

A letter about referencing...

Kia ora ehoa ma,

Last weekend I ran a workshop for beginning thesis students. Following that workshop, a former colleague, now a supervisee, sent me the URL for a free web-cloud-based reference management system. That software is called Mendeley and the URL is <http://www.mendeley.com/> You're given 500 Megabytes as a starter but if you need more space, you pay.

With some trepidation, I used the software to import my EndNote library of 2,864 references which I've steadfastly accumulated since 1992. It did so in a manner of a few seconds and I have to say that what's presented within the software seems simple enough to use as a search engine. However, it won't do Cite While You Write (CWYW) but I think that for many writers that may not be too much of an impediment.

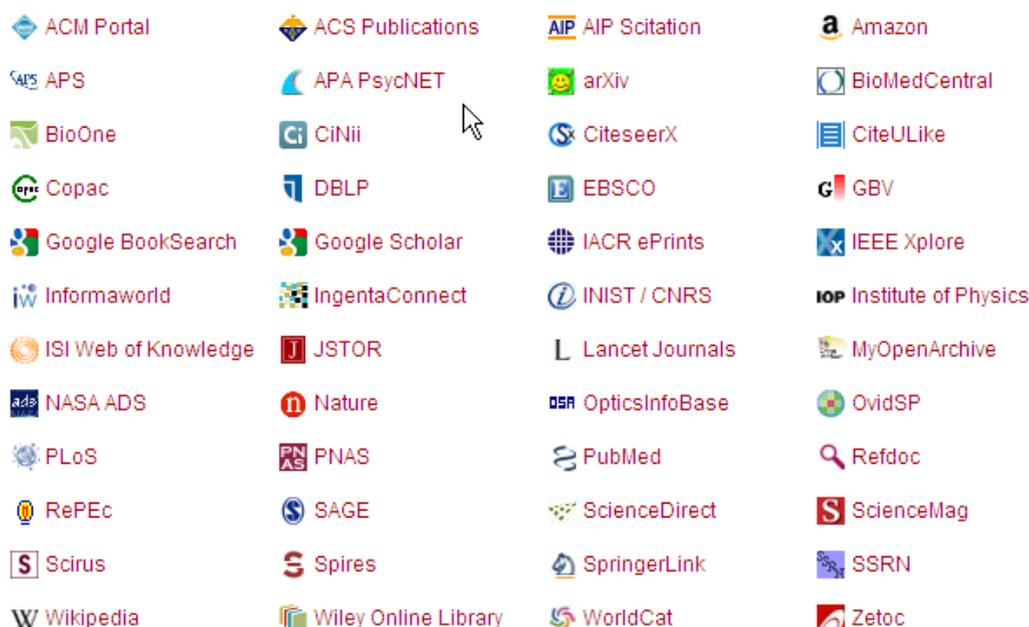
Of course, it goes without saying that if you've grown an EndNote library over time that has even a modicum of professional substance, you should always, always, always make sure you keep copies of it. That way, in the event if anything untoward happening to your cloud based alternatives, you'll always be able to revert to your original baseline of references.

That said, the advantages embedded within this software appear to be considerable:

1. The software is cloud based and that means you have access to your references from anywhere that has a computer and an Internet connection. You can also link it to *iphones* and *ipads*.
2. You can use the application to conduct specific searches for authors and/or texts from within your own library. That means you can then opt to populate your list of references with relevant finds but note again, that CWYW is not an option. Nevertheless, your finds can still form the basis for your reference list for any paper you happen to be preparing.
3. Very pleasingly, you can also gain pretty much instant access to other journal and information sources. It's useful to note that if you ensure that your information is mined from 'open sources' you'll be able to download materials in their entirety. But if you search and download beyond open sources, there will be restrictions such as the being able to access just the abstract, or only the first couple of pages. I searched for materials on visual analysis and found an abundance of materials; not all of it was relevant, but nevertheless, I uncovered interesting materials which were new to me. The ability to step from a reference base into searching the Internet and then corralling lassoed references is perhaps one of the most appealing features of this application.
4. If your search finds are PDFs, they can be easily managed so that the reference will become integrated into your library of references. Two or three clicks was all that was needed to relocate the PDF journal into my library. It was fully referenced because with the click of a button, I was able to make sure it was cited in accordance with APA 6.
5. Sorting selected references into topic specific folders is also an easy matter and there's even an option for being able to import from the web, i.e. from the following which I captured within this screen-shot:

2. Locate a document:

You can now begin to import documents from a wide variety of sites, such as those listed below. In addition to these sites, we also support importing metadata from COinS and metatags. If you wish to add Mendeley Web Importer support for your site, please refer to the [information for publishers guide](#).



Perhaps the thing that I liked the most about this open-source alternative to EndNote is the ability to delve into kindred areas of interest. For instance, I've just today signed up to <http://www.citeulike.org/> and the screen capture below shows some of what that link enables.



For this application, I made a point of following the instructions to lock it onto my 'favourites' and that then gave me a comprehensive list of journals to which I can now gain instant access. Searching for materials within my field of interest was, therefore, a straightforward procedure. Here's the list of supported sites:

3. That's it! You're ready to start bookmarking papers and articles. Navigate to the abstract page of an article from any online journal and press the link button you just created.

