



Blue Pencil

Editing across borders

Carmen Lawrence holds a PhD in experimental psychology from the University of Western Australia. She became premier of Western Australia in 1990 before entering the federal arena in 1994. She held the portfolios of Human Services and Health as well as Assisting the Prime Minister for Women's Interests in the Keating Government until the government fell in March 1996. She remained in parliament until 2007 and then returned to academia at her alma mater. This is a transcript of her presentation at the 2013 IPEd Conference in Perth.

I am aware that your conference theme is designed to encompass diversity across all sorts of borders—physical, cultural, technological, ideological. I want to take a step over one of our habitual cognitive borders—that between ourselves and the environment we inhabit, the contrived border between ‘human nature’ and the planet; to try to peer into the liminal space; the no-man’s land, that special space between borders; the place where all transformation occurs, where we are not in control; where operating at the threshold can evoke a sense of intellectual adventure and new ways of seeing the world.

I will not try to canvass the preoccupations of your profession or the technical elements of your craft, but I hope to take you on a brief journey into our shared heritage. I know you edit and publish across many types of writing and many genres but, whatever your particular focus, words

are at the heart of your obsession—and mine. What you need to be successful editors is a love of and pleasure in working with words; of exploring and understanding the details, nuances, and secrets of language; of relishing the increased inter-connectedness that comes with greater understanding. Such interconnectedness is what I want to explore today. Along with investigating how we come to know the difference between editing that improves the quality of a work and that which is merely destructive; between knowing what to keep and what to discard. This is precisely what heritage is about.

I want to examine the feel and the sense of the place we call home; particularly the place that Australia’s first people call home. At a time when global images threaten to obliterate our sense of the particular, continuing to value and tell stories about our place may be more important than ever.

When the uniformity—and superficial glitz—of international popular culture imperil the grounded local.

I am one of the first to insist on our shared humanity as the basis for sociability and concord, but the annihilation of diversity in cultural experience and artistic expression, and the muting of some voices, actually makes it more likely that people will retreat to a diminished, second-hand idea of what it means to be fully human. And that they will not understand with any precision the contours of other people’s lives or indeed even recognise the precariousness of our existence.

We also need a more profound social commentary on what has been lost; of the absences which populate our lives; the tracks we leave over the millennia, the mysterious and weathered scripts of our passing. The additions and subtractions most of us are blind to without the eyes of scientists, writers

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Next meeting: Tuesday, 5 November 2013

Editing for horticultural publication

Jennifer Stackhouse is a horticulturist and garden writer. She was, until recently, editor of ABC Gardening Australia magazine and is the author and editor of many books on gardening, including co-authoring ‘The Organic Guide to Edible Gardens’, ‘Planting Techniques’ and ‘My Gardening Year’. She will be speaking about the tips and tricks editors need to know when working on horticultural material.

Sydney Mechanics’ School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney at 6.30 pm for 7.00 p.m. Drinks and light refreshments provided. \$20 for members, \$25 non-members and \$10 for students or concession card holders. RSVP (02) 9294 4999 (voicemail) or membership@editorsnsw.com.

and storytellers. And a deeper appreciation of the ancient place in which we live—the story-lines and dreaming tracks.

It may seem strange that it would need to be said, but whether we are aware of it or not, we are connected to and influenced by our social and physical environments, our cultural landscapes. Most people have strong emotional bonds to particular places and the communities in them. Indeed, it is clear that our wellbeing

'Most people have strong emotional bonds to particular places and the communities in them.'

depends on the quality of our relationship with our environment—the relationships we have with the people around us, the stories which connect us to place and the natural and built environment we inhabit; if this cultural environment is destroyed or degraded or if people are prevented from enjoying it, their health and wellbeing are compromised.

Too often we—and our leaders—appear to take literally the biblical injunction that we should enjoy 'dominion over all the earth', adopting an exploitative separateness from our places that renders us blind to the destructive power of our actions to alter our environment and fray the links that bind us to the past. It is no accident that our epoch is now seriously labelled the 'Anthropocene' because of the monumental scale of our impact on the planet.

But we do not simply exist in a physical environment, we also derive meaning and succour from it. And these meanings are not just individual ones but part of the shared fabric of the broader culture and social structure in which we live. They capture people's personal histories, relationships, and significant shared events and the places that shape them. Reading and understanding these meanings is imperative if we are to avert some of the looming catastrophes of our globalised world.

