

Blue Pencil

Newsletter of
The Society
of Editors
(NSW) Inc.

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PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007

August 2006

The critic as editor

At our May meeting, Ivor Indyk presented a talk about the critic as editor, and editing as a form of criticism. Well qualified to discuss both perspectives, Ivor Indyk works as a literary critic, editor and publisher, and is also the Whitlam Professor in Writing and Society at the University of Western Sydney.

I feel a certain embarrassment talking to editors about the mysteries of editing, because I have never trained as an editor, having come to the task from the academy, as a lecturer in Australian literature, as a teacher rather than as an editor.

I co-edited *Southerly*, Australia's oldest literary magazine, in the mid-1990s. An editing job of this kind is taken on by academics as part of their academic duties, and as a path to advancement—it is a duty one performs, without being paid, in one's spare time, as part of one's responsibility to the discipline. Previous experience in editing is not one of the pre-requisites of the job, and it often shows.

In 1996 I resigned from *Southerly*, in the wake of the Demidenko affair, to set up my own magazine. It was called HEAT, partly as an expression of my anger at the situation then prevailing in Australian literature, and partly

'...even when I set up as an editor and publisher of my own magazine, I did so as a literary activist...'

because I was in my mid-forties, at a time when, if you were past your mid-thirties, you were considered to be

washed up—to have little to offer in literary terms. I wanted to show that passion and intensity and commitment to literature was not something transient, was a lifelong affair.

You can see that, even when I set up as an editor and publisher of my own magazine, I did so as a literary activist, and not primarily as an editor, though that too was a part of the process. We think of editing as a concern for minutiae and detail, and much of it is of this nature. But I think every editor feels the way large considerations are at work in the smallest detail, how a

continued on page 2

Inside

New members	2
2006 Member Survey: focusing on incomes and working as an editor	3
IPEd notes	4
Free meeting voucher	4
Tiered membership	5
The editor's job market	5
News, notices and conference diary	6
Professional development	8

Next meeting: Tuesday, 1 August 2006

Panel: Aspects of editing gardening books

Gardening titles fascinate—and employ—many Australian editors. Our three speakers will discuss aspects of the process of commissioning and editing text, obtaining photographs then publishing and marketing gardening books.

A gardening writer for many years, Paul Urquhart has a wealth of experience in magazine and book publishing. He is currently the editor of *Your Garden* magazine and has written books on horticultural subjects including *The new native garden: designing with Australian plants*.

The multi-talented James Young works as an editor, author, designer and project manager but will be focusing on his role as a horticultural photographer. James has circled the globe 13 times on major photographic assignments and each year travels in search of beautiful flowers to add to the James Young Picture Library.

Gil Teague is, of course, a life member of our very own society. He spent 20 years in various aspects of educational publishing before setting up Florilegium in 1989. His aim then was to publish and distribute gardening books; now he spends more time retailing from this well-known bookstore in Glebe.

Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, 6.30 p.m. for 7.00 p.m. Drinks and light refreshments provided. \$15 for members; \$20 for non-members and those who do not RSVP; \$7 for holders of a current concession card.

Please RSVP to (02) 9294 4999 (voicemail) or the new email address <editorbruce@optusnet.com.au> by Friday, 28 July 2006.

September meeting: Tuesday, 5 September 2006

comma in the right place can alter the meaning of a sentence, how an action in the wrong place, or at the wrong time, can have a decisive effect on our estimation of the character, or indeed of the work as a whole.

'I see editing as criticism before the fact—it employs exactly the same skills as literary criticism, but whereas literary criticism is performed after the work has been completed and published, editing as criticism intervenes in the actual production of the book...'

When you are editing young and emerging writers, you can feel something even larger at work: their futures as writers, the emerging contours of a new kind of writing. As someone who comes from an academic background in Australian literature, I have always felt my editing activities to be related in some way, however small, to the continuity of this larger cultural entity.

In this respect, I should say that I have found no disjunction between my role as an editor, and my roles as a critic and teacher of Australian literature. I see editing as criticism before the fact—it employs exactly the same skills as literary criticism, but whereas literary criticism is performed after the work has been completed and published, editing as criticism intervenes in the actual production of the book, not only at the final stage, when it is being readied for publication, but in many cases far earlier, during the process of writing itself.

