



Representing Aboriginal voices

Representing the spoken word in print can be fraught, particularly when working with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander authors who might use non-standard varieties of English. However, as editor Mark MacLean discusses, there are some conventions that you may find helpful.

What is it that makes editing Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers different to editing non-Indigenous writers? Is there a difference at all or is good editing simply a case of being a good editor?

Perhaps it is useful to begin by pointing out why this question is even raised. Writers—all writers—can be uncertain about or distrustful of an editor assigned to work on their project. Writers are often wary of changes suggested by an editor, at worst viewing the editor as a gatekeeper blocking the exposure of their voice to the world. In cases such as this the editor should use all the skill and care that she would use with any client. Tact and diplomacy are vital in any author-editor relationship but some authors may need extra time and care from you, the editor.

Among the Aboriginal-controlled publishers there is a general understanding that you may need extra time for this relationship-building should you be commissioned to work with an Aboriginal author. Discuss

the author and the schedule with the commissioning publisher beforehand. Ask them: How experienced is the author? What is the author's understanding of what is about to happen to her manuscript? For some authors the very act of writing in English is a political statement, yet such a bold declaration might not actually appear on the editorial brief and only rear its head once the editing process has begun.

This said, there are plenty of authors who simply want to get the best book out they can by whatever means necessary—but as the editor discussing

the project for the first time you do not know their stance. So as well as tact and diplomacy I will add another quality you should have: an understanding of 'where they're coming from'. You might label this 'empathy' or 'political savvy' or 'an awareness of the blindness of privilege'. The editor working in the medical sciences often has a background in the medical sciences and so has an understanding of the politics, constraints and discipline-specific restrictions affecting the author, as does the editor working with primary children's books, high school

continued on page 2

Next meeting: Tuesday, 2 November 2010

The near-death of the literary editor

There is a lot of panic these days about the collapse of newspapers, the closure of book review pages, the falling quality of book reviews, and the irrelevance of print in the electronic age. Should we be worried? Susan Wyndham talks about exactly what a literary editor does, the challenges of the job, how books get reviewed, and why it still matters to the book industry.

Susan Wyndham has been literary editor of *The Sydney Morning Herald* since 2008, and did an earlier stint in the job from 1996 to 1999. She has a BA (Hons English Literature) and started her career in journalism as a cadet with the *Herald* in 1981. Since then she has also been a news reporter, feature writer, editor of *Good Weekend* magazine, New York correspondent for *The Australian* and a deputy editor of the *Herald*. In 2008 Picador published her first book, *Life in His Hands*, about the Sydney neurosurgeon Charlie Teo and his patient Aaron McMillan, a young concert pianist. She has edited and contributed to other books, reviewed books, judged book awards and reads books in every spare moment.

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 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 by phone to (02) 9294 4999 (voicemail) or by email to the email address <membership@editorsnsw.com> by Friday, 29 October 2010.

December meeting: Christmas dinner at The Red Snail, Darlinghurst; Tuesday, 7 December 2010. See flyer inside.

Inside

IPeD notes	3
Tiered membership	4
Brisbane Writers Festival	5
Apology	7
Christmas dinner	7
News, notices and conference diary	8
ESD order form	8
Professional development	10

Maths texts, recipe books and so on. The point is this: the onus is on you the editor to engage with the subject. You will not know as much about the topic as your author but you should have a knowledge that is general enough for you to place the author's work in the context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander literature. This applies whether the text is an autobiography, a learner's guide or grammar of an Aboriginal language, or a political critique.

It is an industry maxim that a good editor does not know everything but does know where to find out everything. The largest proportion of Australia's Aboriginal literary production takes place at the regional level, typically the literacy centre or language centre operating out of the local school. You cannot know everything that is happening everywhere but, equally, Google and Wikipedia are not going to be much use either. In the book *Dhuuluu-Yala: To Talk Straight*, Aboriginal editor Rachel Bin Salleh remarks that, in the process of editing an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander author, 'It is not just the text you are editing, it is all the issues that are part of being Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander that you edit'¹. Remember this.

'You cannot know everything that is happening everywhere but, equally, Google and Wikipedia are not going to be much use either.'

