Trends in the digital domain

Editors have an important role to play in selecting and modifying content to be released in digital format. Last year's Unwin Fellowship winner, Natalie Costa Bir, Digital Editor at HarperCollins Publishers, dispelled many of the mysteries surrounding e-books, e-readers, digital publishing and digital marketing when she spoke to members at our February meeting.

About 15 years ago in Australia, the internet had barely entered households; we relied on newspapers and magazines to get reviews, and on bookshops—physical places, made from bricks and mortar—to get our books. While that is still the case today, I think most of us know that we can now also buy books and access reviews online. Fifteen years ago, Amazon, probably the world's best-known online retailer, was already established. So in the last 15 years the availability of books, and ways we purchase them, have changed completely. Books have changed: in format, in content and availability; publishers' methods of creating and promoting books have evolved, as have the editor's work processes.

Key terms in digital publishing
At the moment the trend seems to be putting an 'i' in front of any word to make it a new one but the words I will speak about have an 'e' prefix. There are e-books, e-readers, e-content (that

is another word for digital content) and enhanced e-books. My definition of an e-book is: text provided in digital form. Most e-books at the moment are electronic versions of books that are also available in print media. Something like *Wuthering Heights* as an e-book is just the text of the book provided in digital format.

Some texts are only provided in digital format and are not designed to be printed. As time goes by we will have a lot more of those sorts of books. E-books are designed to be read on computers, on dedicated hand-held devices and on any other device with a reasonable size screen

like a 'smartphone'. Smartphones such as the Apple iPhone, the Google Android and the Blackberry have inbuilt operating systems that function like mini computers—and you can read books on them. The most popular reader in Australia at the moment is the iPhone—not the Sony Reader or the Amazon Kindle.

The devices
Unless you have been under a rock for the last week you would know that the iPad is the new Apple reader device that is supposed to change the world. The key difference between something

Inside

Next meeting: Tuesday, 4 May 2010

Into the world of speculative fiction

Speculative fiction is one of the biggest selling genres in Australian book publishing. Two author-editor-publishers from the speculative fiction world will describe the kinds of work it encompasses. Alan Baxter works in the realms of dark fantasy, science fiction and horror. Bill Congreve's books encompasses horror, with a specialisation in ghost and vampire stories. Between them they are familiar with all the different demands on author, editor and publisher.

Alan Baxter is a fiction writer and editor who also set up his own press AlanBaxteronline.com to produce speculative fiction works. He will have some useful tips on using the latest technologies to print, distribute and sell books, including e-books and print-on-demand.

Bill Congreve is a technical writer, editor and reviewer, and independent publisher. His company, MirrorDanse Publishers, produces speculative fiction anthologies, so he will have some valuable insights into editing an anthology.

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; $10 for holders of a current concession card or student card. Non-members who book and do not attend must still pay.

Please RSVP to (02) 9294 4999 (voicemail) or the email address editorbruce@optusnet.com.au by Friday, 30 April 2010.

June meeting: Publisher Richard Smart on The Australian Publishing Industry; Tuesday, 1 June 2010.

like the iPad and the Sony reader or the Kindle is the technology called *e-ink* (electronic ink). This groundbreaking technology does not require a backlight in the device screen, which means that when you read you will not experience any eye strain beyond what is normal when reading a book. This technology is great. You can read for hours and the battery life of the current e-reader devices, such as the Sony Reader and Amazon Kindle, will allow you to do so. I charge my Sony Reader every two weeks or so, and I use it every day. It is very energy efficient and I have about 70 books on there at the moment, with space for hundreds more. I don't know anyone who has had a negative experience with an e-reader, despite their misgivings beforehand. The readers are easy to use, light-weight, and, above all, easy on the eyes.

The iPad and the iPhone both have a backlight so there is some eye strain when you read on them and the battery life will be short if used continuously because of the energy used in providing the lit display. And of course, for fast readers, it can be frustrating to read on a small-screen device like the iPhone.

