refer to your local system guides for how to feed your file to TEX. You may have to make a local copy of `scrnplay.tex`.

3.1 The basic components

In accordance with the stated goals, there are only a few basic control sequences, and they are easy to master.

To begin a new act, type — you guessed it —"`\act`". This control sequence does not require any parameters. The exact action of this macro will depend on the setting of the variations, but in general it finishes up the previous act, increments the act number, and begins the next act. Depending upon the combination of variants you may have selected, the scene counter may be reset to zero.

After starting a new act, you usually have some opening transition like "fade in". To specify an opening transition, use the sequence: "`\open{`*transition-type*`}`", where *transition-type* is a short phrase like "`fade in`". Similarly, closing transitions are specified like "`\close{fade out}`". Normal transitions between scenes are indicated by "`\trans{`*transition-type*`}`". Whether or not punctuation belongs at the end of the *transition-type* is open for debate. Many authors use

"Fade in:", "Cut to:", and "Final fade out." while others omit the punctuation completely. Both forms are acceptable, but be consistent throughout the script.

Following the transition is the new scene, headed up by the scene line. An example should suffice: "`\scene{int.\ subway train -- night}`". The backslash after the abbreviation "`int.`" (interior) lets TEX know that the period shouldn't be followed by two spaces since it wasn't the end of a sentence. If you forget it, it isn't a big deal. If you remember it sometimes and not others, you may wish to use the `\int` and `\ext` shortcut control sequences listed in Table 3.1. The scene number will automatically be incremented.

If you're still with me, we've made it to the heart of the matter: stage directions and dialog. Normal paragraphs (except those marked with the `\dialog` macro discussed below) are considered to be stage directions automatically. If you wish to explicitly indicate a paragraph as stage directions, you may type "`\stage`". (In a previous unreleased version, the `\stage` macro was required.)

Dialog begins with `\dialog{`*character*`}`, where *character* is the person speaking. Subsequent text is then treated as dialog until the next paragraph (indicated by a `\par`, `\stage`, another `\dialog`, or a blank line in the input file).

With a few more minor macros, you should be off and running.

Within stage directions, you should use: `\sound{`*effect*`}` to indicate sound effects; `\introduce{`*character*`}` to mark the first time a speaking character appears; and `\extra{`*person*`}` to mark the first appearance of a non-speaking character (i.e., an extra). Some combinations of script type and variation in use will cause these special pieces of text to be emphasized.

In dialog, you may occasionally need to use parenthetical directions, those little clues to the performers as to the emotion and gestures which should accompany their dialog. The syntax is: `\paren{`*clue*`}`. Only use this macro in the main text of a dialog block; do not use it as part of the text of the *character* parameter to the `\dialog` macro or anywhere else.

In dialog and stage directions, you may need to use emphasis. The syntax is: `\em{`*words*`}`, and it may be used anywhere normal text is expected. Note that this is not identical to the LATEX syntax for emphasizing text. In the typewritten manuscript, emphasis is shown by underlining the text. In typeset documents, emphasis is indicated by a change in font.

There is one more macro you'll need to know. Put "`\bye`" at the end of the source file. This will make sure the final page is ejected.

3.2 Slightly advanced components

There are a few peculiar situations, which, although they occur rarely, require special attention.

For better or for worse, ellipses are used often in dialog. Experienced users of TEX and LATEX know that ellipses require special spacing to look right. `Script`TEX provides `\ldots` as an abbreviation for a properly spaced three-dot ellipsis. Four dot ellipses don't seem to be used in screenplays, despite what your English teachers may say. In the typewriter style of a screenplay manuscript, you can get away with just typing "`...`", but it isn't recommended. If you ever do other sorts of scripts with `Script`TEX or other sorts of writing with LaTeX, the `\ldots` habit is a good one to have.

Ellipses present another minor problem: poor line breaks. If a character's words trail off into an ellipsis, it's generally a good idea to use a tie between his/her last utterance and the dots of doom. (For those of you new to this, a tie is treated just like a space, except TEX won't break a line there. To type a tie, use the tilde character like this: "`I'll be back~\ldots`".) As with using `\ldots`, you can probably get away without following any of these ellipsis rules, especially in a typewriter-style manuscript, but it's a nice touch.