A growing research literature in the social sciences underlines the importance of a sense of place and feelings of attachment to a place or neighbourhood in shaping our identity and our sense of belonging. Conversely, it shows that rootlessness and alienation result when cherished places, spaces, and settings are destroyed or irrevocably changed beyond our control; we experience a sense of loss and grief.

Most people still have robust emotional bonds to their places and the communities in them, although these links may be eroding as people become increasingly mobile. This is a particular problem for us in the 'fly-in-fly-out' state—people simply do not know enough to see the changes, the degradation and loss. They see Western Australia as the first settlers did—as a place to be developed, a blank canvas, *terra nullius*, a place ripe for exploitation to realise the ambition of material 'progress'.

But we should take heed of Peter Read who warned us in the preface to his elegiac hymn exploring the meaning of lost places, *Returning to Nothing*,

Let us not underestimate the effect which the loss of dead and dying places has on our own self-identity, mental wellbeing and sense of belonging. (p.xii)

It is no accident that one of the first targets of those engaged in genocide is the obliteration of our places, our shared heritage—and through that, identity. The destruction of important civic buildings and places of worship is often part of so-called 'ethnic cleansing' in violent conflicts. The victors systematically seek to remove the traces of the vanquished community in order to establish control over them. As Milan Kundera (1981) put it in *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*: 'the first step in liquidating a people is to erase its memory. Destroy its books, its culture, its history' (p 159). And in response to the recent destruction in Timbuktu, Irina Bokova, UNESCO's director general, made clear:

The attack on Timbuktu's cultural heritage is an attack against this history and the values it carries, values of tolerance, exchange and living together....It is an attack against the physical evidence that peace and dialogue is possible.

Evidence that our very health and wellbeing are affected by the state of the environment we inhabit underlines this nexus; if the cultural environment is destroyed or degraded or if people are prevented from enjoying it, their health and wellbeing deteriorate. For example, research in Western Australia has shown that the happiest and healthiest Indigenous Australians, with low arrest rates and good educational attainment, are those who have been able to retain a strong

attachment to their culture and have a strong Aboriginal identity.

On the other hand, the psychologically adverse consequences of destruction of people's familiar environments have been well documented. For example, interviews with people living in the Hunter Valley of New South Wales found that 'the transformation of the environment from mining and power station activities was associated with significant expressions of distress linked to negative changes to interviewees' sense of place, wellbeing, and control' (p 47), a phenomenon philosopher Glen Albrecht has described as 'solastalgia', a loss of a sense of place.

In the Hunter, millions of tonnes of coal are extracted each year, using open-cut techniques which blast away soil and rock and spread plumes of dust to settle on homes, crops, and livestock. Sites are often permanently lit and trucks and coal trains provide a background of constant noise. Rivers and streams are polluted.

Some of the opposition to the construction of a major industrial gas complex in the Kimberley and to the proliferation of coal-seam gas sites on agricultural land in New South Wales and Queensland almost certainly stems from people's desire to avoid such experiences and to retain their familiar and aesthetically pleasing environments—not to mention the desire to avert dust and noise and traffic and pollution.

Such sentiments are often derided as 'nimbyism' and given little weight, but they are an expression of the profound human need for connection with the natural world and cherished places. Jacobs has argued that such attachment to place is a deep human trait:

People do not simply look out over a landscape and say 'this belongs to me'. They say, 'I belong to this'. Concern for familiar topography, for the places one knows, is not about the loss of a commodity, but about the loss of identity. People belong in the world: it gives them a home (p. 109).

'People do not simply look out over a landscape and say "this belongs to me". They say "I belong to this".'

And such attachment has broader social ramifications. In one study of four communities in the USA, place attachment predicted better relationships

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between citizens; attached community members were more satisfied with their lives, had stronger bonding and neighbourhood ties, were more interested in their family roots, trusted people more, and were generally less egocentric and more altruistic. Other studies have found positive links between the strength of these emotional bonds and people's resistance to changes which despoil their environment. Residents of a small rural community in Norway who were most attached to the place were shown to be those who were most strongly opposed to a proposed hydroelectric plant. Generally they were also better citizens.

