



THE EDITORS

P.O. Box 567,
Neutral Bay Junction 2089

NEXT MEETING...NEXT MEETING...NEXT MEETING...NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of The Editors will be held at the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre at 16 Fitzroy Street on Wednesday 22 August, at 6.30pm. The speaker will be Hester Eisenstein, who is Assistant Director in the Office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment. She will speak about her recent book, Contemporary Feminist Thought, and the experience of women in the workforce.

If you intend to stay for dinner, please RSVP by Monday, 20 August to Monica Ardill, 406 4288.

LAST MEETING

The last meeting was held on 4 July, when Professor Arthur Delbridge and Alan Peterson spoke on 'Problems of Style'.

Professor Delbridge, who is Editor in Chief of the Macquarie dictionaries, spoke of problems he had encountered both with the Dictionary and as a member of the ABC's Standing Committee on Spoken English. This Committee was established in 1944 and, while dealing with general questions of usage, was mainly concerned with pronunciation. In the early days the rules were rigid: pronunciation followed Daniel Jones's Pronouncing Dictionary (which gives South-Eastern English pronunciation), and for any word not in that book the Committee recommended one pronunciation. Nowadays, however, the Committee doesn't impose one single pronunciation, let alone that of Daniel Jones, on announcers.

Professor Delbridge apologised for speaking to book editors about pronunciation and turned to the Macquarie Dictionary. He explained that he regards the function of a dictionary as holding up a mirror to the language rather than laying down rules. He conceded that of course people do use a dictionary as a guide to what is 'correct', whatever the intentions of the compilers may have been. The process of compilation included collecting citations from newspapers,

consulting the Commonwealth Style Manual and bowing to the dictates of the Metric Conversion Board. This last (now defunct, as a member of the audience pointed out), is apparently the only body to which Professor Delbridge ascribes an absolute authority in linguistic matters. In general Professor Delbridge favours a loose standardisation that is adaptable and that can eliminate undesired obscurity, ambiguity and disorderliness.

Alan Peterson, who is News Editor of the Sydney Morning Herald and has been responsible for the editorial style of the paper for the last ten years, then spoke on style from the point of view of a newspaper editor. The SMH tries to lay down uniformity of usage, spelling, capitalisation, etc., because it naturally wants consistency throughout the paper. For this reason the Herald style book has some fairly arbitrary rules.

As for literary style, language simple enough for any intelligent reader is sought. Short sentences with concrete nouns and active verbs are favoured. Active verbs not only make for direct writing, he pointed out, but make the reporter ask 'Who did it?'

Among specific issues he mentioned were taboo words, which he prefers not to see in the Herald, since a newspaper is very public and cannot simply be avoided in the way that a book can, if readers think that they are likely to be offended. The Herald tries to use non-sexist language within the limits of public acceptance. There is no point in a usage like 'rural person' for 'man on the land' because it only provokes laughter, which is not the object of the exercise.

Mr Peterson feels that an Australian newspaper should use Australian expressions, although it is often difficult to decide what they are, especially since so many Americanisms come into the language from TV programs and films.

Both speakers described a type of person who spends most of the time writing furious letters of complaint. These people are old, irascible, have good (selective) memories and plenty of time on their hands. Writing these letters apparently makes them feel in a position of strength and bolsters their egos.

In spite of these ultramontanists on the one hand and the school-leavers (who, according to Alan Peterson, can't spell and know no grammar) on the other, both speakers felt that the language is robust enough to survive.

the Azaria Chamberlain case to ferries which sink in the harbour.

The literary pages of the Sydney Morning Herald are intended to be geared to the interests of the book-buying public, rather than emulating a literary magazine. In other words, they aim at general interest reviews, rather than attempt to be an equivalent of the Times Literary Supplement. The Sydney Morning Herald usually publishes twelve reviews per week. These often cover more than that number in books. Most books reviewed are Australian. Literally hundreds come in for review, usually in bursts. One in ten is reviewed, which seems a very reasonable service to readers.

TRAINING WORKSHOPS

The first workshop for this year will be held on Saturday 11 August, 9.30 to 4.30, at Kuring-gai CAE, Eton Road, Lindfield. The subject will be Copy Editing and the emphasis will be practical. Several workshop groups will be led by experienced editors in different specialised fields, including technical and scientific, academic, cookery, and illustrated books.

The fee will be \$15. Morning and afternoon tea will be provided, but please bring your own lunch.

NEW MEMBERS

Rather belatedly, we would like to welcome the following, who have joined The Editors this year:

Josephine Bastien	Timothy Fraser	Jan Mackey
Jo Beaumont	Carol Freeman	Calvin Miller
Daemoni Bishop	Jon Gamble	Annette Minchin
Judith Burnet	Lynn Gemmell	Jan Phillips
George Carrard	Peter Gibson	Judy Ranken
Adrian Clayton	Leslie Glaysher	Richard Tardif
Sally Carthew	Jo Jarrah	Marie-Louise Taylor
Bryony Cosgrove	Anne Kern	Alan Walker
Dorothy Deger	Stephanie Lewis	Beverley Weynton
Sue Elkins	Megan McDonald	Margaret Wild

A SPECIAL PLEA

For the comfort of everyone, especially the speaker/s, members are asked not to smoke during the main part of the meeting - announcements, speaker's address, discussion, etc. The effect can be rather uncomfortable, particularly in winter when doors and windows are closed.