In screenplays, when one character jumps in and finishes a line for another character (think of Dave and Maddie in *Moonlighting*), ellipses are used. You may have a strong temptation to use dashes, but the authorities say that ellipses are the appropriate tool. If you have such a situation, use "`\leadin{`*last-words*`}`" around the first character's last few words and `\pickup` before the second character's first words. See the example file.

Admittedly, the `\leadin` and `\pickup` macros are pretty boring in screenplays. In a stageplay format, the effect is typographically more interesting (although it could still use work), thus this pair of macros is provided to help you when its time to adapt your Tony Award-winning stageplay to film.

3.3 Variants

Within the general category of screenplays, there are a few variations which are appropriate to specific types of scripts.

Teleplays generally show the act breaks and numbers since that's where they slip the commercials in. Although motion picture scripts are built around acts too, the act breaks are not explicitly shown. `Script`TEX provides the variations `\TV` and `\movie` which can be placed at the top of the source file. Besides suppressing the act breaks, `\movie` also prevents the scene number from being reset at the beginning of each act. In either case, it is recommended that you use the `\act` macro (and its cousins which are described later in this section).

As previously stated, situation comedies are double-spaced. If your script is a situation comedy put "`\sitcom`" near the top of your file. This macro also implies `\TV`.

A script may also be printed various ways depending upon its progress through the life-cycle of a production. If you want to print a copy just for proof-reading, use `\proof`. This macro will put the date, draft, and title on a footline on each page. On the other hand, if this is the copy you plan to send out into the real world, use `\manuscript` which turns off the footlines and scene numbers. If you're fortunate enough to have your screenplay produced *and* you get to maintain control of the shooting script, use `\shoot` which turns on the display of scene numbers.

Manuscripts are generally typed only on one side of the page and are bound with one or two brass brads through holes punched in the paper. `ScriptTEX` makes the left margin wider to accommodate the holes and brads. If, however, you are printing your draft copies on both sides of the paper, use `\twoside`, and `ScriptTEX` will alternate which margin is widened.

One final variant that effects the overall output is the previously mentioned `\jlbrooks` macro which causes `ScriptTEX` to perform "creative margin release". It is not recommended for use on submitted manuscripts, but if you want to save a few sheets when printing drafts, this might help.

By the way, the default for the variants above are `\TV` and `\proof`.

3.4 Mutant cousins

A few of the basic controls discussed in a previous section have mutant cousins with specific applications.

Television shows often begin with a mini act called a teaser, a three- or four-minute audience grabber shown before the first commercial. Similarly, some shows have a couple pages after the last act called a tag where everything is neatly wrapped up or the episode's running gag is finally put to death. These constructs are identical to acts except for the name. `ScriptTEX` provides `\teaser` and `\tag` which can be used for these situations in place of `\act`.

`ScriptTEX` also provides `\prolog` and `\epilog` which might be more appropriate for a miniseries. These two also make the transition between stageplays and screenplays require less thought.

You might want to consider `\open` and `\close` to be mutant cousins of `\trans`; you wouldn't be the only one.

If you absolutely have to have your acts named differently than the automatic names like "Act One", "Teaser", and "Tag", then you can call `\acthead{`*your-title*`}`. Be aware that this routine will increment the internal act counter.

If after the last act, you would prefer to the line "The End" to the standard "End of Act *n*", you can use `\theend` before the `\bye`.

3.5 Shortcuts and synonyms

The macros presented to this point are general enough to handle almost any screenplay manuscript. As a result, certain sequences are so common that it would be convenient to have abbreviations. The source file may also be rendered more readable by the appropriate use of synonyms. These shortcuts and synonyms don't really require any sort of explanation, so I'll just list them in Table 3.1.