The format: epub

The industry standard for e-book format is called *epub*. The iPad uses this format, as does the Sony Reader. It is great for publishers because we just provide one format for all devices and do not need to spend time and labour creating several different formats. The Kindle uses a different format but Amazon can convert epub titles to this format so there is no extra work for the publisher.

Enhanced e-books

Enhanced e-books are those with extra interesting bits, or, and this is the option I think most readers, publishers and authors would prefer, the entire reading experience is enhanced by the way the e-book is presented using the additional features that electronic media allows. It is important that enhancements truly add value to the content and are not, for example, just a selection of author interviews available elsewhere that have been added to the e-book merely to raise the price and perceived value.

Canongate Books in the UK created a wonderful enhanced e-book with *The Death of Bunny Munro* by Nick

Cave. You can view all the available enhancements on the website www. thedeathofbunnymunro.com. Among the offerings, there is an audio book read by Nick Cave with an original soundtrack also created by the author and videos of him reading the book. Canongate offered 500 limited edition slipcased, signed and numbered books that included a DVD of Nick Cave reading. There are now only 16 available for sale according to the website. So it was clearly a popular idea and fulfilled the wants of readers, which is the important thing to consider when creating additional formats.

Canongate also have an iPhone

'Publishers need to make sure they keep the integrity of what they are selling—the narrative story or information.

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application for *The Death of Bunny Munro* that includes the audio book, videos of the author reading, and the e-book. These are all items for sale and this is a great example of how to take content and produce many different formats that will appeal to different segments of the market.

Enhanced e-books could be really significant in the education market. If you were a medical or science student, it would be helpful and educational to watch an operation take place while reading about the procedure. Imagine having newscasts available while reading a book on history, for example, or watching actual war footage. The possibilities are unlimited, with the right access to material. However, publishers need to be very careful about enhanced content and make sure they keep the *integrity* of what they are selling—the narrative story or information.

Digital rights management (DRM)

Digital rights are a way of controlling how an e-book is used, that is: whether it can be shared between more than one user; on which devices it can be used; whether it can be printed; if text can be highlighted, copied and pasted, and so on. It is an interesting area, of course, because with an ordinary hardcopy book you can lend it to as many people as you like. You can sell it on and can basically do what you like

with the physical book once you own it but there are copyright laws in place to protect the actual text.

With an e-book protected by DRM there are limitations on what you can do, but there are also new things you can do because you are reading a digital book. For example, with an e-book opened using Adobe Digital Editions (a type of software for reading e-books on your PC), you cannot copy and paste text, but you can search for words or page numbers. You can also increase and decrease the size of the text by several points, and jump to a chapter with one click.

Most e-books are unformatted texts, which allow the e-reader device to reflow the text when increasing or decreasing font size. As an editor who has spent time taking over and taking back various words to eliminate widows and orphans, it can be frustrating to know that such work is currently lost in the e-book!

DRM is usually put into place by the e-book distributor. With the Kindle format, for example, Amazon restricts its users to reading using only the Kindle device and related applications such as the Kindle iPhone app. Users must have an Amazon Kindle account to purchase e-books to use on the device, although they can also load their own personal documents by emailing them.

The digital publishing process

In the acquisitions process, publishers and commissioning editors have to think about what they can do with the content that they are reading. It is not necessarily about packaging a single narrative and selling it. It is now about the number of things that can be done with it. Can the content be used in different ways to appeal to different segments of the market? Can the content be distributed via websites, application stores, in chapter-sized amounts, or with audio enhancements?

Editors also become involved at the structural- and copy-editing stage because they are looking most closely at the manuscript and have the best idea of which parts could be used in other ways. They are the ones asking the author: 'Is this what you mean?' in order to make the narrative as clear as possible for the reader. They may now also ask: 'Can we use a video to

Professional membership upgrade

The Society of Editors (NSW) would like to remind current Ordinary members that they will need to choose between professional and associate membership by the end of this year. From January 2011 there will only be two categories of members —Associate or Professional.