EDITORS COMMITTEE

Current officers are:

President	Sue Butler	929 5677
Business Secretaries	Sue McGrath	90 5432
	Maureen Coleman	660 2302
Newsletter Editors	Gil Teague	406 4288
	Jo Rudd	949 6092
Treasurer	George Morrison	
Catering Treasurer	Bruce Champion	816 2758
Past President	Desney Jackson	888 3655

REVIEW

Bulletin No 47 of the Australian Copyright Council Limited: Copyright and Writers: Catriona Hughes.

Predictably, this recent (February 1984) interpretation of the Copyright Act by the Copyright Council, written by Legal Officer, Catriona Hughes, will be an invaluable addition to every author's bookshelf. Coming from the Copyright Council, it is a useful guideline on authorial rights as authors as well as publishers are likely to understand them.

Ms Hughes and the Council have also structured this issue to approach a very complex area logically and lucidly by meeting the need for working definitions as well as dealing with leading questions before proceeding to detailed summaries of the rights and other pertinent areas, such as contracts, film rights, etc.

One of the difficulties of copyright legislation to all concerned with publishing is that words we all know, love and use daily now have a specific legal connotation. For purposes of application of the Act, for instance, an author must be a 'qualified person' - i.e. an Australian citizen, resident or protected person (section 32). This does not, however, mean that the Act does not apply to foreign authors.

Australia is a signatory to both the Berne Union and the Universal Copyright Convention, which basically means that Australia agrees to the protection of the work of foreign nationals of other member states in terms of domestic copyright of the country where it is published. This protects all unpublished manuscript, as well as meaning that Australian writers published in London are protected by UK law, and English writers publishing here are protected by the Australian Act.

The section on International Copyright appears on page 11 of the Bulletin. It also carries interesting information such as that the copyright symbol, ©, is legally essential to protect literary works in UCC countries, which includes Australia and the United States (the latter is not a member of the Berne Union).

The Bulletin generally covers copyright's effect on literary properties, treated separately as literary works and dramatic works, and collectively including manifestations of the written word from poems to train timetables. From working definitions of terms such as

MELBOURNE SOCIETY OF EDITORS

We have a reciprocal arrangement with the Society of Editors in Melbourne to exchange newsletters. Members of The Editors can subscribe to the Melbourne group's newsletter for \$6 pa. Write to: Society of Editors, PO Box 176, Carlton South, Vic. 3053.

MELBOURNE FREELANCERS

A group of concerned freelance editors in Melbourne is planning to meet regularly to discuss work-related problems and matters of interest such as rates of pay and quoting for a job. If you would like to contribute your problems, solutions, suggestions, etc., in the interests of a better deal for freelance editors, please contact Debbie Barnes on 03.429 5227.

EDITORS COMMITTEE

Please note: Sue McGrath's phone number is now 498 6843.

INDEXING COURSE

The Society of Indexers (Sydney Group) wants to assess how much interest there would be in a basic indexing course, similar to one run in Melbourne recently. The course ran for one evening a week for five weeks and cost \$75. No previous experience is needed. If there is sufficient interest in Sydney, the course would be run by the Library School of either the University of New South Wales or Kuringai College of Advanced Education.

COPYRIGHT COUNCIL WORKSHOP

The Copyright Council is holding a workshop entitled 'Copyright for Writers and Editors' on Monday 3 September 1984 from 9 am. to 3 pm. The fee of \$55 (\$35 for students and the unemployed) includes valuable reference documents and lunch. Those who are interested should contact Annemarie Baulman at the Australian Copyright Council, Tel: 92 1151, as soon as possible. There are only fifty places available.

'work' and 'author', the coverage extends to general summaries of rights, rights in detail, and consideration of other relevant areas such as publishing contracts, Public Lending Right, film rights, and the kind of legal protection available for titles and ideas.

The Bulletin also notes areas of apparent anomalies. For example, because no words are involved, choreographic works or dumb shows are completely unprotected when reproduced on videotape. On the other hand, there is the grey area which is determined by the individual case of what constitutes 'a substantial part' of the work when part of the work is used or quoted.

If one has even a passing interest in books, writing, publishing and the law, Bulletin No 47 makes fascinating browsing. For anyone with a professional interest in publishing, a close and careful reading is essential homework.

Susan McGrath.

NOTE: Bulletin No 47 (Copyright and Writers) is available at a reduced rate to members of The Editors on application to:
The Australian Copyright Council, 22 Alfred Street, Milsons Point.
NSW 2061. Tel: (02) 92 1151.

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