3.6 Title pages

`ScriptTEX` can also produce pretty title pages, just tell `ScriptTEX` the basic information: your script's title and your name. Put "`\title{`*script-title*`}`"

`\beat`	`\paren{beat}`
`\cut`	`\trans{cut to}`
`\dialogue{`*character*`}`	`\dialog{`*character*`}`
`\dissolve`	`\trans{dissolve to}`
`\epilogue`	`\epilog`[*]
`\ext{`*scene*`}`	`\scene{ext.\ `*scene*`}`
`\fadein`	`\open{fade in}`
`\fadeout`	`\open{fade out}`
`\int{`*scene*`}`	`\scene{int.\ `*scene*`}`
`\os`	`\paren{`off screen`}`[†]
`\prologue`	`\prolog`[*]
`\shot{`*subject*`}`	`\scene{`*subject*`}`
`\tv`	`\TV`
`\vo`	`\paren{voice over}`

[*] These use the *-gue* spelling in the act name.

[†] Actually becomes `\paren{off stage}` in stageplay formats.

Table 3.1: Predefined shortcuts and synonyms.

and "`\author{`*author's-name*`}`" at the top of your source file. The macro `\maketitle` will then produce a title page.

There is a little more to the title page story, however. If you are writing a spec script or an episode of a television series, you should also indicate the name of the series with the `\series{`*series-name*`}` construct.

To show a copyright notice on the titlepage, specify `\showcopyright{`*year*`}` before the `\maketitle` macro. To keep your old scripts looking up to date, you might want to use `\number\year` for the *year* parameter.

Your address and/or phone number (or that of your agent) can be included by using `\address{`*address*`}`. Separate the lines of the *address* with double backslashes (\\\\).

Despite what agents want to see, I like to have draft numbers and dates on my drafts. You can include this information by using "`\draft{`*draft-number*`}`" and "`\date{`*draft-date*`}`" before the `\maketitle` command. If the selected variant is `\proof`, the draft and date information will be printed. If, however, the `\manuscript` variant is in force, the draft and date information is ignored. If you don't supply the date, `Script`TeX will assume `\today` which expands to the date that you are running TeX.

Chapter 4

Breakdowns

The original release of `Script`TeX included the ability to produce cast lists and scene breakdowns. They looked terrible, weren't useful, and generally caused all sorts of problems. Therefore, the breakdown features have been removed from `Script`TeX and will probably not return.

I apologize if you came to rely on the breakdown features. The user-level macros supporting the breakdowns will now cause a warning message to be displayed, but should not otherwise hinder the formatting of your scripts.

Chapter 5

Hints

If you are having problems with `Script`TeX, these hints might be helpful.

Many of `Script`TeX macros only work properly when used in the right context. Strange output is often due to using a macro in weird place. If you are familiar with LaTeX, it may be sufficient to say that variants, revision information, and the `\make`... macros are analogous to LaTeX's preamble except that `Script`TeX doesn't make the distinction between the preamble and the body explicit. Here are the rules of what can go where:

- You must use "`\input scrnplay.tex`" or "`\input stagplay.tex`" before any `Script`TeX macros.
- If TeX complains that the font cmpica or cmpicai cannot be found, you will need to edit `scrnplay.tex` to change the definitions of `mainfont` and `emfont` to `cmtt`.
- Variants (such as `\twoside`, `\proof`, and `\TV`) should come next.
- Revision information must come before `\maketitle`.
- Finally comes the main body of the script formed with the basic components.
- Use `\paren` *only* in dialog.
- The macro `\cleanup` should only come after all of the body of the script. `\cleanup` is optional since `\bye` will take care of it.
- Nothing should come after `\bye`.

Chapter 6

How the macros work

At least some of the techniques used in `Script`TEX should be documented beyond the few cryptic sentences in the source. (In fact, once it is well-documented here, the source should probably be stripped of comments to speed up the `\input` process.) These sections assume a good familiarity with TEX.

6.1 Emulating a typist

One of the trickiest things I've had to do with TEX is make it emulate a typewriter. Here are the techniques used to do this in `Script`TEX.

