

BOOK WORM

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF EDITORS (WA) INC.

May 2003

From the Chair

In April, SOEWA's committee tossed around ideas for guest speakers and meeting topics for the membership in the coming year. As a result of that session, Amanda, the meetings co-ordinator, has put together a fabulous programme of events for the next few months. Details of the first of those events—on quoting: the dilemmas, the challenges, the guidelines—are given below. If, until now, you've been a not-so-regular attendee at SOEWA meetings, how about making 2003 the year you mark our monthly get-togethers in your diary?

I'd also like to remind members of the National Editors Conference, coming up in Brisbane in July. The draft programme looks terrific, with panels and workshops designed to appeal to editors old and new: freelance editing, the marketing of the profession, multimedia materials editing, new techniques for old editors, e-publishing, and so on. Have a look at the conference website (<http://www.editorsqld.com/conference/index2.htm>) for more information on sessions and for details of fees and accommodation.

Have a great month!

Anne Surma

Editorial

Thanks to those kind readers who complimented the last edition of *Book Worm*, but I must confess that that issue's standard was largely due to the efforts of Michèle and James, without whom it would have been an absolute embarrassment of sloppy punctuation and jumbled style.

Michèle and James deserve great bouquets for pulling me through that first gruelling episode. This and future editions will have more lead time and hence less haste (read: panic) on my part, although, as I write, we're about to close up shop for the Easter break, so it could be more of the same, folks.

Thanks also to those who have contributed suggestions and leads for stories, some of which are reproduced in this journal.

James and Gila both achieved a degree of fame with their respective excellent articles in our last edition: both pieces have been sought for reprinting in the *Canberra Editor* and each author has kindly agreed to allow that usage. The *CE* didn't want my editorial, though...

Chris Nagel

May meeting: quoting for work—and getting paid!

*I have this report that has to be done by next Friday and the committee hasn't sent me their comments yet and there might be some revisions and the introduction needs to be rewritten taking into account the latest round of changes to the recommendations and I'm not sure whether we'll be including appendices and we need an executive summary and the chairperson won't be back to give approval until Thursday and this is just the first in the series and we'd really like you to be part of our team. Can you give us a quote?**

Quoting for editing work can be frustrating even for experienced editors. For newcomers it can be a nightmare. And then there's that tricky question of getting paid.

Come along to our May meeting and hear what five experienced SOEWA members, working in different areas, have to say about quoting for work and getting paid. Our generous speakers are:

Janet Blagg: book editing

Rhonda Bracey: technical writing

Tom Jenkins: editing and production for self-publishing clients

Jan Knight: government publications editing

Chris Nagel: manuscript assessment

This is a meeting no one can afford to miss.

When: 7.30 pm, Tuesday 6 May 2003

Where: Tresillian Community Centre, 21 Tyrell Street, Nedlands

Cost: \$2 cover charge

RSVP: Amanda Curtin (phone 9377 2091; curtin@highway1.com.au)

* *The correct answer is 'no'. Unless you really want the rest of that series, in which case...*

Advance notice of June meeting: grammar workshop part 2

SOEWA's resident grammar researcher, James Hansen, will pick up where he left off at last November's meeting—this time going beyond the basics. If you come across a sticky grammar problem, bring it to the meeting for workshopping—or send it to James in advance (jehansen@starwon.com.au) so he can focus on particular areas of concern.

When: 7.30 pm, Tuesday 3 June 2003

Where: Tresillian Community Centre, 21 Tyrell Street, Nedlands

Cost: \$2 cover charge, plus \$5 for a set of James's notes if you didn't get them last time (please advise Amanda you want a set)

RSVP: Amanda Curtin (phone 9377 2091; curtin@highway1.com.au)

Sleuthing patriotic slogans

by Gary Sloan

The following article is reproduced from the AlterNet web site (11 April 2003) with the author's generous permission.