Another study of two small towns in North Wales faced with the construction of 200 wind turbines, revealed starkly different attitudes between the two towns towards the project: in the town where people had a strong sense of place linked to its scenic beauty (Llandudno), people reported feeling angry and threatened and were generally opposed to the project. In the other town (Colwyn Bay) which was perceived by its residents as poor and run down, there was little sense of place, no emotional response and no protest.

We know too that forced removal from place and land has been catastrophic for many peoples including Australia's Indigenous peoples, for whom notions of people and place are inseparably intertwined. Belonging to country is fundamental and the loss of country has resulted in widespread harm: depression

and grief. In Australia, those who took the Aboriginal children to try to turn them into domestic servants and farm labourers explicitly prohibited the children from speaking their own languages and taking part in cultural practices. The Bringing them Home Report documented these effects in considerable detail, finding that principal effect of the removal policies was the severe erosion of cultural links.

This was, of course, the aim of these policies. It was said at the time that the children were to be 'prevented from acquiring the habits and customs of the Aborigines' (South Australian Protector of Aborigines in 1909). Clearly, the intended outcome of the removals was to prevent Indigenous children from developing Indigenous cultural identity as part of their sense of themselves. One witness to the inquiry described this loss:

When we left Port Augusta, when they took us away, we could only talk Aboriginal. We only knew one language and when we went down there, well we had to communicate somehow. Anyway, when I come back I could not even speak my own language. And that really bugged my identity up. It took me 40 odd years before I became a man in my own people's eyes, through Aboriginal law. Whereas I should've went through that when I was about 12 years of age. (Confidential evidence 179, South Australia)

Witnesses also described their sense

of not belonging anywhere or to any community.

I felt like a stranger in Ernabella, a stranger in my father's people. We had no identity with the land, no identity with a certain people. I've decided in the last 10, 11 years to, y'know, I went through the law. I've been learning culture and learning everything that goes with it because I felt, growing up, that I was not really a blackfella. You hear whitefellas tell you you're a blackfella. But blackfellas tell you you're a whitefella. So, you're caught in a half-caste world. (Confidential evidence 289, South Australia)

As the report made clear, while Indigenous cultures were not destroyed by these policies, and continue to exist, many were profoundly changed. As Keating said in the Redfern speech:

[I]t might help us if we non-Aboriginal Australians imagined ourselves dispossessed of land we had lived on for fifty thousand years—and then imagined ourselves told that it had never been ours. Imagine if ours was the oldest culture in the world and we were told that it was worthless.

But the destruction of heritage need not necessarily be the result of such traumatic and cataclysmic events. We are constantly making judgments about what is worth protecting and passing on—as well as

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Tiered membership 2013

Categories

This membership year (2013) the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. will offer members the option of two categories:

1. Existing and new members can become a professional editor member, with full entitlements, for the annual fee of \$85, provided you have two years experience in a paid editing role and can supply two letters confirming your experience; or
2. Existing and new members can become an associate member for the annual fee of \$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*).

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

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 *Blue Pencil* each month, 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 \$130 per person).

The Committee, Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

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about what we would prefer to forget—we are constantly editing our experiences. Not all of these judgments are carefully considered—or even conscious—and many are hotly contested. In struggles to preserve our heritage, economic goals, in particular, may take precedence over what is really precious to us.

Australia's Indigenous people view their world as an interconnected whole: they make no intrinsic distinction between the lands and waters, the plants and animals and the culturally significant sites and objects linked to the traditional knowledge, which lie at the heart of Indigenous culture and identity handed down through the generations. Such traditional knowledge can only be kept alive through use and application in the country to which it is tied. Protecting land and places and promoting cultural practices (especially languages and creative expression) are both crucial for the maintenance of traditional knowledge. Where such use and application are disrupted, as is often the case with resource extractive industries, cultural heritage in the broadest sense is under threat.

Part of the problem, as outlined in the 2011 State of the Environment Report, is that the nature and extent of Indigenous cultural heritage is unknown to much of the wider community, with the result that we do not really know what is being destroyed. In fact, surveys and assessments of Indigenous heritage are often funded and undertaken in response to specific threats from development projects. Record—then destroy. The report also points out that conflicts about the destruction of Indigenous heritage by industry remain common and that 'one of the main threats to Indigenous heritage places is conscious destruction through government approved development'. Even when decision makers are aware of heritage impacts, they frequently choose to authorise destruction, bit by bit; economic considerations are given priority over heritage protection and the cumulative impacts of development are not properly assessed.