Previous versions of `Script`TEX used Computer Modern Typewriter Type (cmtt) by default for typed screenplay formats. This version, however, uses a pica font called cmpica and an underlined cousin called cmpicati created by Don Hosek. The advantages these fonts is that they automatically transform TEX typing conventions like “`‘‘---’’`” into “`"--"`” and they provide better underlining.

If you do not have these fonts available at your site, you can edit `scrnplay.tex` to change the definition of `mainfont` and `emfont` to cmtt, but I encourage you to try to get Don Hosek's fonts. They are available from most TEX distributions.

The typewriter fonts are fixed pitch, and the inter-word spaces can't stretch or shrink. In case the user changes to a different font, `Script`TEX uses `\spaceskip` and `\xspaceskip` to make sure that the spaces are fixed width. Everything is scaled in terms of lines and columns by defining `\lineskip` and `\charwid` once the font is selected. `\lineskip` is set to 12 big points to make sure that there are 6 lines per inch.

The changing margins of screenplay format are achieved by adjusting `\leftskip` and `\rightskip` appropriately. `\rightskip` also takes into account the ragged right margin by having a stretchability of 8 character widths. (The “hot zone” on a typewriter is generally 8 characters wide, so lines are usually broken between the margin bell, which signifies the beginning of the hot zone, and the actual right margin.) To emulate a typist even more exactly, setting

`\hfuzz` to some slightly positive multiple of character widths might be appropriate. To stretch things out when the `\jlbrooks` variant is in effect, `Script`TEX does increase `\hfuzz` (as well as stretch all of the line lengths).

Hyphenation is a fact of life in the realm of screenplay manuscripts, as are "club" and "widow" lines. Additionally, we want TEX to just fill each line as much as possible without worrying too much about the aesthetic look of the entire paragraph. To achieve this, `Script`TEX sets TEX's battery of penalty and demerit factors to zero and increases `\pretolerance` so that we're more likely to hyphenate than have a really short line.

The result is pretty good (apologies to Knuth). Anyone but a typist who was looking for something wrong would not be able to detect weirdness, and the aforementioned typist would probably remark that the output is too consistent.

6.2 Mark madness

Marks are the biggest nightmare in `Script`TEX. Each mark has seven parts used and an eighth part which is reserved for a feature whose implementation is still being worked out. Each part of the mark is a token list of stuff that needs to be done in certain situations. The parts are separated by `\or`s so that the nth part can be selected with `\ifcase`n. The parts are:

0. The text to generate the act/scene header. In the `scrnplay.tex` format, it is the hanging scene number followed by a period and a space. (Some variants don't use this part at all.)
1. The text "(CONTINUED)" if this scene is continued from the previous page.
2. The text "*character* (CONT'D)" if the current dialog by *character* may be continued onto the next page.
3. A call of `\nukeline` to make room for the "(MORE)" text which is used if dialog is split.
4. The text "(MORE)" if the current dialog continues onto the next page.
5. A pair of `\nukeline`s to make room for the "CONTINUED" text at the bottom of the page if the current scene continues onto the next page.
6. The "CONTINUED" text for the bottom of the page if the current scene continues onto the next page.
7. Reserved for the up-coming revision page feature.

It is easier to understand this list if you look at a formatted screenplay to see how the scene and dialog splits are handled from page to page. Putting the `\nukeline`s into separate parts of the mark is necessary because they must be done before the body of the page, but the text doesn't come until afterwards. In retrospect, it might be possible to combine items 1 and 6, but that would come at the cost of generality and clarity.

The `\output` routine actually uses the marks. At first blush this may not seem too tricky, but there is an important subtlety. The "(MORE)" and "CONTINUED" lines at the bottom of the page actually encroach into the space intended for the bottom of the page. The `\nukeline`s help keep track of how much extra space we need at the bottom. When the time comes, the box TEX has handed the `\output` routine must be `\vsplit`, so that a few lines at the bottom are usually deferred to a later page. The local setting of `\vbadness` to "infinity" suppresses the "underfull vbox" messages that come from the split. `\vbadness` is restored (implicitly by TEX's grouping rules) before the `\shipout` occurs.