In this best of times and worst of times, the American landscape is dotted with signs, billboards, posters and stickers emblazoned with patriotic slogans. In my hometown, merchants have scrawled on their display windows a smorgasbord of venerable shibboleths: "United We Stand," "Support the Troops," "Pray for the Troops," "Let Freedom Ring," "Home of the Brave," "God Bless America." Taped on many windows is a flyer that reads: "Pro-America Rally in Railroad Park. Bring lawn chairs, flags, and snacks. Dress patriotic."

When I read the flyer, I thought: Shouldn't that be "Dress *patriotically*?"

Because I have spent much of my life studying and teaching language, I respond inappropriately to patriotic slogans: I parse them grammatically and try to explicate them the way I would an obscure fragment in an essay. Like Hamlet, I sometimes become sicklied over with the pale cast of thought when I shouldn't be thinking at all. The slogans are designed to evoke warm feelings of camaraderie and unity, not grimaces and cocked brows.

Yet I persist in my folly. To wit: many patriotic slogans are in the imperative mood. They issue a command ("Support the Troops," "Pray for the Troops"). Commands are risky. They create resistance in natural-born rebels and in patriophobes (those with an excessive fear of patriotism).

Are "Let Freedom Ring" and "United We Stand" logically compatible? If everyone exercises freedom of speech and conscience, will we all stand united? Instead of assenting to the war against Iraq, some may opt to ring their dissent. How does one "Support the Troops"? Letters? Pep rallies? Boxes of homemade cookies? Can one support the troops by urging them to obey their consciences even if their consciences conflict with their orders?

"Home of the Brave." Hmm. Brave in what sense? Obviously, many Americans aren't physically brave. Millions are afraid to walk the streets at night or open their doors to strangers. If "brave" refers to moral courage, might the bravest Americans be those who resist the will of the majority? Might it require more bravery to protest Operation Iraqi Freedom than to support it?

"God Bless America" is almost as inscrutable as the utterances of a Delphi oracle. Grammatically, the words are in the subjunctive mood. They express a wish or a prayer: "Please, God, bless America," or "May God bless America."

The real conundrum: what do the words mean? In what sense is God to bless America? With good health, bouncing babies, supportive spouses? Good schools? High IQs? Philosophical wisdom? Fat paychecks, sirloin steaks, sport utility vehicles, faster computers, more cable channels, bigger boom boxes? Competitive Superbowls? Better face lifts and liposuction? Speedier cruise missiles, smarter smart bombs, stealthier stealth bombers? Continued monopoly of the planet's natural resources?

And does "America" mean Americans? If so, does it comprise all Americans, including murderers, rapists, thieves, swindlers, embezzlers, muggers, liars, cheats, bullies, pederasts, pornographers, conceited airheads, slobs, slum lords, domestic tyrants, bigots and racists?

Or does "America" refer to land, spacious skies and amber waves of grain? Or to some platonic ideal of government embodied in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, worthy of being blessed even if some Americans aren't?

Now, if I can just figure out how to dress patriotic.

Gary Sloan (sloangg@bellsouth.net) is a retired English professor in Ruston, Louisiana.

Whine list

Please feel free to email Chris Nagel your whines for inclusion, along with your tasting notes.

Possessive apostrophes that shouldn't be there.

Missing possessive apostrophes that should be there.

Confusion about "its" and "it's" ... especially by my MS Word program!

Using one style of quote marks for direct speech and the other style for titles, thoughts, indirect speech or anything else that the writer can't decide what to do with.

Books-in-a-day

from Gila Scheffler

April 23 is the International Day of the Book, probably also in Australia. ...

Literaturhaus Cologne is planning to make the fastest book of the world that very day. In one day they want to write, edit, print, bind, deliver, sell, read and review a book.

At 8 am, 40 German speaking writers all over the world will be asked to write two pages on a topic that will be given at this time. At 10 am editing begins, at 12 o'clock printing will start on a historic press and then 1000 editions [*sic*] will be taken to 10 different places by Germany's fastest train, the Intercity Express.