Every issue of *Blue Pencil* since December 2006 has outlined the tiered membership system and the availability of professional membership to professional editors who have two years of paid experience as an editor (see page 4).

The application form for professional membership is included with this issue. Requirements for professional membership are described on the application form and on page 4 of *Blue Pencil.*

The basic requirement is that you supply two statements, each provided by a third party, confirming your experience in a paid editing role, and that the statements, in total, account for at least two years of full time work or equivalent (for example, four years working 2.5 days a week in a part-time role). The society will contact statement providers for confirmation.

Professional members will be able to :
- vote at the AGM
- become an office bearer
- advertise in the *Editorial Services Directory.*

Avoid the rush. If you are eligible please convert to professional membership before the end of the year to avoid a bottleneck in processing.

Some 80 editors have already become professional editor members of the society.

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7 to 9 September, 2011

Dockside Conference Centre, Cockle Bay, Sydney

demonstrate your point rather than a black and white picture?' 'Could we cut these two chapters out to shorten the print book and use them in the enhanced edition?' Obviously the process of editing a book and creating e-books is not so simple but this is certainly where the editor's role in a digital book can become really exciting and creative.

Sales and marketing

When searching for a book, readers do not generally go to a publisher's website because they want to look at all available books not just those from one publisher. At HarperCollins we do not try to drag readers to our website unless we have something unique to show or tell them. We go to places they are already visiting and promote our titles there. For example, for books about parenting it is more effective to promote them on the Huggies website where a whole community of parents already exists.

Today you would be hard pressed to buy a book in a shop that is not also available online. In the UK bricks and mortar shops are dropping like flies. Borders has ceased operations in the UK. Traditional bookshops are becoming difficult to sustain when online retailers like Amazon, and now Apple, are able to offer discounted books, and now electronic books at the lowest prices delivered instantly to an e-reader via a wireless connection.

A lot of booksellers in the UK talk about book communities as a way of connecting with their customers and encouraging them to purchase from the bookshop. However, they could also buy the cheapest version of the book from Kmart or Target and then discuss it on the booksellers' websites. The Harry Potter books sold out in the large discount retailers before they sold out everywhere else. These chains were undercutting prices to the point of making a loss but were gaining the through traffic.

There is a fear that books and digital content are being devalued by unsustainable cheap prices. Apple have announced the iBook store and have been negotiating with publishers on retail prices. With Apple's emergence as an e-book retailer, there is some competition for Amazon, which can only be a positive for publishers, retailers and readers.

Copyright

Territorial copyright continues to be an important issue for publishers, especially with e-books. Publishers sell rights in English (and other language) territories. In Australia a publishing house may purchase the rights to a book that was originally published in

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Tiered membership

The society's tiered membership system will work as follows:

Categories

This membership year (2010) the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. will offer members the option of three categories:

1. Existing members (as at 31 December 2006) can remain an ordinary member at the current fee ($75/85) with the current entitlements; or

2. Existing and new members can become a professional editor member at the current ordinary fee with the current ordinary entitlements, provided you have two years' experience in a paid editing role and can supply two letters confirming your experience; or

3. Existing and new members can become an associate member at a reduced fee ($55/$65) with reduced entitlements (an associate member cannot vote at an election, cannot become an office bearer and cannot be listed in the *Editorial Services Directory*).

Phasing in a new system

Before January 2011 all ordinary members will be asked to choose either:

1. Professional editor member status; or

2. Associate member status.

Four years should be sufficient time for those seeking professional status to gain professional experience if they do not already have it.

Experience

Professional editor members must have at least two years' in-house experience as an editor or the equivalent freelance or part-time experience. For example, if you worked half-time as an editor for four years (part-time or freelance) then that would be an acceptable equivalent to two years full-time work as an in-house editor. Professional experience must be in a paid editing role. As professional members may have had career breaks, there is no limit on how long ago the professional editing experience was obtained. Professional editor members will be asked to provide details of their experience and two letters (in English) that can be checked by a subcommittee appointed for this purpose. The subcommittee will simply confirm the statements supplied by the third parties. The letters can just be a statement of the years of experience in an editorial role. See the essential **Professional Editor Membership form** for more details about requirements.