Varieties of English

Understanding the author, the story, her cultural and political context, all give way at some point to the act of editing. One aspect of editing Aboriginal voices that is regularly revisited, and the aspect I discuss here, is that of voice and the representation of voice.

In her preface to *The Cambridge Australian English Style Guide* (CUP, Melbourne, 2007), Pam Peters notes that 'Since World War II Australian English has emerged as a variety in its own right', and Australian English

now has its own government-endorsed style manual and national dictionary. However, many contemporary Aboriginal authors use non-standard varieties of English when creating their work, particularly Australian Aboriginal English (sometimes called 'pidgin' or 'broken English').

The most comprehensive description of Aboriginal English is that prepared by Jay Arthur in *Aboriginal English: A cultural study* (Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1996). Her introduction to the book describes the development of a pidgin between the early colonisers (who themselves spoke several varieties of English, and Gaelic) and the Gadigal and Eora communities they encountered. As the frontier advanced across Australia so too did this pidgin, gradually evolving and incorporating aspects of the different language communities that pidgin-speakers encountered. After two centuries the result is variation that sees Aboriginal English as a continuum of Englishes—from a variety very much like standard English in parts of southern Australia to Kriol, a language in its own right, in northern Australia.

(For a status report on pidgin/Aboriginal English in New South Wales, see Jean Harkins' chapter on the subject in the *Handbook of Aboriginal Languages of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory*, Muurrbay Language and Culture Cooperative, Nambucca Heads, 2008.)

The person transcribing speakers of Aboriginal English and editors working on these transcriptions should be aware of several features of Aboriginal English. Some English words that appear to have the same meaning as their English equivalents may not have the same meaning at all. Examples include the exclusive use of the masculine pronoun 'him' when discussing males or females, the use of the word 'bin' or 'been', and the addition to verbs of '-im' or '-em' to show transitivity. If you would like to hear an example of some of these aspects of Aboriginal English I have put a short recording of an Aboriginal English speaker, Dinny Japaljarri, a Warlpiri man from Yuendumu in the Northern Territory, on my website². Have a go at transcribing Dinny's story

then compare it with the version that appeared in *Long Time, Olden Time*, the collection of oral histories published by IAD Press.

Representing people's voices in print: English words

While vernacular literacy materials continue to be published throughout Australia, most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people write and are published in English. However, two key things need to be borne in mind: firstly, as mentioned above, the English

'Some English words that appear to have the same meaning as their English equivalents may not have the same meaning at all.'

used by many Aboriginal people is not standard Australian English; and secondly, the representation of their voices in print form is viewed by some people as a political act.

I edited a manuscript co-authored by a non-Aboriginal academic and an Aboriginal cultural custodian; this Aboriginal person, while literate, made the deliberate decision not to write her contribution. This left the non-Aboriginal co-author in the role of both writer and scribe. The Aboriginal contributor spoke in a variant of Aboriginal English that was also peppered with words from her native tongue, which is undergoing a major revival.

A great deal of discussion took place between the authors, the publisher and myself regarding how best to represent the Aboriginal voice using the tools at our disposal—mainly punctuation marks and fonts. We dismissed the use of different fonts as too busy on the page and so our talk focused on how to deal with dropped letters (such as the missing 'h' at the beginning of words, 'g' in '-ing' endings, and the 'd' at the end of 'and') and variations in pronunciation using alternative spellings.

Literary fiction allows more latitude when dealing with the spoken word, as anyone who has read James Joyce or Tim Winton can testify. But oral histories tend to be published within

continued on page 4

¹ *Dhuuluu-Yala* is published by Aboriginal Studies Press but a facsimile version can be viewed on Google Books at <http://books.google.com.au/books?id=ZvO8x8ebZWcC&printsec=frontcover&dq=to+talk+straight&hl=en&ei=aaJ8TNUJBI-icerTyKYF&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCcQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

² <http://www.brumac.com.au/aust-ed-aae.html>

IPEd notes

News from the Institute of Professional Editors Limited, August–September 2010

IPEd held its 2010 annual general meeting on 5 September by teleconference. Activities and progress over the 2009–10 year will be covered in an annual report in preparation. At the AGM, Rosemary Noble (Vic.) retired as Chair of the IPEd Council, and Rosemary Luke (SA) acceded to the position, with Tina Thornton (Tas.) as Deputy Chair. The council extended its warm appreciation to the noble Rosemary for her steady guidance of institute activities over the past year. She remains as a councillor.