Making a book in a day seeks to create awareness of how many work steps are

necessary and how many people are involved in this process. Most people only know about the author and the publishing house. Of course, quality work requires time in everyday life but on the other hand people are really curious to find out if there's not a piece of interesting literature coming out? The initiators hope that nobody overlooks their winking [*sic.*] [Quaint phrase! *Ed.*] when starting this event.

More than 150 people will participate—authors, editors, printers, distributors, reviewers etc.

The books will be sold at 20 Euro each; the proceeds will be given to a literary project that is running out of time [*sic.*]; and well-known multinational companies will sponsor the event.

Please take a look at www.schnellstes-buch-der-welt.de, unfortunately only available in German.

The Katharine Susannah Prichard Foundation is organising a similar book-in-a-day event for the writing of a children's book. Go to www.kspf.iinet.net.au/bookinaday for more information. Ed.

Events, workshops and conferences

CASE: national promotional strategy

The Council of Australian Societies of Editors (CASE) is planning to convene a working party, made up of representative members around Australia, to develop a national promotional strategy for the profession.

SOEWA is looking for a member with lots of ideas, who is keen to join such a working party. If that's you, please contact Anne 9287 1494; asurma@murdoch.edu.au) for more details.

National editors conference progress report, 20 March 2003

Report supplied by Robin Bennett

The CASE conference to be held in Brisbane on 18 and 19 July is taking its final shape. We have been working to achieve a program that will provide the best coverage for CASE issues and meet the professional needs of our colleagues around Australia. We have still to revise our draft timeslots to ensure the best advantage for every presentation, but we can confirm that the program will include:

Friday 18 July

The official opening by Minister for Arts Matt Foley.

An address by the keynote speaker.

A stimulating hypothetical on the long-term future of the book, in which a facilitator and at least six panel members will consider such issues as currency, access, plagiarism, copyright, How shall we publish?, relative advantages and disadvantages, and Is e-publishing worth it?

A session on legal issues, including copyright (Trisha Baker).

A double session on education and training of editors. The first half will consist of a presentation by Pam Peters on teaching editors online; the second hour will be a forum on What is the ideal editing course? A student, a teacher and a publisher will consider prerequisites, content, etc. We will be contacting all tertiary institutions offering courses in editing, publishing and related skills to invite them to supply multiple copies of brochures for a stall in the trade fair.

A session on the future of design (the impact of the 'net' on print), presented by David Whitbread.

A session on editing magazines and journals, including e-zines, presented by Robert Nichols of the Australian War Memorial (editing a journal) and Ffion Murphy from Edith Cowan University, WA (editing an online arts review).

Saturday 19 July

A plenary session on the major CASE issues. A three-person panel including Renee Otmar and Robyn Colman, plus facilitator, will discuss and answer questions on marketing the profession.

Another panel chaired by Janet McKenzie will present and explain recommendations by the CASE accreditation group on accreditation. Both of these sessions promise to be lively sessions, of great importance to conference participants.

A panel session (three-person panel) on editing indigenous writing.

A session on new techniques for old editors (Victoria Richardson).

A session on editing biography, based on the biography of Judith Wright.

Editing fiction.

Changes in English usage—the implications for editors.

A session on assessing an index.

A session on reversioning (Cathy Gray).

A session on working with self-publishers (Barbara Ker-Wilson and Sue Pechey).

Editing for tertiary institutions (Vern Field, Deakin University).

A session on e-publishing.

A plenary session to wrap up the conference.

Unless otherwise stated, conference sessions will consist of a 40–45-minute paper and 15–20 minutes for questions. As you can see, we still need to add some presenters to the program, and groupings may change. We hope this

program will prove to be too tempting to resist for your members!

Poster/soapbox sessions

We will be arranging poster or soapbox sessions during the conference, that is, informal sessions on issues that people feel passionate about, such as possessive apostrophes, which don't add up to a full paper or would be more effectively presented in a non-formal setting. We will need some advance notice, so we can plan and allocate the soapboxes. Could you spread the word and invite your members to let us know about the bees in their bonnets, so they can buzz at Bardon in July?