Corporate Associates

A new category of Corporate Associates is also available. Publishing companies and other businesses and organisations that support the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.'s aims can become Corporate Associates. For an annual fee of $400, Corporate Associates of the society will receive five copies of *Blue Pencil* each month and two copies of the current *Editorial Services Directory*, five free admissions to each monthly meeting and two free admissions to one special event per year, such as the Christmas dinner. The usual member rates on professional development courses and workshops will apply for up to five attendees from the Corporate Associate organisation (a saving of approximately $95 per person).

The Committee
Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

Affordable insurance for freelance editors

The society is pleased to have negotiated an insurance package with Aon that will meet the needs of freelance editors whose clients demand insurance coverage.

The annual Aon premium for public liability is $332.75. Premiums for professional indemnity range from $520.00 to $805.75 depending on annual income.

For further details see the society's website or contact the society's Account Executive at Aon, Kylie Moody by email on kylie.moody@aon.com.au or phone 03 9211 3256.

Adelaide conference papers now available online

Some of the papers presented at the 4th IPEd National Editors Conference, in Adelaide last October are now available on the IPEd website.

The papers available are:
• Pamela Ball's speech to launch *Editors inConversation 2*
• Julian Burnside's keynote address, 'Words and language: truth and lies'
• Steve Evans' and Mike Ladd's presentation, 'Poets edit poets edit...'
• Pamela Hewitt's paper 'Don't be depessed: edit your way out of a recession'
• Greg Maguire's paper 'Edit less, explain more; Using web tools to foster academic writing skills'
• Val Mobley's presentation about global editing communities
• Invited speaker Rob Morrison's take on 'Breakthough and other swear words; Science misbehaving in the media'
• Peter Riches' presentation, 'Corporate communication: Managing a large government project'
• Deborah Singerman's paper, 'How sustainable is green editing?'

They can be accessed from www.iped-editors.org/content/papers-4th-iped-national-editors-conference-adelaide-october-2009.

the USA and will now publish it in Australia. This means the book now has a local champion and additional royalties for the author. With e-books it is not quite that simple.

As we establish our e-book program we find we are receiving emails saying 'You publish this book, so why isn't the e-book available on Amazon?' Our response is that we do not necessarily have the electronic rights to the print books we publish. Publishers can be caught in the difficult situation of promoting a print book but not receiving the benefit of electronic edition sales (even though the digital version is benefiting from their promotion). One positive for readers is that overseas publishers are likely to make electronic editions of books available worldwide, if they hold the digital rights.

E-communities
Today, publishers, authors and booksellers need to have more than just an online 'presence'. They need to create places where the reader will be comfortable and want to stay and discuss books or share information about books. Publishers need communities.

An example of a book community on the web is BookArmy (www.bookarmy.com). It is partly owned by HarperCollins UK and is a place people can visit to discuss books in a number of different forums. The website runs lots of competitions and sends out regular newsletters to get people to come to the site and talk. Another interesting reader community is Booktagger (www.booktagger.com) because it is Australian based, with a lot of Australian users. Publishers send out early reading copies of books to site users in return for reviews which then help promote the book. Spinebreakers (spinebreakers.co.uk) is a Penguin site

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> 'You publish this book, so why isn't the e-book available on Amazon?'

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aimed at teenagers and young adults.

With social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, publishers and authors can see what people are looking at, and also market themselves to an interested audience. They are ideal places for encouraging people to read our books and just to read books in general.

The digital editor
One of the main aspects of my current role as Digital Editor at Harper Collins is to maintain the quality of our publications as they become e-books, which involves making sure that the readers have the best possible experience when they read our books. I go through all our e-book titles and make sure that no strange computer symbols or sudden quotation marks have crept in. It sounds fairly basic but it does take a long time and is essential to the quality of the e-books we produce. We also make sure all the links in the book work. We call this 'QA ing'—it is our quality assurance check. This is an area where a qualified and extremely dedicated editor or proofreader is necessary.