At its regular monthly meetings in August and September council monitored and discussed progress on several current projects.

The redevelopment of the website is proceeding apace. The final design has been approved but the magnitude of the task of populating the site has necessitated a postponement of the launch date, originally scheduled for 1 September. Various councillors and committee members have written updated copy for the site and the content is being managed by Communication Committee stalwarts Rowena Austin and Rosemary Luke, both members of the SA society.

In parallel with the new site, an A4 flyer promoting the value of editorial services has been produced and will be freely available to societies and

their members. Only a few have been printed, its primary use being seen as an electronic document. Your society's councillor can provide further information. The council hopes that editors will find that the flyer has many uses including, for example, as an appendage to project bids.

The Accreditation Board has been occupied with three main tasks over the past two months: development of the next accreditation exam, scheduled for May 2011; updating its *Procedures Manual*; and setting the criteria for renewal of accreditation. Work on the first is ongoing; the other two are virtually complete. The *Procedures Manual* is a substantial document detailing exam procedures and the activities and responsibilities of every member of the exam team before, during and after the event. Accredited editors wishing to remain so will need to apply for renewal of accreditation every five years, success being dependent on, among other things, continuing employment in, and contribution to, the profession.

Revision of the *Australian Standards for Editing Practice*, first published in 2001, is being managed by Ted Briggs of the Canberra society. A first draft has been produced and circulated for comment. It is evident that much more work is needed to bring the standards

into line with contemporary practice, particularly the major and continuing impact of electronic editing, publishing and communication technologies.

In consultation with the societies, a group in WA headed by Anne Surma has revised IPEd's policy on 'The editing of research theses by professional editors', first developed in 2001. The revision was made in order to take account of the changing environment in which editors and students work, particularly in relation to electronic or on-screen editing. The council will now seek endorsement of the revised policy by the Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies committee of the Australian universities.

The response to a call for contributions to the *IPEd Occasional Papers* series launched earlier in the year has been disappointing to say the least. It is hard to believe that so few members of a group of professionals who make their living by, and find joy in, the proper use and management of the language are unwilling to put pen to paper to write about it. Anyhow, you can have a change of mind, because the period for submissions has been extended to 31 October.

Ed Highley
Secretary
www.iped-editors.org

professional courses in editing and publishing on campus and online

Set yourself up for an alternative career in editing and publishing through full or part-time study at Macquarie University, in the Postgraduate Certificate in Editing or the Postgraduate Diploma in Editing and Publishing.

For more information, contact the Linguistics Postgraduate Office, Macquarie University:

T: (+61 2) 9850 7102
E: ling.postgrad@mq.edu.au
www.ling.mq.edu.au

MACQUARIE
UNIVERSITY 

CRICOS Provider Code 00002J

continued from page 2

the academic (or trade-academic crossover) list. If the freedom of expression that makes *Finnegan's Wake* so delightfully incomprehensible was applied to an Aboriginal voice then the manuscript would not make it to the typesetter.

Dropping letters from standard English words is usually dealt with by showing an apostrophe, as in the contractions *can't* and *shouldn't* or the final letter loss in *goin'* and *bein'*. But when there are lots of contractions and lost letters the transcription can become littered with apostrophes to the point where it is not merely distracting but makes the text almost unreadable, or at least hard work. Consider the following:

Unbeknowns'to 'im, Uncle 'Arry an'
Unca Tony 'adn't bin in the 'ouse,
'n' even though 'e were follerin'
'em back 'e couldn't find neither of
'em. 'E took that babaarr and started

chuckin' it around everywhere,
scarin' everyone.

This is not an actual extract from any work I have edited but contains features from several works that I have.

None of us enunciate our words individually; rather, we produce sounds made up of groups of words and the hearer hears these groups of words and creates meaning from them.

Problems occur when transcribers attempt to retain the essence of a 'person on the page', what fiction authors refer to as 'voice'—the mannerisms and patterns that distinguish a character. There is a temptation to overplay the presentation of individual words in order to try and capture voice but this can happen at the cost of readability or comprehension.