Workshops

Conference participants will have six workshops to choose from on Sunday, most of which will be held at Bardon. At least one or two will be held in a Queensland University computer lab; we will arrange transport to enable participants to get over to St Lucia if people find themselves facing transport problems. The choices will be:

- Developments in design, conducted by David Whitbread.
- New techniques for old editors.
- Editing multimedia materials.
- Freelance editing—the person in the business (Kathie Stove).
- Freelance editing—marketing your business.
- Children's picture books—the creative process (non-computerised illustration).

We have aimed to avoid topics that would normally be covered by societies through their own professional development programs.

Conference dinner

The conference dinner will be held on Friday night at the Moomba Function Centre, Annerley. For \$50 per head, participants will receive a three-course dinner with complimentary wine and a cash bar. Entertainment will be provided by Musica Prima, a six-member group that performs medieval and Renaissance music. Bring your medieval, Renaissance or Addams Family costumes with you and enjoy the party. Non-conference participants will be welcome to join us!

Pre-conference drinks

Pre-conference drinks and finger foods will be arranged for Thursday evening, 17 July, at the Bardon Centre. Entertainment will also be provided for that evening to pleasure the company. Relax, enjoy good Brisbane entertainment and get to know your fellow participants over a few drinks!

Conference charges

Many people have asked about conference costs. We are still working on them; we should know soon, and will let you know as soon as possible. We are seeking to keep the charges reasonable, so as many people as possible can afford to attend: we are aiming at \$275 for the early bird full conference rate. Single-day rates and concession rates will be available: full-time students and Health Care Card holders will be entitled to a 25 per cent discount. Conditions may apply.

Accommodation

We have arranged with Bardon for staff at the Centre to handle all bookings for accommodation. People who wish to secure their accommodation can ring the Bardon Centre now on (07) 3217 5333. Ask for Tanya Daniel, identify yourself as a member of a society of editors and give the reference number for group reservations, 600 549.

Just to remind everyone, the choices are:

- a single studio with private en suite (\$114 per person per night);
- a guest lodge with shared en suite (\$86 per person per night);
- a twin studio with private en suite (\$69 per person per night);
- a single queen executive suite (\$127 per person per night);
- a family suite (three adults, \$160 per night).

Trade fair

We will also be holding a trade fair, including books and electronic displays.

Billeting

A set of questions matching the ones already sent out to potential Brisbane hosts in *Offpress* will be circulated this week so hosts and guests can be happily matched.

Web site

We are inviting all presenters to supply an abstract of no more than 200 words and a digital photo, to be placed on the SocEds (Qld) web site progressively, so everyone can see what the program for this CASE conference will consist of. The text of papers will be placed on the web site after the conference.

Call for expressions of interest in BELS exam

Australian editors are invited to register their interest in sitting for the second BELS exam to be held in Australia.

The Board of Editors in the Life Sciences was founded in 1991 to evaluate the proficiency of manuscript editors in the life sciences and to award credentials similar to those obtainable in other professions.

Accreditation as an Editor in the Life Sciences (ELS) provides qualified manuscript editors with a way to demonstrate their editorial proficiency and provides employers and clients with a way to identify proficient editors.

Candidates sit a three-hour multiple-choice test of scientific editing in English.

To be eligible, you must have a bachelor's degree or equivalent and at least two years' experience as a manuscript editor in the life sciences (or four years' experience in lieu of a degree).

Registration costs US\$25. To apply, you must submit a résumé, letters from employers or clients describing your employment, and copies of academic transcripts or degree certificates.

If you are accepted, the cost of registration for an exam is US\$100. Full details, including an application form, are available at www.bels.org

If there is enough interest, the exam will be held in Sydney in late 2003 or early 2004. Please write to Leslie Neistadt, neistadt@hughston.com to register your interest, or just post your application to BELS.

For more information contact Matthew Stevens, mls@zeta.org.au or Rhana Pike, rhanap@ozemail.com.au

General meetings

Join us at Tresillian Community Centre on 6 May (7.30 pm) for the first meeting in our 2003 program.

Deadline for next issue of *Book Worm*: Tuesday 20 May 2003
—carn, youse guys!

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