The splitting of the box further complicates keeping track of the mark. No longer is `\topmark` valid, since it might have come from lines that were put back when the previous page was output. It is not a mistake that `\splitbotmark` is used when `\topmark` seems to be the logical intent. TEX assures us the `\splitbotmark` is null if no `\vsplit` has yet occurred, so there is no special case for the first page.

The macros for the basic components may seem to use penalties in odd ways. This is to assure that a split doesn't occur between a mark and the relevant block. In some cases, they may be redundant, but the intent was to guarantee proper operation in this early release and then to optimize later.

The current value of each part of the last mark is carried around in a set of seven macros. This is necessary since certain basic components don't know how to set all of the components of the mark. Close inspection will probably reveal possible optimizations in this regard, but again the intent was to keep it general for the first release.

Chapter 7

Distribution and local changes

This document, the `ScriptTEX` macro files, and the demonstration document are copyrighted by the author. You may make and distribute copies as well as prepare derivative works for non-commercial purposes. All other rights are reserved by the author.

Feel free to re-distribute this document as well as the files described herein. I request, however, that you try to keep the files together (i.e., don't break up the package).

If you make local hacks, please change the version number by appending a letter to it, e.g., "1.04-A". Be aware that "1.04-A" at one site will quite possibly be different than "1.04-A" at another. I would like, however, users to feel confident that "1.04" is "1.04" is "1.04" everywhere. I also prefer local hacks don't propagate too far. If you have a change that is generally useful, I would love to hear about it and integrate it into the "official" package.

This document is written for LATEX. There is a companion example file called `stdemo.tex` which demonstrates the use of this macro package. Table 7.1 lists the files which constitute `ScriptTEX`.

`scrnplay.tex`	macro definitions for screenplay manuscripts
`scrnwrit.bib`	BIBTEX source for this documentation
`stagplay.tex`	macro definitions for stageplays
`stdemo.tex`	`ScriptTEX` demonstration file
`stdoc.tex`	LATEX source for this documentation

Table 7.1: The components of `ScriptTEX` 1.04.

Appendix A

Script formats

This appendix describes the formats for the various types of scripts currently supported by `Script`TEX.

A.1 Screenplay manuscript format

Screenplay manuscripts are typed, not typeset. With computers becoming even more ubiquitous, aspiring scriptwriters are more likely to be submitting nice-looking documents formatted with Macintoshes$^{\mathrm{TM}}$ and PC's and the like. For better or worse, agents take typewritten manuscripts more seriously, according to Richard Walter in *Screenwriting: The Art, Craft and Business of Film and Television Writing* [Wal88]. Therefore, `Script`TEX's screenplay manuscript format looks typewritten.

The layout of a typewritten manuscript has few variations. The `Script`TEX macros have been designed to emulate those conventions that seem to be most universal. Details like lines per page, page number, scene numbers, and margins have all been based on half a dozen screenwriting books and a few actual screenplays. Whenever there was an inconsistency, I went with the majority.

The screenplay format is so evolved that — averaged out over a half-hour TV show, a two-hour movie, or a four-night miniseries — one page is one minute of screen time. This may sound absurdly arbitrary, but it seems to hold true. One page averages to one minute. Agents and producers realize that this is only a rule-of-thumb, but this rule does drive decisions. Production costs are often estimated from the page-count, so it is important that the conventions are followed.

There is an exception to the page-a-minute rule: situation comedies. Sitcoms are typed double-spaced, so one sitcom page is 30 seconds. In all other aspects, though, sitcoms are formatted just like other teleplays.

As an amusing aside, James L. Brooks, in his foreword to the published screenplay of *Broadcast News* [Bro88], explains that he often bribed studio typists to shrink the margins to make his too-long scripts come closer to "acceptable" page-counts. This anecdote is the inspiration of the `\jlbrooks` macro in `Script`TEX.

If you are serious about submitting your work to agents, you are better off knocking their socks off with a good story than your own interpretation of manuscript format.