The benefits of this kind of critical editing for Australian literature, and Australian writers, are obvious. As a reviewer for the newspapers I always found it difficult to criticise the faults of a book which one knew might have

been remedied with careful editorial attention. But once the book has been published the text is set in stone. The faults cannot be rectified. The book stands or falls according to the strength of its weaknesses.

Editing of the kind I am referring to, which assumes a relationship of equality between editor and writer, though each brings his or her own skills to the work, troubles the romantic notion of authorship, the cult of the author as individual. Anyone who has worked in publishing knows what a collaborative process it is, and how far the technicalities and technologies of production carry one from the mysteries of individual genius.

There is something mysterious in the creative process that produces great writing, and the first task of the editor is to respect this. But the second, and all the subsequent tasks, involve an intimate involvement—immersion even—in the flow of writing, in a way which often dissolves the boundaries of individual agency. At these points, it is the writing which speaks and moves, and both writer and editor are the mediums through which it achieves its fullest expression.

Our awareness of the power of readers in the whole process of publishing—the way they determine what is given currency, what succeeds and what fails, should leave us in no doubt about the essentially collaborative nature of the book business.

'It is, above all else, an act of empathy, a subsuming of one's own voice and identity to a public voice which is and is not one's own.'

The editor is in a curious position: a reader par excellence, he or she must also identify deeply with the writer, must read the text from the writer's point of view as well as the reader's. It is not easy to act in both these roles at once, as one must—to act as both writer and reader, to be both and not oneself—I think it is this sort of paradox that gives editing its particular power. It is,



above all else, an act of empathy, a subsuming of one's own voice and identity to a public voice which is and is not one's own.

Ivor Indyk is founding editor and publisher of HEAT magazine and Giramondo books, and Whitlam Professor in Writing and Society at the University of Western Sydney. A critic, essayist and reviewer, he has written a monograph on David Malouf, published by Oxford University Press in 1993, and essays on many aspects of Australian literature. Details about HEAT magazine may be found on the Giramondo website <www.giramondopublishing.com/heat>.

NEW MEMBERS

Karen Bindoff
Jo Chipperfield
Fiona Craigie
Jim Higgins
Bronwyn Hore-Lacy
Michael Kirwan
Mary Mackenzie
Dov Midalia
Sarah Newton-John
Kiriaki Orfanos
Nancy Shearer
Nicky Shortridge
Stella Tarakson
Kirsten Wilkins

2006 Member Survey

focusing on incomes and working as an editor

Pay and conditions for editors are a perennial topic for discussion and debate, so the society's 2006 member survey will focus on incomes, training, working conditions and costs for editors—both in-house and freelance.

Within the next month you will receive a copy of the survey in the mail. This year's survey is more focused than previous surveys, as we believe that up-to-date research on the subject of pay rates for editors in New South Wales can be used to benefit society members.

We urge you to have your say and complete the survey. You will receive a stamped envelope with the survey to make it easy to respond.

One reason for researching these issues is that your committee has been considering whether the society should publish suggested rates for freelance work as a guide for both editors and their clients. Although the Australian Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance publishes rates for book editors and proofreaders, professionals in New South Wales are rarely paid these rates.

In this survey, we will seek your opinion on whether suggested rates are of value to professional editors, as well as information on current and preferred rates across different fields of editing.

All responses will be submitted anonymously so confidentiality is assured. The results of the survey and an analysis will be published in *Blue Pencil*.

We would like to receive as broad a response as possible, so please take the time to complete and return the survey after you receive it.

Please ensure that the membership secretary has your current postal address. We look forward to your participation.

The Committee of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

IPEd notes

News from the Institute of Professional Editors (formerly known as CASE)
July 2006

IPEd's Interim Council is making preparations for its first face-to-face meeting since the national conference in Melbourne in October 2005. Delegates will descend on Canberra in the first week of August, and we thank Virginia Wilton and Ed Highley for hosting the meeting and making the arrangements.

