

Next meeting

From manuscript to final proofs – issues of communication and management

Wednesday, 3 May 2006

The English Speaking Union, 146 Toorak Road West (between Walsh and Marne Streets), South Yarra (Melway 21 4E)

6.30 p.m. for pre-dinner drinks and delectable finger food. Soft drinks, orange juice and wine at bar prices.
\$20 members, ASTC and AusSI members;
\$15 students (ID required); \$25 non-members

From manuscript to final proofs, every step of the publishing process involves interaction between two or more professionals. Although the allocation of roles varies, every project requires effective communication between inhouse staff and the freelance contractors. Whether the project is a primary reader or government document to be uploaded onto a website, its smooth progress from thought to finished product depends on:

- each person's understanding of their contribution
- how clearly these responsibilities have been communicated to members of the project team
- the structure of the project
- the reality of the timeframe
- the 'real' state of the document and its associated parts.

Our experienced panel will discuss successful freelance and inhouse teamwork and project management and the solving of issues that we deal with each working day. There will be ample time for discussion and for panel members to answer your questions. This session is a must for both inhouse editors and freelance contractors.

Our panel

Brigid James, with Jane Angus, established Writers Reign, an editing consultancy business, over 21 years ago. With a background in secondary and tertiary education and textbook writing, they make their main focus educational publishing. They have worked for most of the major education publishers, as well as a number of non-publishing corporate and government clients.

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Colin McNeil is currently Managing Editor in charge of secondary titles at Macmillan Education Australia. He started his career in publishing in 1995, working for a small scientific publishing company in London. Since then he has worked for a variety of publishing houses on scientific journals, monographs, multi-volume encyclopaedias and also secondary titles across all school subjects.

Lan Wang bought her first computer in 1984. She was delighted to discover she could both indulge her passion for computers and also earn a living as a freelance writer, editor, typesetter and website and database developer.

Rebecca Yule is a freelance graphic designer. She has worked both inhouse and freelance for educational publishers over the last 10 years, and also does design work for a range of retail clients. With two young children to work around, time management and good communication are her specialty!

Please note our booking details:

- Book with Katherine Ross – email preferred – at <info@akra.com.au> or phone (03) 9712 0704.
- Book STRICTLY before midday on **Monday 1 May**. Bookings received after this deadline cannot be accepted.
- State if you are a member, student, ASTC member, AusSI member, student or non-member. Give an email address or telephone number.
- **If you need to cancel, please email Katherine as soon as possible. Last month the Society had to pay costs for eight people who didn't turn up.**
- If you cancel after 7 p.m. on the day before the meeting, the Treasurer will contact you shortly after and ask you to pay as if you had attended.
- Due to our booking restrictions, people who arrive on the night without a prior booking will be unable to attend.



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IPEd notes

News from the Institute of Professional Editors

March 2006

IPEd's teleconference in mid-February was a welcome chance to review progress made during the summer. The Interim Council is improving both its communication and its administration. Plans are well advanced for a new website which will not only offer a national forum for members but will also ease IPEd's internal communications and improve our record-keeping and archiving. The Canberra society has offered to hold a sub-account for IPEd funds as an interim measure until IPEd becomes a formal body. Most societies have formally agreed to the proposed levy of \$20 per member to help with the initial costs of setting up the national organisation and have decided how best to raise the money.

Accreditation

Workshops are being held in each state and territory to explain the assessment process and hear members' concerns. The Accreditation Board, chaired by Robin Bennett (Qld), will collate and analyse the information gained from these discussions to plan the information kit that will be sent to applicants and the guidelines for assessors. Board members will also select questions that participants have raised and publish a response to them in *CredAbility*, the Board's monthly newsletter column to begin in April. The Board has been deciding on timelines for 2006-7 and is planning to make a detailed presentation to the national conference in Hobart in May 2007. Societies have nominated distinguished editors to assess the first round of applications; a list of their names and brief biographical details will be published shortly, and a very impressive list it is.

Working groups

We welcome the new convenor of the Promotions Working Group, Kathie Stove (SA). Kathie has form as the leader of the team that created *Australian Standards for Editing Practice*, so we look forward to her contribution.

The National Organisation Working Group led by Trischa Mann (Vic.) is developing the content of the proposal for a national organisation. They have reached some preliminary conclusions but there are still many details to be investigated, and they expect to present the proposal to members by mid to late 2006. If members accept the proposal, the new body will be registered soon after.

The Education Working Group under Rosemary Luke (SA) is researching the formal courses in editing offered in Australia by universities, TAFE, private providers and the editors' societies. This survey will provide a picture of what is available and where the gaps are, giving a basis for future planning to develop continuous and comprehensive education for editors. As if that wasn't enough, these energetic people are looking into mentoring as well, so the group's official name is now the Education, Training and Mentoring Working Group.