In the above extract, the problems with dropped letters are compounded for a number of reasons. The final 't' in 'unbeknownst' runs into the leading

't' of 'to' and so is not clearly heard. But does not hearing it mean that it should not be recorded? Similarly, the dropping of initial 'h' in 'He' at the start of the second sentence results in an inelegant capitalised 'E' preceded by an apostrophe. And then there is the variation in 'Uncle' and 'Unca', which might be true to the speaker but jars on the page. The reader will not be privy to the editorial discussions around representation and may simply wonder whether this is deliberate or sloppy.

None of us sign our signature the same way twice and probably never say the word 'uncle' the same way twice either. Should the transcriber record variation and difference? And, if she does, should the editor query this?

In this instance we agreed that the '-ing' endings should remain without either the 'g' or an apostrophe, which is still readable and removed a lot of

continued on page 6

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.**

Treasure from the Brisbane Writers Festival

Sonja Goernitz visited 12 paid and 13 free events over four days at the Brisbane Writers Festival in September. In this article she shares some of the impressions she recorded in her diary of the event.

As Susan Wyndham from *The Sydney Morning Herald* said, 'It all becomes a big mash.' So much information, so many authors and events. Most of the authors here are 40, 50, 60 years old, have a lot of life experience and they phrase what is important to them in the sessions. The pieces of information are like diamonds, lots of diamonds; I have gathered a treasure.

Of course the authors don't reveal all their wisdom but are mainly busy with promoting their books and themselves. Only one woman, Kate Howarth, who has written *Ten Hail Marys* about unethical and at times illegal adoptions, had a message for the listeners. She had it from Professor Ross Fitzgerald, who had it from Alcoholics Anonymous. It is: everyone should/could face up to the exact nature of their wrongs (to create a better society).

The main message for me came in the 'time' session: to slow down. Less time for emails, no Facebook, no Twitter. Forego the immediate personal update and work, 'do the slogging', on a long-term project. They spoke about a novel. Cate Kennedy said, 'The novelist is like a long-distance lorry driver, while a blogger is a courier bicyclist in the city delivering an urgent parcel.'

'The novelist is a long-distance lorry driver, while a blogger is a courier bicyclist in the city delivering an urgent parcel.'

The crime writer Val McDermid said many writers blog, but a writer's life is boring, so they start revealing a lot of personal information about themselves and their family and friends. When 'the shit hits the fan'—and it does, she said—the author has no place to hide.

Donna Mulhearn went to Iraq and showed us slides of terribly sick and by now, deceased, children there. She said, we see negative news items, one after the other, and get the feeling we can't do anything about it and so we just... yes, don't do anything. She is a trained journalist and she claimed, reporting-

from-there is what she is good at. She suggested others should find out for themselves what they are good at and do that.

There was a talented 17-year young refugee from Burma, Ta Naw Naw, who told her story by showing her artwork (paintings, collages and drawings) in a slide show. At the end she made the strong point that she wants to be useful in Australia, wants the people in Burma to be proud of her and wants the people around her here, such as her neighbour, to think well of her. Her teacher from the TAFE English Language and Literacy Services said these refugees are not a burden on Australia's society but a benefit. They contribute.

At the closing address psychiatrist Norman Doidge said the brain can change itself. It finds new ways for the body to function better again, say after a stroke. The change can work in good but also in bad ways. It is important to train the weak parts, to, for example, put the good hand into a glove or a cast to not use it and to force the bad hand to do the work. And after a while there is improvement.

The typical question to authors is 'Where do you get your ideas from?' Val McDermid said, 'One gets a contract from the publisher. Then the publisher points the author to a URL, where he can find a list with ideas. The author chooses an idea and pays \$500 to the publisher.' People in the audience laughed. But apparently a man came up to the author afterwards and said, 'I'll give you \$500 for that URL.'

The concept of 'What happens if?' came up a few times. This is how many authors get ideas. Doidge divides the world into two areas: the explored and the unexplored territories. Writers explore and then comes the time to write. As Susan Johnson said, 'I have enough stimulation already. I need to work with what I have.'