At this meeting the Interim Council will review progress so far and chart future directions for the creation of the national organisation. It will also hear reports from the various working groups, and other items on the agenda are finance, the development of the accreditation scheme, news from the societies, and preparations for the national conference to be held from 9 to 12 May 2007 in Hobart.

After holding one of its rare teleconferences, the Accreditation Board is completing its current round

of consultation with members with the holding of a workshop in South Australia. The first-round assessors, the distinguished editors, are meeting in each State and Territory to review the process of assessment and the role they will play. The board has also begun to draft documentation such as the information kit that will be sent to applicants to guide them in preparing their application.

The Standards Revision Working Group, led by Shelley Kenigsberg, has held a teleconference and is making progress with improvements to *Australian Standards for Editing Practice*. The National Organisation Working Group is recovering momentum under its new convenor, Deborah Edward, and will hold a teleconference this month.

Janet Mackenzie
Liaison Officer

Call for contributions

Have you been to an interesting conference or event?

We welcome your contributions to

Blue Pencil.

We would like to publish your articles, book reviews or letters.

Please email the editor at <cje_editing@hotmail.com>.

Have you been to a meeting this year?

Don't forget to use your free meeting voucher!

It is already August so, if you are a member and have not used your free meeting voucher this year, make sure you attend a meeting soon.

All members were sent a free meeting voucher along with their membership receipt earlier this year. If you are yet to experience the great food, wine and excellent company at the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc., you still have the opportunity to do so, for free. We've already had a host of exciting speakers, so don't miss your chance to be informed, educated and entertained at one of our meetings. To make catering easier and less expensive for the society we do ask that you make a firm reservation before the RSVP deadline and notify the society if, for any reason, you are unable to attend on the evening.

Tiered membership

As noted in detail in last month's Blue Pencil, the society's committee is looking at updating the membership system. The committee seeks the views of members regarding the introduction of tiered membership.

As outlined in last month's issue of *Blue Pencil*, a tiered membership system offers different levels of membership for different kinds of members. Principally, it differentiates members working as editors from those who have an interest in editing and/or are training or hoping to become working editors.

Other editors' societies in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom have membership models that differentiate members. See the following websites for details:

ACT <www.editorscanberra.org>
Queensland <www.editorsqld.com>
South Australia <www.editors-sa.org.au>
Tasmania <www.tas-editors.org.au>
Victoria <www.socedvic.org>
The Society for Editors and Proofreaders (UK) <www.sfep.org.uk>
The Editors' Association of Canada <www.editors.ca>.

The committee of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. is developing for consideration a proposal that our membership model be changed to a tiered system. However, this proposal must reflect the wishes of the society, and the final proposal will be voted on by the membership.

Before we can draft a proposal, we need to hear your views. We are now asking members to look at the systems in place elsewhere so they can let us know what model they think the New South Wales society might offer.

The model will need to reflect the members' views in terms of:

- How many tiers we include.
- How changes might be implemented.

The committee is also proposing the introduction of a new category, Corporate Associates, so that publishing companies and other businesses and organisations that support the society's aims can become Corporate Associates. Note that this will not affect existing membership but is part of the proposed update of our membership system.

A tiered membership system would, if accepted and implemented, require the society to differentiate between members when they renew membership or join/rejoin the society.

This raises several questions.

- How do you define a 'professional' editor?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a professional editor member rather than an associate?
- Should professionals and associates both pay the same fee?
- What would be the time frame for the introduction of any new system?

Criteria used by other societies include the following:

- A possible yardstick for a 'professional editor' is a minimum of two or three years' experience in full-time paid employment as an editor, or equivalent (proven by two written references). Some societies also take formal training in editing into account.
- Principally, professional members are distinguished from associates in having the right to vote and to serve on the committee and being permitted to have a listing in the freelance register.
- Associates may pay a lower fee, partly because this group will often include those on a lower income, such as job seekers and students, and because associates usually do not have voting rights.

If implementation of a tiered system is endorsed by society members there would be no change to the status of current members this year. The system would be implemented gradually over three or four years, giving members who lack professional experience ample time to gain work experience.