The basic layout is simple. A scene begins with a line, in all caps, which indicates the location and usually the time of day. (In a shooting script, each new camera angle is considered a scene, so the scene lines in the middle of a sequence often simply indicate the main subject of the shot, such as a particular character.) Stage directions and descriptions are typed like normal paragraphs without indentation.

Dialog begins with the character's name, all in caps, roughly centered on a line by itself (no colons or other punctuation). The character's words are set as narrow paragraphs, again without indentation. Parenthetical directions which indicate the mood or mannerisms of the character as he/she speaks are set even narrower and inside parentheses.

Transitions like "dissolve to" and "cut to" are done in caps near the right margin. Opening and closing transitions such as "fade in" and "fade out" are placed at the left margin.

Note, overuse of and is usually considered bad form. A simple "cut to" is redundant, since that can be inferred from the beginning of the new scene. Occasionally, it is appropriate to use a "dissolve to" to signal a *long* passage of time or to introduce a flashback. Parenthetical directions alsost always amount to directing on paper, which is another no-no. When a character speaks to a specific person in a group, a parenthetical direction may be used to avoid ambiguity. If you want to sell your script, don't give into the temptation of padding your script with zillions of useless transitions and parenthetical directions.

Blank lines separate almost everything. Pages are numbereds in the upper-right corner of the page. If a scene crosses page break, as they often do, "CONTINUED" should be placed at the bottom of the page, in the same style as a transition, and the page-number line of the following page should be marked "CONTINUED" at the left. If scene numbers are used (rare in manuscripts), then they are set hanging in the left margin next to the scene lines and the top "CONTINUED" designations. If a character's dialog spans a page break, the first part is labeled "(MORE)" in the same style of parenthetical directions, and the following page repeats the characters name with the designation "(CONT'D)".

Text marked with the `\sound`, `\introduce`, and `\extra` macros will be set in all-caps in shooting scripts. In all other formats, `\sound` is a no-op.

This has been a loose description of the format, with which one should be able to read a screenplay. The actual placement of these blocks is strictly prescribed in terms of lines and columns. Some books even list different tab settings for pica and elite typewriters. Since the Computer Modern Typewriter Type, "cmtt", isn't really pica or elite, I have scaled things in terms of character widths, which will cause nearly identical line breaks as someone following the standard conventions with a standard size type. Baselines have been set to 12 big points rather than 12 points in order to get a true 66 lines per page. I shall put off other such details to the description of the workings of the macros.

Another set of cold rules for screenplay manuscripts is those that apply to the title page. Most of these rules are of the “do not” variety. The “do” rules are easier to enumerate: (1) put the name of the script in all caps centered on the page; (2) put the name of the author a few lines below the title. The “do not” rules essentially say, “Don't put anything on the title page other than the title and the author's name”. If you disagree with these rules, see the Richard Walter book listed in the bibliography; he explains why you shouldn't have the date or draft information, the author's address and telephone number, or even the words “written by” before the author's name. Except for the draft and date fields, `Script`TEX will place the other pieces of information on your title page if you have defined them. Draft and date will also appear if the `\proof` variant is in force. Michael Hauge recommends that you include a copyright notice on the title page, but always use the current year to keep your old scripts looking fresh.

A.2 Stageplay format

The layout of the stageplay format was fairly arbitrary. Published formats for stageplays seems to exhibit more flexibility than the screenplay manuscript format.

Act and scene designations are always shown. Acts and scenes are counted in Roman numerals: uppercase for acts, lowercase for scenes. Acts always begin on a new page. The heading line on each page contains the title and the act and scene number.

Scene lines and stage directions are typeset in an italic font. Dialog uses the same margins as the rest of the text. The speaking character is set in small caps with hanging indentation. The dialog itself in roman type, and parenthetical directions are italicized like stage directions.

The transition macros `\open`, `\close`, and `\trans` should be used to indicate key curtain and lighting changes, such as “`\open{curtain up}`” and “`\close{blackout}`”.

The `\leadin` and `\pickup` macros measure and stagger the text to emphasize the flow of the dialog from one character to the next.