The Standards Revision Working Group, with Shelley Kenigsberg (NSW) as convenor, is charged with updating *Australian*

Standards for Editing Practice. The group is considering whether to embark on a more thorough revision to rewrite the document in a form that can be used for competency-based learning and training. This would enable the profession to meet demands from an industrial environment that is insisting on more formal vocational educational qualifications, but it is a large undertaking. The group is looking into methods of tackling this project, including funding, timing, and coordination with the other working groups. The group would welcome more members, especially if they have expertise in developing Training Packages.

Meanwhile, down in Hobart, the conference committee is making good progress in organising the 2007 national conference, which has the theme 'From inspiration to publication'. For more information, see <www.tas-editors.org.au/conference2007.htm>.

April 2006

Some members may have wondered about the expense of forming and operating a national body, or be unclear about the process by which it is going ahead. There's still a lot to be done before any decisions are made.

The IPEd Interim Council is extremely sensitive to costing issues, as well as the need to protect the societies' revenue deriving from membership and activities. As foreshadowed at the national conference last October, we have re-formed the National Organisation Working Group (NOWG), an *ad hoc* group of interested volunteers, to examine the method of forming a national organisation. Care is being taken to ensure NOWG involves contributors from all states and territories so that all viewpoints and society structures can be taken into account.

NOWG's task is to research and make a recommendation on the most effective and lowest-cost option for the establishment of a national entity. It will first make recommendations on its own terms of reference, consultative methodologies, ratification guidelines and so on, to make sure all interested parties are heard. Only after that will it set to work on exploring possible structures, taking into account the existing realities as well as what might be accomplished into the future. In due course a detailed, costed proposal will be put before the members, who will decide whether to create the national body.

IPEd is also alert to industrial issues. On its behalf the Victorian society's committee is holding preliminary talks with the trade union that covers editors, the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance, about the implications of accreditation for union membership, the book editors award, and the new industrial relations legislation.

We are making progress with the new, improved national website: have a look at <www.iped-editors.org>.

Janet Mackenzie
Liaison officer, Institute of Professional Editors

CredAbility 1

From the Accreditation Board

This is the first of the Accreditation Board's regular columns in our quest to reach the grail of accreditation for editors. Any quest is a challenge, and any challenge is easier if we all know as much as possible about what it entails. The aim of this column is to involve you by telling you what the Accreditation Board is seeking to do, how it is trying to do it, and by asking for your input. Our initial topic covers what has become a FAQ: how were the first assessors chosen?

Establishing our first pool of assessors

As set out in page 4 of the Accreditation Working Group's Final Report (2004), the Accreditation Board was charged, 'in consultation with each state and territory to set up an interim pool of assessors comprising distinguished editors acceptable to their peers'. Once accreditation is granted, any accredited editor will be eligible to be appointed as an assessor. 'The aim is to ensure that the profession as a whole regulates itself, and that accreditation is not controlled by a small and possibly unrepresentative group.'

Each member of the Board went back to their respective committees and asked them to nominate individuals who met the criteria for being 'a distinguished editor'. It was clear that we needed career editors who were endorsed by their societies, who were accomplished and respected by their peers, who were ethical, professional and active supporters of editing standards.

The obvious choices were the honorary life members of each society. However, as some societies had fewer such people to draw on than others, the various committees nominated appropriate people from among their peers. Those people, now deemed to be distinguished editors, were then invited to be among the first assessors, and the list of acceptances was provided to the Board.

As you can see from the list below, we have a formidable group of people who have agreed to take on this role. (Details about the assessors and their areas of expertise will soon be available on our various state and territory websites, as well as the IPEd website <www.iped-editors.org>.) This inaugural pool of editors has effectively been accredited by virtue of having been identified by their societies as 'distinguished' and nominated as assessors.

Please use CredAbility as a forum to raise your comments and queries. Contact Janet Mackenzie (03) 5775 2988 with your feedback. The Board wants to know what your concerns are, to address them, and to discuss them via CredAbility.