In the world of e-books the role of the editor has not changed. It is still fundamentally about ensuring the author and publisher create the best book possible.

__Natalie Costa Bir__ is the Digital Editor at HarperCollins Publishers. She has worked in both online and traditional marketing, as well as in the editorial department. In August 2009, as the winner of the Unwin Fellowship, she travelled to the UK to research a project on online book communities and social networking and how these can be more effectively used to benefit the book industry.

Details about the APA's Unwin Trust Fellowship are at www.publishers.asn.au.

Wordstorm, Darwin, 13 to 16 May

WordStorm 2010, the Festival of Australasian Writing, has a strong focus on Indigenous and South East Asian writers. It is a festival that talks to, and about, the region it inhabits. Some of the issues to be discussed include: How can the nations of this region address climate change? Is Australia still 'the lucky country'? Can an intervention be benign? Is there a place for feminism in Islam? How can the world's displaced find a place of refuge? For more details visit the website: www.ntwriters.com.au and click on the festivals link.

Sydney Writers' Festival, 17 to 23 May

Full details of the festival program can be viewed on the Sydney Writers' Festival website: www.swf.org.au.

Henry Lawson Festival of Arts, Grenfell, 9 to 14 June

The town of Grenfell, birthplace of Henry Lawson, hosts the Henry Lawson Festival on the June long weekend each year to promote and recognise aspiring Australians in their artistic endeavours. Visit the festival website www.grenfell.org.au/henrylawsonfestival for details.

'The Nib': CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature, closing date 9 July

The CAL Waverley Library Award for Literature recognises excellence in research. All genres of writing including fiction and non fiction, published between 1 July 2009 and 30 June 2010, are eligible.

The Award's major sponsor, Copyright Agency Limited's Cultural Fund, provides a trophy and prize of $20,000 to the winners.

All shortlisted authors receive the Alex Buzo Shortlist Prize. For information about the award visit the website www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/library/award, or contact Denis Moore, Project Officer on 9386 7709.

Mildura Writers Festival, 15 to 18 July

The sixteenth annual Mildura Writers Festival will be held from 15 to 18 July. Details of writers and events have not yet been announced. Watch the website for details: www.artsmildura.com.au/writers/.

Byron Bay Writers Festival, 6 to 8 August

Early bird tickets for the festival are now on sale. The festival program will be available online from Friday, 4 June. For more information visit the festival website: www.byronbaywritersfestival.com.au.

Indigenous Literacy Day, Wednesday, 1 September 2010

The Indigenous Literacy Project is a partnership between the Australian Book Industry and The Fred Hollows Foundation that raises funds to purchase and supply books and other culturally appropriate material to remote communities where the Foundation works.

The fourth Indigenous Literacy Day will be held on Wednesday, 1 September 2010. For more details about the project visit the website at www.worldwithoutbooks.org/.

New Horizons 2011 conference website

Stay up to date with planning for the 5th National Editors Conference to be held in Sydney, 7 to 9 September 2011, by visiting the official conference website—www.editorsnsw.com/conference2011.htm.

Have you used your free meeting voucher for 2010?

All members received a voucher with their 2010 renewal entitling them to free admission to one of the society's monthly meetings.

Don't let your voucher go to waste. Come along in May for the talk about speculative fiction, or in June for the talk about the Australian publishing industry. Light supper, drinks, good company and conversation always provided.

Call for contributions

Have you been to an interesting conference, workshop or event?

We welcome contributions to *Blue Pencil*. We would like to publish your articles, book reviews or letters.

Please email the editor at bluepencil@editorsnsw.com.

Date for your diary

July Winter Dinner
Tuesday, 6 July

Planning is under way for this year's winter dinner. Based on previous dinners the organisers have a high standard to uphold in selecting a venue that will provide good value and the right ambience.