The committee is aiming to develop a proposal that ensures membership of the society is equitable and easy to administer under our existing voluntary system, and that will meet the needs of current and future society members.

Have your say

The committee is relying on feedback from you, the members, so that later this year we can put forward a proposal for changing the membership model.

We urge you to have your say. Please send responses to 'Tiered Membership', Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

The Editor's Job Market

The Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. offers publishers the opportunity to advertise Positions Vacant, by email, free of charge. Reach the editors of New South Wales by using this free service to our members.

- **Publishers: please send us your ad as a PDF or Word document and we will distribute it by email to our members. You are assured of wide distribution among your target audience.**

- **Members: please supply or update your email address so that the society can email you notices of jobs for editors.**

We welcome advertisements for all editorial roles from trainee to publisher, for permanent, temporary or freelance jobs.

Email Bruce Howarth:
<editorbruce@optusnet.com.au>

Freelancers do lunch, 25 July

The next freelancers' lunch will be held at Jan's Cafe, Crown Gardens, 63 Crown Street, Woolloomooloo, at noon on Tuesday, 25 July. Mains cost about \$10 to \$14.

The cafe is two blocks down from William Street. Buses 324, 325, 326 and 327 for William Street leave the city frequently. There is no need to RSVP. We hope to see you there.

Australian Book Industry Awards, 26 July

The Australian Book Industry Awards (ABIAs) will be held at 7.00 p.m. on Wednesday 26 July. The awards will celebrate the best Australian books, authors, booksellers and publishers from the past year.

The many awards to be presented include Australian Publisher of the Year, Australian Biography of the Year, Australian General Non-Fiction Book of the Year, Australian Illustrated Book of the Year and the Pixie O'Harris Award for Distinguished and Dedicated Service to the Development and Reputation of Children's Books.

The venue is the SMC Conference and Function Centre, 66 Goulburn Street (corner of Pitt Street) Sydney. Peter FitzSimons is MC for the evening. For more information on the awards go to the Australian Publishers Association website <www.publishers.asn.au>.

Australian Awards for Excellence in Educational Publishing

The Australian Awards for Excellence in Educational Publishing 2006 category winners and overall winner will be announced on Thursday, 27 July at a presentation lunch starting at 12.30 p.m. The lunch will be held at the AJC Convention Centre in Randwick. Categories for the shortlisted entries cover primary and secondary school, TAFE and vocational education, and tertiary education titles. For details, visit <www.publishers.asn.au>.

Melbourne Writers' Festival, 25 August to 3 September

The main events at the Melbourne Writers' Festival (MWF) will be held at the CUB Malthouse. Additional events will be held at the BMW Edge at Federation Square and ACMI. The Festival Club, in the open space alongside the CUB Malthouse, will be an informal venue. Among the international writers who will be attending this year's festival are US writer, Dava Sobel; New Zealand poet Brian Turner; and Canadian author, broadcaster and humourist Stuart McLean. International writers at the festival will take part in master classes and workshops at the City Museum in Spring Street (numbers for these events will be limited).

The line-up of local writers taking part includes Nick Earls, Jackie French, Helen Caldicott, Claire Scobie, Arnold Zable and Marion Halligan. Italian author Niccolo Ammaniti will join Morris Gleitzman, Andy Griffiths, Gary Crew and Tim Flannery at the festival's schools program.

For more details see the festival website <www.mwf.com.au>.

Canberra Readers and Writers Festival, 25 to 27 August

The fourth Canberra Readers and Writers Festival, organised by the ACT Writers' Centre, will be held at the National Library of Australia.

With a line-up of about 40 Australian authors in conversation and reading their work, the event will have the broad theme of 'deserts and desertion: landscape and escape'.

This year the festival will feature a Schools Day with writers for young people on the Friday, a number of book launches, a cooking demonstration, an afternoon tea and fun evening events.

Guests confirmed for the festival so far include Jo Dutton, Mark Tredinnick and Dorothy Horsfield. Most events will be free. For more details go to <www.actwriters.org.au/Festivals/festivals.htm>.