It seems most authors write on a computer. Only a few write long-hand. Norman said, 'Putting pen to paper changes cognitive behaviour.' How? I sent him an email and his assistant directed me to chapter three of his book. Cate said writing long-hand slows down

the process and that manuscripts are longer now that people use computers. Alex Miller disagreed, saying novels were shorter these days. Well, it seems more editing takes place to cut down the text for an audience with a shorter attention span and 'attention deficit disorder'.

The American author Joe Bageant said he was absolutely shocked at the success of his work. He introduced himself as a 'redneck'. He lives in Mexico because he doesn't want to support the USA (war) with his tax money. He was (is?) often off his face in his office and raised his kids while he was drunk and/or drugged.

'More editing takes place to cut down the text for an audience with a shorter attention span and "attention deficit disorder".'

This relates back to Fitzgerald, who is now bleeding from four areas in his brain. After this diagnosis he felt driven to publish his alcohol story. How do members of AA react to his book? He said he has never despised the anonymity of others and they supported his book, but there were a few purists who were not pleased with his work. His honesty, openness and willingness to share stood out.

Festival Director Jane O'Hara said at the closing address the festival has been successful, for example book sales doubled compared to last year's. The bestseller this time was Simon Winchester's book about the Atlantic. Jostein Gaarder's latest book, *The Castle in the Pyrenees*, was sold out on Saturday, according to the bookstore manager, and his earlier success *The Solitaire Mystery*, on Sunday. However, a few copies of *Sophie's World* were left. Who doesn't have this book already?

Sonja Goernitz is a writer, journalist and researcher. She publishes many of her articles and diary entries on her website www.sonjakg.com.

continued from page 4

apostrophe clutter. It is also not entirely unfamiliar to anyone who has read a number of oral histories (or James Joyce or Tim Winton). Variations in pronunciation were maintained, though not within the same block quote; that is, the same speaker might say both ‘uncle’ and ‘unca’ but if this was in the same quoted section then one would become ‘dominant’. Apostrophes were retained for dropped aitches on a select group of words (which were listed on the style sheet). The exception was proper nouns, which never took an apostrophe (‘Harry’ not ‘’Arry’).

With these standards in place, the above quote looked like this:

Unbeknownst to him, Uncle Harry an Uncle Tony hadn’t bin in the house, an even though he were follerin em back he couldn’t find neither of em.

He took that babaarr and started chuckin it around everywhere, scarin everyone.

There is a risk of bowdlerising the speaker’s voice in any editing of the spoken word and, ultimately, it comes down to agreement between all parties and the level of compromise that the speaker, the scribe/author and the publisher can be happy with. And then the editor can apply their agreed-to standards. It could be argued that the above quote loses some of the speaker’s voice but I would argue that it retains enough of the original voice while remaining readable and visually elegant; removing the apostrophe clutter makes it more inviting and more likely to actually be read rather than skimmed over.

Finally, and importantly, a note was prepared in the introduction alerting the reader to the conventions used in the transcriptions. I believe that this is critical in maintaining the reader’s trust: variations may appear but must be accounted for, otherwise we will hear that familiar lament, ‘It was a great book, but gee it was badly edited’.

Representing people’s voices in print: language words

Non-Aboriginal people have attempted to represent Aboriginal words using both English alphabet characters and a mixture of common characters along with specialised symbols and accents.

In the second sentence of the mock example I gave above there was an Aboriginal word:

He took that babaarr and started chuckin it around everywhere, scarin everyone.

First-time use of words that are unfamiliar to the reader are often italicised or put in quotes but many Aboriginal authors object to this practice; if there is any unusual or foreign word on the page then surely it is English.

The word babaarr in the example above is a Gumbaynggirr word for a stick or fighting club. Context is important in its presentation. This word can be easily read using the characters of the English alphabet and the publisher could feel confident that readers who had picked up the book would be engaged enough to anticipate the occasional unfamiliar word; hence, italics or quotes are not deemed necessary. Seeing the doubled-

‘First-time use of words that are unfamiliar to the reader are often italicised or put in quotes but many Aboriginal authors object to this practice; if there is any unusual or foreign word on the page then surely it is English.’

up ‘aa’ and final ‘rr’ the English-speaking reader can imagine a lengthened vowel sound and perhaps a rolled or trilled ‘r’ and therefore make a pretty good fist of pronouncing this Gumbaynggirr word.