While some appear to think that the destruction of important Indigenous places, and the cultural practices and stories embedded in them, is the price that Indigenous people have to pay for economic improvement, I believe we are all impoverished in the deepest sense. The loss of such precious knowledge and history is global in its impact.

Let me give you a couple of recent examples from this state (W.A.) where the mining boom is still at full tilt and both state and federal governments are enthusiastic barrackers. Resource extraction industries inevitably place pressure features which form an important part of Indigenous heritage and the palimpsest of our past—landscapes, habitats, rock art, ancient story-lines, geological formations. In the rush to feed and fire the steel mills of China we barely stop to consider the loss that this represents. What little research there is has shown that 'mining and other forms of industrial development can result in profound and often irreversible damage to the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples'. It is fear of such damage that often drives Indigenous opposition to such development, especially since heritage laws have generally proved ineffective in protecting Indigenous heritage. And, in many cases, the promised economic benefits have not materialised. Neither has Native Title law necessarily helped protect these special places, especially when mining companies divide and conquer as one has done to the Yindjibarndi people of Roebourne.

Like many other groups, the Yindjibarndi people were effectively asked to trade off their heritage for economic benefits and employment; while they would undoubtedly welcome improvement in their living conditions and life chances for their children, many of them remain very uneasy about the fact that this may mean the destruction of important heritage sites and the destruction of their capacity to exercise their responsibilities to 'care for the land and make sure that the language and the culture are passed on.' The Chair of the YAC has said, 'We are deeply angered that fundamental human rights ...are being blatantly violated in this state. The Minister's decision steals from our people what is at the centre of our world, the cultural heritage that lies at the heart of our identity, our confidence, our right to exist as Yindjibarndi.'

A local song poignantly captures the strong connection to place:

*the wind belonging to the sea-side
snake is rising
blowing up-river
roaring through/
the wind from the sea is blowing up-
river
roaring through/
trees touch me...
a fire is burning there*

*loaded full with spirit power/
they are dancing, dancing
round and round
stamping on the ground
over and over
on the ground at Yirribinyanha...*

For Aboriginal people, the distinctions we make between people and place, past and present are artificial ones. The reality is that 'in many locations, natural, Aboriginal, cultural and historical values co-exist layer upon layer revealing the history of human interaction with the environment of many, many thousands of years' (Damien Bell) ; the environment is perceived as one interconnected and complex cultural landscape, created and lived in by ancestors and the contemporary community.

This way of thinking was very clear in the Australian Heritage Council assessment of the heritage values of the West Kimberley, in which I was privileged to take part. Anyone fortunate enough to have visited the area will agree that the West Kimberley is an extraordinary place by any measure—fascinating and unique wildlife, a magnificent coastline, spectacular gorges and waterfalls, ancient and ongoing Indigenous culture and a distinctive pastoral and pearling heritage. Not only is it recognised as one of the most ecologically diverse parts of the world, but scientists discover new species almost every time they visit. Some have argued that it deserves UNESCO World Heritage Status as a 'site of outstanding cultural and natural importance to the common heritage of humanity.'

Whatever its official status, it is, I believe, Australia's last great wild places; one of very few remaining on our planet. Despite decades of European settlement it is remarkably unspoilt; the coastland and marine life is not fully charted, and many parts of the rugged, trackless terrain rarely visited. It has so far been protected by this relative isolation. But that may be coming to an end.

The West Kimberley occupies approximately 420,000 square kilometres of the far north-west margin of our continent—and for most of us, a place in our imaginations. The Indian Ocean sculpts its rocky coastline and off the coast lie thousands of islands, many fringed with coral. The steep escarpments of the Mitchell Plateau rise nearly 800 metres above the sea. This is a complex

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landscape—the extensive plains, the dissected sandstone plateaus and the rugged mountains—formed by geological events thousands of millions of years ago. More recently, more than 300 million years ago, the extensive limestone ranges emerged from the remains of an extraordinary reef complex, rivalling the Great Barrier Reef in scale. This has since eroded to form an intricate network of caves and tunnels, the superb gorges with which some will be familiar.

