Tip #5: Reproducibility: Linking to a specific version of a protocol

As we all know, reproducibility is an extremely important aspect of the scientific method. Of course, you can always rely on Vellind's First Law of Experimentation, which states:

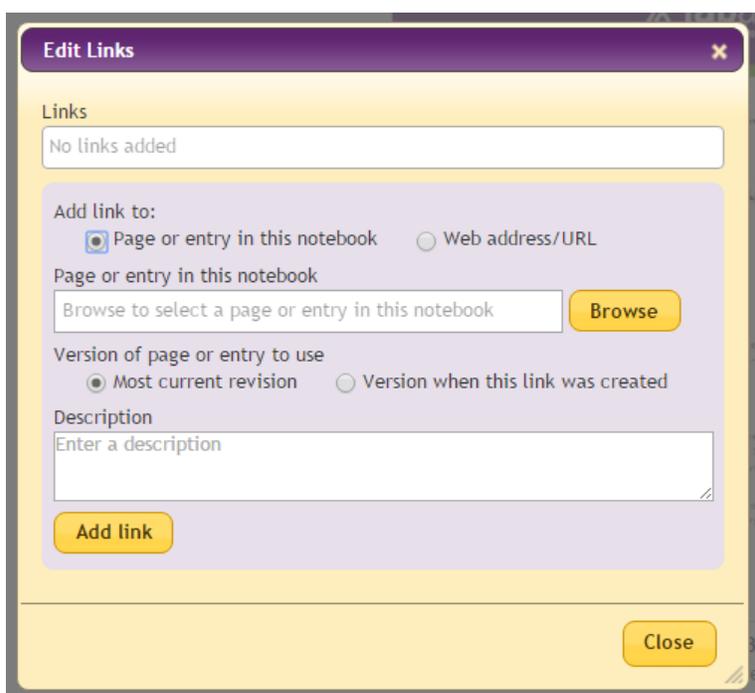### "If reproducibility is a problem, conduct the test only once"

Knowing the protocol that was followed for a particular process is one important step toward ensuring reproducibility for your experiment. Of course, protocols often evolve over time, so knowing its state for a particular procedure is critical.

LabArchives includes a feature that makes it easy to link to a specific version of a protocol so that even years later you will know what version you used.

As you may know, every Entry in LabArchives contains a "Link" function which enables you to link that Entry to another Entry (or Page) in your Notebook (or to multiple locations). The Link icon is in the Entry Edit menu which appears whenever you hover over an Entry:

Note that this appears at the far right-hand side of the screen. Click on <u>edit links</u> and the following dialog will appear:

Note that you can link either within the Notebook or to an external location (this can be a URL on the web or a local file). Assuming the protocol that you used is located within your LabArchives Notebook, click on the browse button, and choose the protocol from the menu that appears. Once selected, you will see an additional selection:

Version of page or entry to use
  ⦿ Most current revision   ◯ Version when this link was created

When linking to a protocol, you will want to choose "The version when the link was created" (the other option is useful, for example, when linking to a MSDS file where you would want the most current safety information).

 Add the link by clicking on the add link button, and save your Entry. The links appear on the upper right side of each Entry, and placing the cursor over the link will display information about the target and enable you to navigate directly to its location.

 Linking to specific versions of protocols is one of the unique and powerful features of LabArchives that distinguishes it from most general purpose filing systems.