But consider words that are less ‘friendly’ to the English-only speaker: words in those Aboriginal languages that have sounds or groups of sounds that either do not occur in English or do occur in English but in places that English speakers do not expect to see them. The ‘ng’ sound of English ‘sing’ occurs at the beginning of words in many Aboriginal languages; not expecting to hear it there, some English-only speakers substitute a straightforward ‘n’ sound or the hard ‘ng’ of ‘finger’. But this can actually change the meaning of words: the Ngaanyatjarra noun ‘nulu’ means ‘closed end of a burrow’ but ‘ngurlu’ is an adverb meaning ‘afraid, fearful, scared’.

In some languages, sounds are represented by groups of characters that appear formidable or unpronounceable to the English-only reader. Consider the ‘kng’ trigraph in the Alyawarr kinship

term ‘Kngwarrey’, or the grouping of consonants in ‘ntyangkwelkng’, the Eastern Arrernte word for a women’s ceremonial fire stick. Both these words contain groups of letters that represent sounds which do not occur in English or occur in parts of words unfamiliar to the English-only speaker; hence, they may cause the reader to stumble, pause or possibly ignore the language word. When this happens the language word’s presence becomes redundant; there is no point in moaning that the reader needs to work harder to engage with the text as the reader is busy and has another six books on her desk or bedside table vying for her attention.

In these cases the editor needs to discuss the use of language words with the author and publisher. If the spelling system is one that employs unfamiliar clusters of letters that are off-putting to a reader unfamiliar with the language and its orthography then a note on pronunciation in the introduction is in order. If there are certain key words that recur throughout the text then these could be contained in a glossary, close to the pronunciation guide.

Occasionally books employ glossaries that ‘sound out’ the word (so the language name Yuwaalaraay might be represented ‘you-WAH-la-roy’). Linguists tend not to like this as it is too open to misinterpretation, and indeed it would be best avoided in a grammar or learner’s guide. But in a general text in which several unfamiliar words occur often then it might be worth considering.

The important point is to make the reader feel prepared enough to tackle the unfamiliar word. The author might choose to take a confrontational stance: This is our language; we have had to make the effort to learn your language and now you can make the effort to learn ours. If the publisher has agreed to publish the author with this understanding then the editor should still make sure that there is enough supporting information for the reader to make a reasonable attempt to pronounce the language words.

It is about context. If the use of language words is not in quoted material but appears in the general narrative, and is only occasional, then quote marks or italics might well be the best solution. Consider the following:

continued on page 7

On occasion, Pitjantjatjara speakers might use the word *nyata*, which means 'reluctant to do something'.

Discuss the issue with the author and the publisher. Is the message being articulated clearly? Will the reader trust the author and so feel willing to be led through unfamiliar territory? Will the reader feel prepared enough to feel comfortable when confronted by a word that is unfamiliar? As is so often the case when discussing 'rules of editing', it is all about context.

CATE workshop

In August 2009 the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and Aboriginal Studies Press ran a Cultural Awareness Training for Editors (CATE) workshop. One of the proposed outcomes was a forum for editors (most of whom are non-Aboriginal) to discuss the process of editing and representing Aboriginal voices. This forum is yet to happen but, in the meantime, I have created a subset of my own website to discuss the issues that non-Aboriginal editors face. It is very much an open, organic process and I welcome comments and criticism from my colleagues and peers—you. I have also posted the recommendations from the CATE workshop. Please visit the site and provide me with feedback; I would greatly appreciate it and it could help us all to become better editors. Finally, many of the issues of representation (including languages and naming) are covered in *The Little Red Yellow Black Book*, published by Aboriginal Studies Press.

Mark MacLean

<http://www.brumac.com.au/aust-ed-home.html>

Mark MacLean is an accredited editor, working with book designer Christine Bruderlin as Bruderlin MacLean Publishing Services. As well as being the publisher at IAD Press throughout the 1990s Mark also opened and operated an independent bookshop in Newcastle, NSW.

APOLOGY

Book review:

Word bytes: Writing in the information society

In our last issue we printed a review of the book *Word Bytes: Writing in the information society* written by Jackey Coyle, member of the Victorian Society of Editors.