In these rocks, frozen in time, are many fossilised species and the remnants of past life. Best known perhaps are the dinosaur footprints and tracks which are exposed in many places in the Broome Sandstone along the western length of the Dampier Peninsula. Recent research has underlined the uniqueness of this area – precisely the one to be destroyed to make way for an LNG plant which need not be built there.

The Kimberley is marked by many overlapping stories, principally those of the Aboriginal people who have occupied the land for more than 40,000 years. Indeed, there is informed speculation that this may be where the Aboriginal people first set foot on Australian soil. This is the traditional and spiritual home to 13 traditional owner groups who speak more than 30 different Indigenous languages, some unique to the region. It is home, too, to their ancestors and the many creation beings held by Traditional Owners to have shaped and occupied the ranges and plains, rivers and waterholes, seas and islands. Powerful creation beings such as the Wanjina are seen in many different forms; in the rock art, river systems, tidal movements, stone arrangements, geographic formations, animal and plant species and in the stars and planets.

What has come to be known as the ‘Dreaming’ or ‘Dreamtime’ is for Aboriginal people the Law, transmitted through traditional narratives, images, song and dance, weaving together the elements of their social world—their entitlements, responsibilities and obligations. As one Bardi women said, ‘they are living stories; they are the spirit of us’. The many Wanjina paintings of large-eyed, mouthless, anthropomorphic beings with halo like rings encircling heads and the elegant human-like painted images (the Gwion/Gwion) have attracted a lot of international interest. They form what is considered one of the longest lasting and most complex rock art sequences anywhere on the planet.

However, to the Aboriginal people, this is not art in the Western aesthetic sense but places where creation beings have placed themselves in rock.

The area is also host to what may be the greatest diversity of migrating shorebirds in the world; of 200 known shore bird species, 50 land on beaches and wetlands in the Broome area. The fine-grained silt of Roebuck Bay is teeming with tiny crabs, molluscs and worms rich in protein on which these birds feed. This rich life has sustained Aboriginal people for generations—marine shells, molluscs, fish, shellfish, turtles, Dugong. While many of the world’s oceans are heavily polluted, the Kimberley coastline remains among most pristine marine environments on earth. It is a sanctuary to Humpback whales and the rare snub fin dolphin. In the superb coral reefs and the extreme tidal environment are many remarkable freshwater and saltwater fish; eels; saw fish; whiprays, as well as the endangered northern river shark.

There is no doubt the Kimberley will be permanently altered by plans to exploit oil and gas off the coast and to establish a gas hub at James Price Point. And that will almost certainly not be the end of the story; a great many mining projects await the green light of development. What is in contemplation is not a small footprint but a very large and complex piece of infrastructure which will almost certainly expand over time; witness the LNG complex to the south, on the Burrup, which is now an industrial estate. Just last week it was announced that another nitrate fertiliser plant is to be built on the site.

Most people know the Burrup Peninsula from television footage of gas tankers powering through the impossibly blue channels of the Dampier Archipelago, delivering gas to an energy hungry world from the processing plants on the remote Pilbara coast.

What most do not appreciate, is that in the background is the most significant heritage site in Australia and the only Australian site to have been placed on the World Monuments Fund’s list of the 100 most endangered places. For on the Burrup—or to give it its Indigenous name Murujuga—is the densest concentration of rock art in the world, estimated at perhaps as many as a million petroglyphs; what some have described as ‘the world’s largest gallery of engraved prehistoric

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NEW MEMBERS

Virginia Ginnane
Cathy Hammer
Donna Hayward

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 professional 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 Anna Rauls for more information:

membership@editorsnsw.com

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art.’ And despite the fact that it is now on the Australian Heritage List, most Australians are almost entirely ignorant of its existence.

Rock carvings are scattered through the barren rocky ridges and steep-sided valleys of the peninsula and the surrounding islands. The oldest of the art work is believed to date from the period when the Burrup was an inland range, before the inundation which drowned much of the surrounding landscape more than 9,000 years ago. Amongst the distinctive images are geometric designs, tracks of humans, animals and birds, and a huge variety of both naturalistic and figurative representations of humans and animals, some so detailed that they can be identified as particular species. The rock art includes depictions of Thylacines or Tasmanian tigers, extinct on the mainland for more than 3,000 years and panels and composite images of daily activities, such as hunting, which have clearly been added to over long periods of time. With European settlement, as was so often the case in our history, came devastation for the original inhabitants of the peninsula, the Yaburara people, many of whom were massacred in 1868.