Supported sites include:

[ACL Anthology](#) | [AIP Scitation](#) | [Amazon](#) | [American Chem. Soc. Publications](#) | [American Geophysical Union](#) | [American Meteorological Society Journals](#) | [American Physical Society](#) | [Annual Reviews](#) | [Anthrosource](#) | [arXiv.org e-Print archive](#) | [Association for Computing Machinery \(ACM\) portal](#) | [Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence Digital Library](#) | [BioMed Central](#) | [BiomedExperts](#) | [BioOne](#) | [Blackwell Synergy](#) | [BMJ](#) | [Cambridge University Press](#) | [Cases Network](#) | [Cell](#) | [Chicago Journals](#) | [CiNii](#) | [CiteSeer](#) | [CiteSeerX Beta](#) | [crossref-doi](#) | [Cryptology ePrint Archive](#) | [Daum](#) | [DBLP](#) | [de Gruyter](#) | [EBI CiteXplore](#) | [EdITLib](#) | [Education Resources Information Center](#) | [EGU Journals](#) | [Elsevier](#) | [E1000](#) | [First Monday](#) | [HighWire](#) | [IEEE Digital Library](#) | [IEEE Explore](#) | [Informa Healthcare](#) | [informaworld](#) | [Ingenta](#) | [IngentaConnect](#) | [International Journal of Communication](#) | [IoP Electronic Journals](#) | [IOS Press](#) | [IUCr](#) | [IWA Publishing Online](#) | [Japan Society of Applied Physics](#) | [JASA](#) | [Journal of Machine Learning Research](#) | [Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association](#) | [Journal of Visualized Experiment](#) | [JSTAGE](#) | [JStatSoft](#) | [JSTOR](#) | [LibraryThing](#) | [Mary Ann Liebert](#) | [MathSciNet](#) | [mdpi](#) | [MetaPress](#) | [MIT Press Journals](#) | [Morjan and Claypool](#) | [NASA Astrophysics Data System](#) | [National Bureau of Economic Research](#) | [Nature](#) | [Nature Precedings](#) | [New England Journal of Medicine](#) | [novo|seek](#) | [Open Repository](#) | [Optical Society of America](#) | [PenSoft](#) | [Pion](#) | [plos](#) | [PLoS Biology](#) | [Primary Care Respiratory Journal](#) | [Project MUSE](#) | [PsyCONTENT](#) | [PubMed](#) | [PubMed Central](#) | [Requests for Comments and Internet-Drafts](#) | [Royal Society](#) | [Royal Society of Chemistry](#) | [Science](#) | [ScienceDirect](#) | [Scopus](#) | [Social Science Research Network](#) | [SPIE Digital Library](#) | [Springer Protocols](#) | [SpringerLink](#) | [Taylor and Francis](#) | [The Journal of Clinical Investigation](#) | [UK PubMed Central](#) | [University of Texas at Austin AI Lab Website](#) | [Usenix](#) | [Wiley InterScience](#) | [WorldCat](#) | [WormBase](#)

Note: if you use our [advanced bookmarklet](#) instead, you will also be able to post from Scopus, ISI Web of Knowledge, Mendeley, Google Scholar and Google Books. It also supports many ePrints sites and multiple simultaneous postings from PubMed.

(By the way, if you want to use any one or more of these tools on a regular basis, think about going to the dropdown file menu within Internet Explorer when you are in the site, and choose "send to desktop as shortcut". A shortcut will then appear on your desktop for that site.)

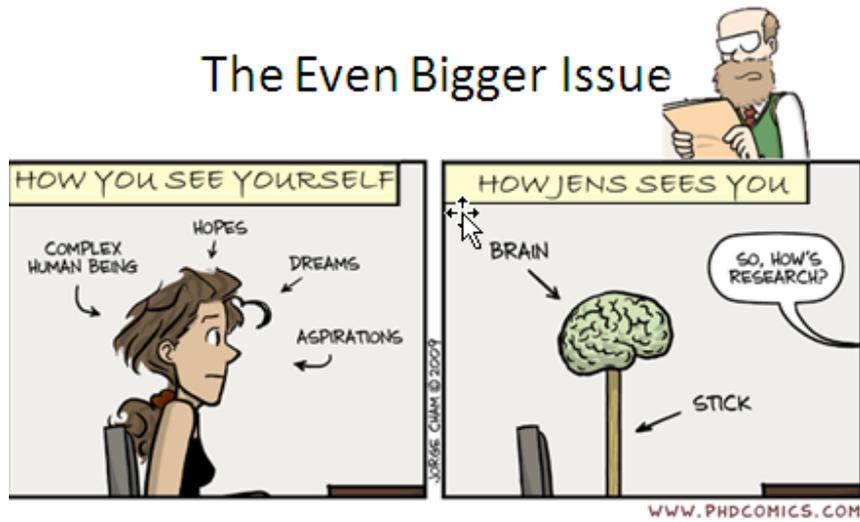
I've never been a fan of advertising within the net even though advertisements undoubtedly fund applications thereby enabling them to become shared. But even though the Citeulike page featured advertisements they weren't 'in-your-face' to such an extent that they became disconcerting. Whilst I'm being critical, I'd also like to comment that it might be useful, I think, to be able to export from Mendeley into EndNote. I'm not at all sure why that should be a capability but I'm bound to comment that for older academics like me, who have very little (once golden but now silver) hair left, there seems to be some form of comfort in being able to revert to tried and true regimes.

So there you have it, an alternative to EndNote. To be fair, I'm not *dissing* EndNote; far from it. Indeed, I still think that we should make a far more concerted effort at teaching students about that kind of software especially now that it's now far more readily accessible for tertiary students. We should be teaching them about EndNote and/or Zotera and/or Mendeley.

The important point is to teach them the skills of referencing and of careful literature and information management. It's equally as important to help them to understand that developing a substantial reservoir of RELEVANT citations and accompanying key-words, abstracts, reference notes, and so on, can serve as an essential tool for the remainder of their professional careers.

But as this note tells you, there are alternatives. So why not have a play with the alternatives I've introduced here? You never know, some of you may even be able to prevail upon me to offer to run a very brief workshop.

Happy sleuthing with your mind literally being in the clouds...and let me tell you, that's far, far better than being a mere brain on a stick!



Na

Jens