



The Joy of TEX

Second Edition

A
Gourmet Guide
to Typesetting
with the $\mathcal{A}\mathcal{M}\mathcal{S}$ -TEX
macro package

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Personal Pronoun Pronouncement

*Which The Reader Skips At
His or Her Peril*

Since T_EX is a rather revolutionary approach to typesetting, I decided that a rather revolutionary approach to non-S_EXist terminology would be appropriate in this manual. I myself am completely unprejudiced, of course. As Mark Twain said, or should have said: All I care to know is that a man or woman is a human being—that is enough for me; he or she can't be any worse. But I hate having to say “he or she” or “his or her” or using awkward circumlocutions. Numerous approaches to this problem have been suggested, but one strikes me as particularly simple and sensible. Just as ‘I’ is the first person singular pronoun, regardless of gender, so ‘E’ will be used in this book as the third person singular pronoun for both genders. Thus, ‘E’ is the singular of ‘they’. Accordingly, ‘Eir’ (pronounced to rhyme with ‘their’) will be the possessive, and ‘Em’ (rhyming with ‘them’) will stand for either ‘him’ or ‘her’. Here is an example that illustrates all three forms:

E loves Em only for Eir body.

•Exercise PPP.1¹

How many possible meanings does this sentence have?

¹Answers to all the Exercises will be found in Appendix B.