Appendix B

Known problems and limitations

Most of these problems are minor annoyances.

- Using certain macros in the wrong context, such as a `\paren` in stage directions or a variation switch too far down from the top can cause all sorts of weird things to happen. ("Doctor, it hurts when I do this!" "Don't do that.")
- If your script has an inordinate number of acts, the act number will shift from being spelled out ("Act Nine") to uppercase Roman numerals ("Act XXIV"). This threshold, however, should be high-enough to handle even week-long miniseries without enter the Roman numeral phase.
- The `\leadin` and `\pickup` macros don't work quite right in stageplay format. A future release will provide better support.

Appendix C

Glossary

“A-pages” Pages in a screenplay (usually a shooting script) which have been inserted during the course of a revision.s To avoid renumbering the entire script, additional pages are numbered with the number of the previous page and a letter. For example, if page 92 has grown into three pages, the page sequence would be: . . . , 91, 92, 92-A, 92-B, 93, ...

club lines If a paragraph is split across pages between the first and second line, the first line is a club line.

dialog block A screenplay format construct consisting of the character’s name and his/her words along with the associated parenthetical direction.

extra A character in a script who has no dialog.

koala An Australian marsupial that eats bushes, shoots, and leaves.

manuscript [in the context of this document:] A typed script of the form submitted to an agent or producer.

master scene A scene in a script that is written in terms of all of the action that takes place in the given locale at a particular time rather than a shot-by-shot description of the same events. Manuscripts are generally written as master scenes which, if the script is produced, later broken down shot-by-shot into the shooting script.

parenthetical direction Parenthesized items embedded into a character’s dialog which indicate the mode, timing, and gestures for that speech.

scene line The line in all caps at the beginning of a scene which identifies the location and time of the scene. In a shooting script, the scene line often indicates the primary subject of the shot.

screenplay A script for a television show or motion picture production.

shooting script A script that has been prepared for production by breaking each sequence down shot-by-shot. A shooting script is generally prepared by the director (sometimes in association with the author) from the author's original manuscript.

spec(ulation) script A script written on speculation for an existing television series. Spec scripts are rarely sold, but they may lead to a regular staff-position for that series.

stage directions Blocks of text which describe scenes and characters and there actions. Stage directions also indicate sound and special effects.

stageplay A script for a theatrical production.

teleplay A script specifically for a television show or made-for-TV movie.

widow line If a paragraph is split across pages between its penultimate and last lines, the last line is a widow line.

Appendix D

Macro summary

This summary lists the `ScriptTeX` macros which are intended for authors to use.

D.1 Basic components

`\act` Begins a new act.

`\bye` Ejects the last page, closes the auxiliary files, and performs other housekeeping duties.

`\cleanup` Ejects the last page and closes the auxiliary files. After `\cleanup` you may safely use the `\makecastlist` and `\makescenelist` macros.

`\close{`***transition-type***`}` Outputs a closing transition like "FADE OUT" for use at the end of an act.

`\cut` Shortcut for "`\trans{cut to}`".

`\dialog{`***character***`}` ***speech*** Begins a new dialog block for the specified *character*. His/her words and parenthetical directions (*speech*) should follow. The dialog block ends at the next paragraph break.

`\dissolve` Shortcut for "`\trans{dissolve to}`".

`\em{`***words***`}` Emphasizes the *words* (by underlining them in manuscript format).

`\extra{`***person***`}` Used to indicate the first appearance of a particular non-speaking character.

`\introduce{`***character***`}` Used to indicate the first appearance of a speaking character.

`\open{`***transition-type***`}` Outputs an opening transition like "FADE IN" for use at the beginning of an act.

`\paren{`***clue***`}` Places a parenthetical direction inside a dialog block. Never use this macro outside the context of the *speech* parameter in a dialog.

`\scene{`***scene-line***`}` Begins a new scene.

`\sound{`***effect***`}` Indicates that *effect* is a sound effect. Never use this macro outside the context of stage directions.

`\stage` (optional) Begins a block of stage directions.

`\trans{`***transition-type***`}` Indicates the type of transition between scenes.