Dava Sobel at Gleebooks, 22nd August

Dava Sobel, a former *New York Times* science reporter, is the author of the best-selling *Longitude* and of *Galileo's Daughter*, which was shortlisted for the Pulitzer Prize. She has also co-authored six books and won a number of awards for her outstanding contribution towards public understanding of science.

On Tuesday, 22nd August Dava Sobel will talk about her latest book *The Planets*, which tells the story of each member of our solar family, from myth and history, astrology and science fiction, to the latest data from the modern era's robotic space probes.

The event will be at Gleebooks, 49 Glebe Point Road, Glebe, 6.30 p.m. for 7.00 p.m. The cost is \$9/\$6 concession. To book, phone (02) 9660 2333.

Other fascinating talks, discussions and launches will be held at Gleebooks throughout August. See the website <www.gleebooks.com.au> for more details on coming events.

Asialink arts residencies applications, closing date 1 September

Asialink's Residency Program offers residencies in Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Arts Management and Literature in different Asian host countries.

Residencies are usually of three to four months' duration and each residency offers a specified amount of funding and initial contacts. Artists are generally attached to a host institution and are expected to pursue their own work, as well as participate in the life of the organisation and community.

Residency applicants may include writers and book illustrators. Book industry personnel such as editors, festival staff and program managers may apply for Asialink's Arts Management residencies. Applicants must have at least three years' experience in their field.

Applications will close on Friday, 1 September 2006. For more details and application forms visit the website <www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/arts>.



The Editorial Services Directory 2006 is now available

Members who have advertised their services in the *Editorial Services Directory* 2006 should receive their free copy soon. Non-members can purchase a copy from Terry Johnston for \$20 (postage included). Please send a cheque or money order to PO Box 2229, Rose Bay North, NSW 2030, or fax credit card details to (02) 9337 4126.

The Occasional Series on Australian Editors

The Occasional Series on Australian Editors (OSAE) working group are currently planning a program of activities for 2006 and beyond. OSAE will organise a follow-up event for the 2007 national editors' conference in Hobart. OSAE will continue to interview honorary life members in Victoria in 2006 and also schedule interviews with other State and Territory members at next year's conference.

The working group are currently seeking wider publication of Occasional Series oral, print, pictorial and digital material to increase the profile and visibility of Australian editors and promote the editing profession. The working group are also searching for a home for the Occasional Series oral, print, pictorial and digital archive. If members have any ideas or suggestions, OSAE would love to hear from you.

The working group will continue to post updates about activities on the OSAE page of the Society of Editors (Victoria) website. For more information contact the program convenor Diane Brown, phone (03) 9718 1358, or email <dianeb@netspace.net.au>.

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007; Voicemail: (02) 9294 4999
<www.editorsnsw.com>.

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Editor: Catherine Etteridge

Assistants: Robin Appleton, Janice Beavan, Moira Elliott, Julie Harders, Meryl Potter

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Your comments and contributions are welcome. Mail them to the Editor, *Blue Pencil*, Society of Editors (NSW) Inc., PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007, or email Catherine Etteridge at <cje_editing@hotmail.com>.

Copy deadline for the September issue is Tuesday, 8 August 2006

The views expressed in the articles and letters, or the material contained in any advertisement or insert, are those of individual authors, not of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

Advertising rates

Full page, \$375; half page, \$200 (horizontal only); one-third page, \$125 (vertical or horizontal); quarter page \$100 (horizontal only); one-sixth page, \$75 (half of one column). Inserts: \$200 per hundred for DL-sized or A4 pre-folded to DL size. Circulation: approximately 375. Please note that the committee reserves the right to decide whether advertisements are appropriate for this newsletter.

Membership

Membership of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. is open to anyone working as an editor for publication (print or electronic documents) and anyone who supports the society's aims.

Membership runs for a calendar year. 2006 fees are \$75 for new members (\$45 if joining after 31 May) and \$70 for renewals.

To obtain a membership application form, phone (02) 9294 4999 or write to PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007. You can also download an application form from the society's website at <www.editorsnsw.com>.