First cohort of assessors for accreditation

ACT

Elizabeth Murphy (generalist)

Chris Pirie (generalist)

Loma Snooks (generalist)

NSW

Heather Jamieson (literary fiction, generalist)

Sybil Kesteven (educational, vocational)

Pam Peters (generalist)

Meryl Potter (generalist, education)

Julie Stanton (generalist)

SA

Jane Arms (generalist)

Karen Disney (generalist, online editing)

Celia Jellett (generalist, children's literature)

Susan Rintoul (generalist, education)

Kathie Stove (generalist, sciences)

Tas

Janice Bird (generalist)

QLD

Susan Addison (legal, humanities)

Paul Bennett (education, business)

Rosanne Fitzgibbon (fiction, history, education)

Jill Morris (children's and adult fiction)

Barbara Ker Wilson, AM (generalist)

Ruth Ridgway (sciences, generalist)

Jan Whelan (generalist)

Judy Heinemann (education, government)

Vic

Elizabeth Flann (generalist)

Beryl Hill (generalist, writer)

Susan Keogh (education, non-fiction)

Janet Mackenzie (generalist, writer)

Renée Otmar (generalist)

WA

Anne Surma (generalist)

Janet Blagg (fiction, non-fiction)

Publishing in MOTOP (media other than on paper)

Immediate information is, of course, everything. Whether it involves satisfying curious readers on major world events or filling them in on new travel destinations, online information is by now a publication medium well entrenched in everyday culture. But not so its working practice.

A panel of three people comprising Simon Johanson, editor of *The Age Online*, Katie Falkiner, online editor for *Destinations* at Lonely Planet, and Heidi Romano, award-winning graphic designer and fine art photographer, completely mesmerised over 50 people who had braved Melbourne's first blast of winter with their presentations of the implications, ramifications and intricacies of working with electronic media.

Simon spoke first and explained how people are looking for immediacy in breaking news. The examples he cited showed that people, as always, are interested in knowing the latest as a human drama unfolds (compared to politics). When the nightclub bombing occurred in Bali, there was a 30 per cent increase in traffic. The same increase was recorded with the invasion of Iraq in March 2003. The killing of two Monash students by a fellow student in an econometrics tutorial in 2002 crashed the server, such was people's interest then. When Schapelle Corby's verdict was announced, 656,000 unique browsers were recorded by *The Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. In three years, the number of people who access *The Age Online* has gone from 70,000 to 300,000.

Like print media, Simon said, online access can manipulate what people read by where it is placed on the page. Unlike the print media, however, the online facility has an effective tracking mechanism that shows what stories are most popular, and allows them to be repositioned accordingly. He emphasised that word articles and audio–multimedia facilities allow stories to be presented in different ways, which caters for different markets. The demographic for accessing *The Age Online* is 60 per cent male and 40 per cent female, aged typically between 25 and 40, well educated and affluent.

Obviously, there has been a dramatic shift in the news publishing world but, on the whole, journalists are embracing it, as is the public. The skills set required for online editing is quite different from that for a print reporter. Shorter and quicker stories are required, often with multiple versions of one story.

Katie took a different approach in her talk. First, she spoke of the similarities of online and print publishing. For both, the audience is the major consideration. The Lonely Planet

audience has typically sought inspiration to travel and to be able to plan it. Increasingly, the planning element is most important for the online audience.

Katie emphasised that good grammar and spelling on a website invoke trust. Writing for the web requires the author to use short sentences and short paragraphs, and the inverted triangle system of writing (similar to newspaper reporting where the assumption is that if people get beyond the headline, it's a bonus, and if they read beyond the first paragraph, it's incredible). So the most crucial data must be up front; semi-colons are *verboden*; every modifier must be questioned—is it really necessary?—so that content can be as succinct as possible.

Katie also spoke about re-purposing and changing content. While books are linear, web content is not, and so no assumptions can be made about what people have already read. This is one of the most important reasons for links, as they create visual information to guide users to their area of interest.

Katie also raised the issue of web maintenance. Publishing on the web is not free. There is a cast of thousands (well, many) to ensure that Lonely Planet's 30,000 pages of information remain current. The people who maintain this content have to be paid.

A lively conversation ensued about user-generated content, and its implication for editing.

Heidi's presentation took a different slant. She delightedly pointed out that in referring to how one edits online, Katie had used a printed book as reference. She said that design is the poetry of form and function—that is, when it is done well, but all too often this is not the case online. Heidi refuses to take on any more projects that do not appreciate the importance of design. Online all begins with good navigation, which, for Heidi, is the most important part of the website.

Describing the web as a big library, Heidi wondered whether the consumer is taken into account in the design process for some websites she had seen. She stressed the importance of building a better awareness of the web as a medium, and of functionality as being an integral part of web design. Heidi expressed concern that many people were taking on the profession of web design without having any design qualifications or experience to draw on. Editors, ring any bells?

Discovering Beatrice Davis

by Jenny Craig

In this article Jenny Craig discusses Anthony Barker's monograph on one of Australia's first book editors and what we can learn from her.