The society dinners (July and December each year) are a great opportunity to meet and talk with other members in a relaxed social environment with good food and wine.

Put the date in your diary now. Details in the next issue of *Blue Pencil*.

Next accreditation exam in 2011

IPEd has announced that there will not be an Accreditation Examination in 2010. The reasons underlying this decision are:

1. The Accreditation Board requires an optimum number of candidates to make the exam financially viable. A larger pool of candidates is available in an 18 to 24 month period than in a single year.

2. The Accreditation Board is investigating the possibility of including an onscreen component in the exam. Considerable research and testing are required to develop this mode of delivery in a way that is equitable with previous exams.

The Board anticipates that the third Accreditation Exam will be held towards the middle of 2011, subject to sufficient registrations being received.

Costs of the 2011 exam will be finalised closer to the exam time. For further information see www.iped-editors.org/content/accreditation-program and refer to the information for 2009 candidates.

NEW MEMBERS

Sabina Belli

Barbara Cameron-Smith

Daniel Heuman

John Paul Newbury

Kiriaki Orfanos

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.
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Blue Pencil

Editor: Denise Holden
Assistants: Nicky Shortridge, Moira Elliott, Catherine Etteridge, Julie Harders and Therese Kutis.
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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 the Editor at bluepencil@editorsnsw.com.

Copy deadline for the June issue is Tuesday, 11 May 2010.

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; one-third page $125; quarter page $100 one-sixth page, $75 (half of one column). Inserts: $200 per hundred for DL-sized or A4 pre-folded to DL size. Circulation: approximately 400. 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 is available in different categories.

Membership runs for a calendar year. The 2010 fees are $75 for ordinary member or professional member renewals; $85 for new professional members; $55 for associate member renewals or $65 for new associate members. Interested organisations can become corporate associates for $400 per year.

To obtain a membership application form visit the Society of Editors (NSW) website—www.editorsnsw.com, phone (02) 9294 4999 or write to PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007.

Listing in the *Editorial Services Directory*

The *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 the ESD coordinator at esd@editorsnsw.com.

Committee meetings

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

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.
2010 COMMITTEE

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IPEd.
To advance the profession of editing

Occasional papers series
Insights into editing

The Institute of Professional Editors Limited (IPEd) is pleased to announce a call for papers in the first of its occasional papers series, 'Insights into editing'. This series aims to encourage editors and those working in editing-related fields to share their ideas, views and reflections on editing as theory, as practice and as a profession.

The theme for this round is 'Communicating in a technologised culture: the editor's role'.

Papers can be entertaining or erudite (though the best will be both). They can take any angle on the topic, but should engage with the contemporary editing scene in Australia and/or internationally.

Papers will be blind reviewed by a panel selected by the IPEd Council. The best papers will be published on the IPEd website.

The author of the best paper will receive a book token to the value of $150.00.

Author guidelines
Format and presentation
Papers should:
* be 2,000–2,500 words in length
* include an abstract of 75–100 words
* include a cover sheet, containing the author's name, address, email and phone number
* conform to APA style (see http://www.apastyle.org) for in-text referencing and the reference list
* be in Microsoft Word, and use 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced.

Apart from on the title page, the author's name should **not** appear anywhere in the paper.

Evaluation criteria
The best papers will be:
* original, engaging and relevant
* organised clearly and coherently
* informed by relevant primary and/or secondary material
* well written and expertly edited.

Submission deadline
Papers should be sent as an attachment to ipedsecretary@gmail.com no later than 30 September 2010.

Announcement of winning papers
Details of the winning papers will be announced in November 2010.

Copyright
Papers submitted should not have been published in another forum, nor be under consideration for publication elsewhere at the time of submission to IPEd.

Copy deadline for the next issue of

Blue Pencil
Tuesday
11 May 2010

Professional development: 2010 worshops

Workshops planned for later this year are:

* Manuscript Assessment and Reader Reports
* Plain English
* Punctuation
* Advanced Copy Editing