Many different engraving styles are represented—scored lines made with a very fine pointed rock, pecked marks, abraded lines and indents in the dark red-black glossy patina that covers the rocks in this area. The ‘fine execution’, the ‘dynamic nature’ of the images and the high degree of creativity have often been admired by those fortunate enough to have visited the site. For many it has been a revelatory experience. All who have seen even part of this extensive precinct—covering 42 islands over a 45km radius—marvel at the range and diversity of the art work which, together with camp sites, middens, quarries and standing stones form an irreplaceable record of the lives of the Indigenous people from the first arrivals to the recent

past. We are privileged to glimpse the minds and identities of individual artists and communities. The National Trust has described the Dampier Rock Art Precinct as ‘one of the world’s pre-eminent sites of recorded human evolution and a prehistoric university.’

It should be obvious that such a site is a precious part of our heritage, of the world’s heritage, deserving of careful study and preservation. Instead of the care and reverence which we would expect to be shown to a site with the significance of Stonehenge, the painted caves of Lascaux in France or the structures of Machu Picchu, the rock art precinct on the Burrup has taken second place to industrial and resource development for more than 40 years. A land use impact assessment undertaken in 2006 estimated that approximately 15 per cent of the Burrup Peninsula land mass had been heavily impacted by existing industrial, residential and infrastructure development (McDonald 2006:34).

Although there have been a number of partial surveys of this matchless site, many of them undertaken as part of the development approval process, it has never been the subject of a comprehensive inventory or analysis. As a result there is no generally accepted framework for understanding the various locations and cultural elements within the site. And industrial expansion remains on the agenda (two proposals for nitrates facilities and a desalination plant are under consideration), vandalism is occurring and the few tourist visits are haphazard and unsupervised. In early 2011, in response to a motion in the Senate, Minister Burke asked the Australian Heritage Council to undertake an emergency assessment of the outstanding universal values of the Dampier Archipelago and any threats to the site. Our assessment was not good news.

Anyone who has been paying attention to Australian public debate over the last few years can not have failed to notice that there has been a lot of talk about values. Heritage, of course, is about values—or more precisely, what we value from our past, what we are prepared to protect and conserve and to pass on to future generations. As I have already said, knowledge and experience of our heritage gives meaning to our lives, inspires us and contributes to our collective sense of identity. The sites, landscapes and places which we can be galvanised to protect are, in some ways, an indication of what matters to us and what we think of ourselves. Our actions speak louder than words. As they do on the Dampier Peninsula, in the Kimberley, in the Tarkine.

Our relationship with the places we know and in which we live are not abstract, but intimate and intricate. As these places change, so do we. Even though we may only dimly apprehend the deeper human loss which ensues from the destruction of our heritage, the effects are, nonetheless real and lasting. This alone is reason enough to take heritage protection very seriously.

A recent review of Indigenous suicide by Aaron Stuart attributes the high rates of suicide in some Indigenous communities to people ‘grieving from loss of culture and identity’. Unless we re-weight the balance between economic activity and heritage and culture, priceless human assets will be lost forever and the wellbeing of Indigenous Australians—and of all of us—further compromised by the pressure to produce more useless ‘stuff’.



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The Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.)

Professional development

Grammar Essentials

Date: Friday 18 October 2013

Time: 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Presenter: Pam Peters, DE, Emeritus Professor of Linguistics, Macquarie University

Venue: UTS Short Courses Venue, Level 7, UTS Bld 10, 235 Jones Street, Sydney

Cost: \$220 for society members, \$350 for non-members (includes lunch, and morning and afternoon teas)

Please let our Administration manager, Anna Rauls, know if you are interested in attending—membership@editorsnsw.com.

Editors often feel that they need more grammar, but how much is enough? The major grammars of contemporary English consist of more than 1,000 pages, with vast networks of grammatical terms. Editors probably do not need to know all of them—unless they are aiming for a career change. What they do need for the purposes of professional editing is enough grammar to:

- Make the most of dictionaries, style manuals and other language references.
- Understand and explain the variable points of current English usage.
- Capitalise on language resources for cohesive writing.
- Enlarge their repertoire for managing stylistic change.