Anthony Barker's *One of the First and One of the Finest: Beatrice Davis, Book Editor* is a wonderful introduction for those who are not familiar with Australia's literary and publishing scene in the 1930s to the early 1970s, nor with Beatrice Davis's contribution to the editing profession.

Before reading *One of the First*, I knew virtually nothing of Beatrice, other than that she was regarded as a doyen, if not *the* doyen, of Australia's book editors and that she had worked with many of Australia's eminent writers. I was intrigued.

What had made her 'one of the first and one of the finest'? In this short work, skilfully interweaving Beatrice's personal and professional life, Anthony Barker provides some of the answers.

As for many of the editors who followed her, in particular before the existence of editing and publishing courses, Beatrice's route to editing was via a number of fortuitous connections and choices.

Although her first love was music—she was a gifted piano player—Beatrice needed to earn a living, and on completing high school applied for a Teachers College scholarship. She soon discovered that teaching was not her forte and after graduating with a BA from Sydney University she set about learning some commercial skills.

After working as a stenographer with the French Trade Commission, she moved to the *Medical Journal of Australia* following a conversation with an acquaintance, Mervyn Archdall, the Journal's then assistant editor. Originally employed as a stenographer, Beatrice became editorial assistant to Archdall when he became editor. It was Archdall who trained Beatrice as an editor.

While working for the Journal, Beatrice did some freelancing for publisher Angus and Robertson (A&R). In the late 1930s, A&R appointed her as the company's first full-time editor. Anthony Barker charts the thirty-six years of Beatrice's career at A&R, emphasising now and then, as did Beatrice herself, that she worked with a cross-section of authors and edited books on a wide range of subjects.

Nevertheless, Barker makes very clear the importance of Beatrice's role in nurturing and providing critical advice to writers who became well-known literary figures. She was also responsible, with Douglas Stewart, for instigating publications of Australian literary works such as the poetry and short story anthologies *Australian Poetry* and *Coast to Coast*.

As an editor, I was most interested in Thea Astley's comment on Beatrice's skills with authors:

She ha[d] the capacity to advise without hurt, to correct without making the author feel ashamed or inadequate.

(Barker, p. 15)

I was also impressed by (and envied) writer Margaret Trist's comment that Beatrice's edited manuscript '... looked so beautiful' with its tiny, neat and unobtrusive handwriting. (Barker, p. 13)

Barker goes on to detail Beatrice's working life after she and other talented editors were dismissed from A&R in 1973, following a company takeover. She worked for Thomas Nelson (Australia) Ltd for a number of years and also freelanced (still doing so in her late seventies).

The biography is full of interesting detail about Beatrice's way of working and her relationships with writers and colleagues. As a friend and colleague of Beatrice when she was head of A&R's editorial department, Barker provides a fascinating glimpse into Australia's publishing world at that time. His book is well worth reading.

One of the First and One of the Finest: Beatrice Davis, Book Editor by Anthony Barker, *The Society of Editors (Vic) Inc, Carlton, Victoria, 1991, can be ordered through the Society's website.*

Jenny Craig is a member of the Occasional Series on Australian Editors (OSAE) working group in Victoria. The OSAE working group is in the process of interviewing honorary life members of the Society with a view to publishing selected material in several forms in the coming year.

New UK Code of Practice

The UK Society for Editors and Proofreaders has published a revised Code of Practice for its members. The code is a guide to recommended professional procedures and has been updated to reflect the latest developments in the roles of editors and proofreaders. It covers recommended practices for suppliers or employees and for clients or managers, and includes sections on standards of editing, proofreading and editorial project management. You can view or download it at <www.sfep.org.uk>.

Us & Them



Delighted as I am to answer your questions about the relationship authors have with their editors, I must point out that you are editing me before I begin by suggesting (editors never insist—they just keep making suggestions until you agree with them) that answers be ‘personal and immediate in tone’ as well as ‘providing food for thought’ and ‘entertainment’.

Before slipping into a structured response, I must say this: ‘Editors have, over the years, honed my rambling thoughts, directed my enthusiasms, sanitised my diseased MSs, metaphorically beaten a better MS out of me, saved my skin—especially due to my inclination toward creative spelling—and had me banging the walls with my bare fists in frustration. (One editor had a thing about ‘at’. You don’t walk in the door, I was told. You walk in ‘at’ the door. She wanted to add 500 ‘ats’ to the MS. I suggested a page of ‘ats’ at the end would do nicely.) For all these contributions by editors, I am grateful.

Now in my most ‘personal and immediate tone’, I will attempt to answer your questions.

What three words describe your relationship with your editor?

Informed dictator.

What did you expect from working with an editor? Did your editor surprise you?