Listing in the Editorial Services Directory

The society's *Editorial Services Directory* is available online at <www.editorsnsw.com/esd/>. New listings and updates can be added quarterly as follows:

- online only: July (deadline 30 June); October (deadline 30 September)
 - print and online: January (deadline 31 December); April (deadline 31 March).
- The cost is \$40 per year (\$20 for new listings received from April to September) in addition to the fee for membership of the society. New listings should be submitted using a template available from Cathy Gray at <cgray@mpx.com.au>.

Committee meetings

All members are welcome to attend the society's committee meetings, generally held each month. Please contact a committee member for details if you wish to attend the next meeting.

2006 COMMITTEE

President: Michael Lewis

Email: <mlewis@brandle.com.au>

Vice presidents:

Shelley Kenigsberg

Email: <shelley@skpublishing.com.au>

Pam Peters

Email: <pam.peters@mq.edu.au>

Secretary: Bruce Howarth

Phone: (02) 4731 5406 (h)

Email: <editorbruce@optusnet.com.au>

Treasurer: Janice Beavan

Phone: (02) 9660 0335 (h)

Fax: (02) 9660 9375 (h)

Email: <JBeavan@bigpond.com>

General members:

Robin Appleton

Phone: 0414 645 103 (message)

Catherine Etteridge

Email: <cje_editing@hotmail.com>

Terry Johnston

Email: <pnayp@ozemail.com.au>

Sheena Pettigrew

Email: <SheenaPetti@bigpond.com>

Pauline Waugh

Email: <pauline.waugh@corporatecommunication.com.au>

Membership secretary: Bruce Howarth

Phone: (02) 4731 5406 (h)

Email: <editorbruce@optusnet.com.au>

Newsletter editor: Catherine Etteridge

Phone: (02) 9555 4071

Email: <cje_editing@hotmail.com>

Publicity officer & Meetings coordinator: Terry Johnston

Email: <pnayp@ozemail.com.au>

Professional development coordinator:

Pauline Waugh

Email: <pauline.waugh@corporatecommunication.com.au>

Website coordinator: Jo Healy-North

Email: <jhn@bigpond.com>

Editorial Services Directory coordinator: Cathy Gray

Phone: (02) 9331 4731

Email: <cgray@mpx.com.au>

Catering officer: Jennie Begg

Phone: (02) 9818 6416

Email: <snowcat@iprimus.com.au>

Professional development

Writing and Editing Memoir

This workshop will explore some of the similarities between memoir writing and creative writing, and it will look at how to trim and shape a memoir so it makes interesting reading. We will also look at legal and ethical issues that might arise.

Date: Saturday, 19 August

Presenter: Rae Luckie

Cost: \$195 for society members, \$220 for non-members

Typography for Editors

This workshop looks at the basic principles of typography, and how type and layout decisions affect readability. It will not be about using typesetting programs like InDesign or Quark XPress.

Date: Saturday, 16 September

Presenter: Bruce Howarth

Cost: \$195 for society members, \$245 for non-members

Writing for the Web

The internet presents unique challenges and opportunities for writers, and it has changed the rules of writing and how readers absorb information. This workshop is designed for people building a new website, looking to improve their current website copy, or anyone writing for the web. You will receive up-to-date practical guidance, tips, and language tools to enhance your internet writing and editing skills, and you will learn how to lay out text on a page and structure the pages within your website.

Date: Saturday, 18 November

Presenter: Simon Hillier

Effective Writing: structure, style, and plain English

Date: TBA

Presenter: Pauline Waugh

Professional Proofreading

Date: TBA

Presenter: Tim Learner

Regional members living more than 200 km from Sydney may receive a 40 per cent discount on the cost of the society's workshops (excluding computer-based workshops).

Cancellation and refunds

The society will refund 100 per cent of the fee if you cancel four or more working days before the workshop, and 50 per cent if you cancel one to three days before. However, please note that there can be no refund if you cancel on the day of the workshop.

For more information about the society's workshops, please email Pauline Waugh at <pauline.waugh@corporatecommunication.com.au>.

**Copy deadline for the September issue of
*Blue Pencil:***

Tuesday, 8 August 2006