Let us bridge the grammatical gaps and find grammatical resources for enhancing all aspects of writing and editing. The workshop is designed to be interactive and to allow for discussion of the ins and outs of usage as they arise.

Pam Peters directed Macquarie University's postgraduate program in editing and publishing for 18 years, and continues as consultant to its revised course in editing and electronic publishing. She wrote the *Cambridge Guide to Australian English Usage* (2007) and the forthcoming *Cambridge Dictionary of English Grammar*.

The age of experience—Society of Editors (WA) celebrates 21 years

On 20 August 2013, around 34 people from the society, LinkedIn and Facebook friends, editors past and present, new friends and old joined in celebrating 21 years of the society in Western Australia. The venue, Bluewater Grill, was a picturesque mount above the river, which showcased the glittering Perth skyline overlooked by an unusual blue moon. Vasse Felix wine was given away as door prizes and lucky dips with one table of seven having six winning tickets drawn! The mathematician at the table said there was a one in 3,652 chance of that happening.

President, Robin Bower, introduced the speakers for the evening. Life member James Hansen, and members Amanda Curtin and Anne Surma reminisced about their early years developing networks in the burgeoning industry in Perth. After the official speakers, committee member Cheryl Bettridge invited other members to speak about their own experiences joining the society and in the publishing industry. These general speakers were member Betty Durston, committee member Jan Knight, committee member Marisa Wikramanayake, member Allan Watson, member Chris Walker and Rose Van Son. Robin Appleton and Christine Nagel sent messages which were read out at the event.

Workshop information

Registration

To register for regular workshops download and print out a form from the society's website and send it to the Administration manager, Anna Rauls. Please note that workshops require a minimum of 10 registrations by the closing date to proceed. The society reserves the right to cancel workshops if there are insufficient enrolments.

Payment for workshops

To secure a place you must send payment with your registration form. Workshops fill quickly and we often have people on a waitlist for courses. Please contact the Administration manager at membership@editorsnsw.com if you need a tax invoice.

Regional members

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

Freelancers' lunch

Join this monthly gathering for lively conversation and networking opportunities. We meet at Café Delizia, located at street level in the Hyde Park Towers Building, 148 Elizabeth Street, in the CBD between Liverpool and Goulburn Streets (Surry Hills side of the road). Meet at **noon** or thereabouts. Put it in your calendar. There's no need to book or rsvp—just come. Some come early, some later. We are generally there from **noon until 2.00pm**.

Our next gathering will be held on

- **Thursday 19 September**

We deliberately vary the days and dates to accommodate the varying schedules of our freelancers, and the venue is centrally located and easy to reach via public transport. This little café has a cosy and quiet back room with floor-to-ceiling books along three and a half walls (they had to leave an opening as a door). The menu is limited, but the food is good and inexpensive. We welcome suggestions for other venues, if anyone wants a change of scenery.

2013 COMMITTEE

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Blue Pencil

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Assistants: Jacqui Smith, Robin Appleton, Agata Mrva-Montoya and Owen Kavanagh
The *Blue Pencil* is available only in digital format (PDF). If you require a printed version, please contact the Administration manager at membership@editorsnsw.com

Published: 11 issues a year (combined January/February issue)

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 October 2013 issue is Thursday, 17 October 2013

The views expressed in the articles and letters, or the material contained in any advertisement or attachment, 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). 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 2013 fees are \$85 for professional members (new or renewal) and \$65 for associate members (new or renewal). Interested organisations can become corporate associates for \$400 per year.

To obtain a membership application form visit the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. 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:

- January (deadline 31 December)
- April (deadline 31 March)
- July (deadline 30 June)
- October (deadline 30 September).

The cost is \$40 per year in addition to the fee for membership of the society. Only professional members are eligible for a listing. New listings should be submitted using a template available from the Administration manager at membership@editorsnsw.com.

Committee vacancy

A position is currently available for a professional member to volunteer as a committee member. Participation involves attending the society's committee meetings, generally held on the second Tuesday of each month. Committee members receive one workshop per year free as incentive. Please contact a committee member for details if you would like to join