Editors seem to know what semi-colons are for. They could spell even before spellcheck. They remember what you wrote in Chapter 2, especially if it contradicts what you wrote in Chapter 9. And the especially talented editor—the one you trust—can, where necessary, sift the gold dust out of the dross of your tangled words and muddy thoughts.

Were you happy with what you were able to achieve together? Why?

A good editor provides feedback. Writing a book is like building a house from the inside. An author can’t see their work from

Kerry Cue

*Kerry Cue is a humorist, columnist and sage (on a good day) as well as the author of 17 humorous and educational books, including *Australia Unbuttoned* and *I Left My Heart in Chinkapook* and my *Knickers in New York*.*

the outside. So you need someone to tell you what it looks like. A good editor can tell you that you’ve forgotten to include the #\$\$@#\$\$ front door. Or the like.

How critical to the success of your published work was the editing it received?

Dunno. They didn’t publish the raw MS.

Some people have described writing as an intensely personal process. Is this so for you? How does your editor fit into this process?

It is personal. But returning to the house-building metaphor: there is no point building a house if there is no front door. No one else can get in. And the author can be trapped in its structure.

How important is trust and respect to the relationship between author and editor?

Absolute.

Did you feel your intentions were respected by your editor?

Not with all editors. One or two seemed bent on writing their own book with my words.

What was the most valuable contribution your editor made?

Being a friend.

What was the least helpful thing (if any) the editor did?

Sending me some blank pages—this was pre-computers—with a note attached saying ‘Put more humour here’.

Would you consider changing your publisher to retain your favourite editor?

I have.

Please provide a short description of your most recent book and/or of the work you have discussed in the questions above.

This is a compilation of the editing style associated with the 17 or so books I have already published. My last book was *I Left My Heart in Chinkapook* and *My Knickers in New York* (Lothian). My current book has been ten years in the writing. Think of the time invested in each word. The major attribute needed by my next editor will be, I suspect, extreme bravery.

Dinner meeting report, 8 March

The editor, the writer, the book and its cover: the musical

The dinner meeting on 8 March will go down in the Society's history of dinner meetings as the first of its kind. Editors Pam Hewitt and Shelley Kenigsberg sang their presentation to their unsuspecting audience.

For over 40 minutes, Shelley and Pam belted out their mostly original lyrics to the foot-tapping, shoulder-swaying music of Rogers and Hammerstein (Julie Andrews), Michael Nesmith (Linda Ronstadt), the Beatles, Burt Bacharach (Dusty Springfield), Neil Diamond, Fred Ebb (Frank Sinatra) and others. Vocals were their only instruments.

For those who contemplated going and then decided not to on account of the deceptively mundane title (rightly so): bad move. For those who read the title but were swayed by the knowledge that these two editors were hardly likely to bore you: good call, wasn't it?

The hilarious lyrics, penned by Shelley and Pam, relate the story of a writer approaching an editor to 'publish' her book. Starting with *My Favourite Things*, the editor's character as a 'punitive spinster with no other passion/desperate to take authors' words, and then smash 'em' is exposed as myth.

There are 'hard days' nights' labouring over the script; there's the writer 'wishin' and hopin' and plannin' and dreamin' that she'll be the next JK Rowling. The editor pleads her case: 'Please don't run, dear, it can be fun, dear/well, if not fun, then mighty close'. And miraculously, the author suddenly sees 'the sense in all this word-weaving', and realises that collaboration is a mighty foe (against obscurity). The writer 'sees the light/ now she's a believer/couldn't leave her' (the editor), if she tried.

It's what brings the two finally together. 'It's launch time for editors/and every editor is having a lovely time today'. Their destiny set, there's no turning back: 'Start spreading the news/My novel's away/I've found the very heart of it...New Work, New Work'. The characters have nothing to look forward to now except a wonderful book launch, and a future replete with more harmonious collaborations.

It has to be remembered, of course, that this was a musical, a genre less inclined and less obliged towards the harshness of reality than other art forms. But still. What a presentation.

Dates for your diary

Next meeting

From manuscript to final proofs – issues of communication and management

Wednesday, 3 May 2006

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John Curtain (d. 1999) Stephen Murray-Smith (d. 1988)
Beatrice Davis (d. 1992) Anne Godden (d. 2004)
Frank Eyre (d. 1988)

Membership of the Society is open to anyone engaged professionally in any aspect of editing for publication, or who has had such experience in the past. Associate membership is open to anyone interested in the Society's activities. Associate members may not vote or hold office in the Society.

Application/renewal forms are available from the Membership Secretary or the Society's website: <www.socedvic.org>

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