coolfn:
A package for a cool way to typeset footnotes

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1 Overview

Legal writing, for better or for worse,\(^1\) often involves very long and dis-
cursive footnotes replete with a series of often doubtfully relevant cita-
tions (perhaps with blockquotes of even more doubtful relevance).\(^2\) Con-
sequently, the formatting of footnotes for clear numbering, delineation of
internal quotations and paragraphs, and clarity takes on a great import-
ance.

This is a subjective question, on which the typographic authorities offer
many suggestions. This package simply provides a way of formatting long
footnotes the author thinks is, for lack of a better word, cool. It uses a
clear column of numbers separated from the footnote, of sufficient width to
accommodate triple digit footnote numbers. A hanging indent emphasises
the footnote as the sideways mirror of the text, reflecting the paragraph but
in a different way.\(^3\) There is no footnote rule and a very slight increase in
the parskip to help the eye distinguish multi-paragraph footnotes.\(^4\)

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1 Almost certainly for the worse, except in the very rare situations where the author is
capable of mastering the art of distinctive discursive footnote writing. Far more
authors think that they can pull off this delicate technique than actually are capable
of doing so.

2 Here, it is apt to note, as Parke B said in Parke B in \textit{Mirehouse v Rennel} (1833) 1 Cl & F
527, 546, that:

\begin{quote}
Our common law system consists in the applying to new combinations
of circumstances those rules of law which we derive from legal prin-
ciples and judicial precedents; and for the sake of attaining uniform-
ity, consistency and certainty, we must apply those rules, where they
are not plainly unreasonable or inconvenient, to all cases which arise;
and we are not at liberty to reject them, and to abandon all analogy to
them, in those to which they have not yet been judicially applied, be-
cause we think that the rules are not as convenient and reasonable as
we ourselves could have devised.
\end{quote}

3 Think of the classic mirroring of the main text having the case name and the footnote
the legal citation.

4 Which are usually a bad idea, but should at least look nice if they must be used.
2 Usage

The package has no options, and the only configurable length is the \fnindent, which sets the indent for the hanging footnotes, and also defines the relationship of the footnote number and main footnote blocks. By default, this is set to 1 m, but can be easily changed by using the simple inbuilt \LaTeX{} renewal macro. For example:

\renewcommand{\fnindent}{1.25em}.

3 Development

Bugs, feature requests, etc, should be submitted to the project’s official GitHub page: (https://github.com/ezgranet/coolfn/).

4 Licence

This project is licensed under the Latex Public Project Licence version 1.3c. This documentation is copyright of the author but licensed under cc-by-sa 3.0.
5 Implementation

\def\coolnversionnumber{1.1.0}
\ProvidesPackage{coolfn}
[2023/27/02\coolnversionnumber\]
\begin{quote}
A cool way to format footnotes
\end{quote}
% This work may be distributed and/or modified under the
% conditions of the LaTeX Project Public License, either version 1.3c
% of this license or (at your option) any later version.
% The latest version of this license is in
% http://www.latex-project.org/lppl.txt
% and version 1.3c or later is part of all distributions of LaTeX
% version 2005/12/01 or later.
%
% This work has the LPPL maintenance status `maintained'.
%
% The Current Maintainer of this work is Elijah Z Granet

%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%
% FOOTNOTES
%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%
%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%
% from%
% tex.stackexchange.com/questions/305033/
%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%
%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%
% usepackage[bottom]{footmisc}
% makeatletter
%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%%
% multi paragraph footnotes
% are inherently pretty bad
% but they happen in law
% so might as well deal with them? so a slight spacing to compensate
\newenvironment{Parskip}{%
\par
\parskip=0.25\baselineskip \advance\parskip by 0pt plus 1pt
\parindent=\z@ \
def@listI{\leftmargin\leftmargini
\topsep\z@ \parsep\parskip \itemsep\z@}
\let@listi@listI \
@listi \
def@listii{\leftmargin\leftmarginii
\labelwidth\leftmarginii\advance\labelwidth\labelsep
\topsep\z@ \parsep\parskip \itemsep\z@}
\def@listiii{\leftmargin\leftmarginiii
\labelwidth\leftmarginiii\advance\labelwidth\labelsep
\topsep\z@ \parsep\parskip \itemsep\z@}
\partopsep=\z@ 
\par}{%}
\makeatother

\newcommand{\fnindent}{1em}
\usepackage{calc}% for maths
\newlength{\lengtha}
\setlength{\lengtha}{\textwidth}
\newlength{\lengthb}% maths again
\newlength{\lengthc}
\setlength{\lengthc}{\fnindent}
\setlength{\lengthb}{1.75\lengthc}% parblock
\makeatletter
@ifclassloaded{memoir}{\usepackage{hanging}}{\usepackage{hanging}}
\makeatother
% for hanging paragraphs
\renewcommand{\footnoterule{}}
6 Version History

1.1.0
27 February 2023: Fixed issue with footnotes at the bottom

1.0.0
6 October 2022: Package creation