D.2 Slightly advanced components

`\acthead{`***act-name***`}` Begins a new act named *act-name*. This macro is used in the guts of `\act` and its mutant cousins. In general, using this routine directly is not recommended unless you know what you are doing.

`\ldots` Expands to a three-dot ellipsis.

`\leadin{`***last-words***`}` Prepares the dialog to be interrupted by the next character. See `\pickup`.

`\pickup` Use at the beginning of a character's dialog when he/she is interrupting the previous character. See `\leadin`.

`\theend` Causes the final "End of Act *n*" line to be replaced by "The End". Use immediately before `\bye`.

`\today` Expands to the current date in the form *dd-MMM-yyyy*.

D.3 Variants

`\jlbrooks` Invokes the James L. Brooks variant, causing `Script`TEX to squeeze a little more script onto every page.

`\manuscript` Invokes the manuscript variant for ready-to-submit output.

`\movie` Invokes the motion picture variant.

`\proof` Invokes the proof-reading variant. Use on preliminary drafts to include date and draft information on each page.

`\shoot` Invokes the shooting script variant. Use if you're making a shot-by-shot breakdown.

`\sitcom` Invokes the situation comedy variant, i.e., it double-spaces the script and implies the `\TV` variant.

`\TV` Invokes the teleplay variant.

`\twoside` Variant which causes the left margin to shift on alternate pages, so drafts printed on both sides of a sheet will be easier to read when bound.

D.4 Mutant cousins

`\epilog` Mutant cousin of `\act` for use at the end of a miniseries.

`\prolog` Mutant cousin of `\act` for use at the beginning of a miniseries.

`\tag` Mutant cousin of `\act` for use at the end of a television show.

`\teaser` Mutant cousin of `\act` for use at the beginning of a television show.

D.5 Shortcuts and synonyms

`\beat` Shortcut for “`\paren{beat}`”.

`\dialogue` Synonym for `\dialog`.

`\epilogue` Synonym for `\epilog`, except that it causes the act name to be “Epilogue”.

`\ext{`***scene***`}` Shortcut for “`\scene{ext.\ `*scene*`}`”.

`\fadein` Shortcut for “`\open{fade in}`”.

`\fadeout` Shortcut for “`\open{fade out}`”.

`\int{`***scene***`}` Shortcut for “`\scene{int.\ `*scene*`}`”.shortcuts!interior

`\os` Shortcut for “`\paren{off screen}''.`

`\prologue Synonym of \prolog, except that it causes the act name to be ``Prologue''.`

`\shot{`***subject***`} Shortcut for ``\scene{`*subject*`}''.`

`\tv Synonym for \TV.`

`\vo Shortcut for ``\paren{voice over}''.`

D.6 Title page information

`\address{`***address***`}` Specifies the address and/or phone number of the author or agent which will then be printed on the title page.

`\author{`***name***`}` Defines *name* for use as the author's name on the title page.

`\basedon{`***string***`}` *string* will be printed below the author's name to allow for comments like "Based on a novel by John Doe".

`\date{`***string***`}` Uses *string* wherever the draft date should be printed (if appropriate to the selected variant).

`\draft{`***draft-name***`}` Makes *draft-name* the text used on the title page and in the footline (if appropriate to the selected variant).

`\maketitle` Uses the information in specified in `\series`, `\title`, `\author`, `\draft`, and `\date` commands to create a title page.

`\showcopyright{`***year***`}` Specifies that a copyright symbol and the *year* should appear on the title page. It is sometime recommended to use `\number\year` to always keep your script looking up-to-date.

`\series{`***series-name***`}` Indicates that *series-name* should be used as the name of the series on the title page and footlines.

`\title{`***name***`}` Defines *name* to be used as the title of the script on the title page and footlines (if appropriate to the selected variant).

Bibliography

[Bro88] James L. Brooks. *Broadcast News.* Vintage Books, New York, 1988.

[Wal88] Richard Walter. *Screenwriting: The Art, Craft and Business of Film and Television Writing.* Plume, New York, 1988.