Unfortunately in the last stage of layout adjustment Jackey's name disappeared from the bottom of the article during a reflow of text and this was not picked up by the editor. We

apologise sincerely for publishing her interesting and informative review without attributing her as author. The omission has been rectified in the online edition of *Blue Pencil* October 2010 available on the society's website.

Jackey Coyle is a freelance writer, editor and educator based in Melbourne. Her business website is www.wordygurdy.com.au.

Christmas Dinner

Tuesday, 7 December

6.30 p.m. for 7.00 p.m.

The Red Snail

Cnr Kings Cross Road and Ward Avenue

Darlinghurst 2010

(close to Kings Cross train station)

\$30 per person includes three courses. Choose from a selection of French classics including French onion soup, duck liver pate, snails, whole trout, duck breast with cherry glaze, Atlantic salmon, chocolate mousse, creme brulee and profiteroles. Visit the restaurant website www.redsnail.com.au to read the complete menu.

BYO wine. Other drinks may be purchased at the bar.

See the flyer in this issue for more details and to reserve your place.

Space is limited.

Don't miss this night of good food, good fun and good company.



2010 Whitley Award winners announced

The Whitley Awards, first held in 1979 and hosted annually by the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales, are presented for outstanding print or electronic publications that contain a significant amount of information relating to the fauna of the Australasian region.

The 2010 Whitley Medal was awarded to George Hangay and Paul Zborowski for *A Guide to Beetles of Australia* (CSIRO Publishing).

The complete list of award winners can be viewed at www.rzsnsw.org.au/.

2010 Man Booker Winner

Howard Jacobson has won the £50,000 (A\$80,000) 2010 Man Booker Prize for his novel *The Finkler Question* (Bloomsbury).

Although Jacobson has been longlisted twice before he was not the favourite to win.

The Finkler Question beat a shortlist that included *Parrot and Olivier in America* by two-time Booker winner Peter Carey (Penguin) and the bookies'

favourite *C* by Tom McCarthy (Jonathan Cape). Andrew Motion, chair of the judges, said *The Finkler Question* was 'a marvellous book: very funny, of course, but also very clever, very sad and very subtle. A completely worthy winner of this great prize'.

Emerging Writers' Festival, 7 November, NSW Writers' Centre

The Emerging Writers' Festival (EWF) will host a one-day mini festival in Sydney on Sunday 7 November in conjunction with the NSW Writers' Centre (Rozelle). Details available from www.emergingwritersfestival.org.au.

Textbooks replaced by iPads in Adelaide

The University of Adelaide's Faculty of Sciences will provide all first year students in 2011 with a free iPad in a move to replace traditional study materials with online learning tools.

The university is the first in Australia to utilise iPads in this way, although institutions in the USA have implemented similar programs over the last 18 months. The university will

consider extending the program to other faculties following an evaluation of the science faculty program.

Barbara Jefferis Literary Award 2011, closing 30 November

The Barbara Jefferis Award valued at \$35,000, is now open for entry. It is offered annually for the best novel written by an Australian author that depicts women and girls in a positive way or otherwise empowers the status of women and girls in society.

Closing date for entries is 30 November, 2010. Details and entry forms available from www.asauthors.org.

55th Walkley Awards, Gala Ceremony, 9 December

The 2010 Walkley Awards will be held in Melbourne at the Crown Ballroom on Thursday, 9 December and will be broadcast nationally on SBS TV.

See the Walkley Foundation website for information about The Walkley Award for Best Non-Fiction Book. www.walkleys.com/non-fiction-book-award.

Order form: Editorial Services Directory 2010-11

The *Editorial Services Directory 2010-11* published by the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc., is NOW available. It lists 130 freelance editor members. The directory has all the usual features—freelance editors listed by Services Offered; Types of Published Material they have worked on; Subject (or Genre) specialities; together with a directory entry for each freelance editor.

I would like to buy.....copy/ies of *Editorial Services Directory 2010-11* @ \$21 per copy (postage within Australia included) for a total of \$.....; or(>10 copies minimum) @ \$15 per copy (postage included).

Name:.....

Organisation:.....

Address:

.....

Cheque/money order (made out to Society of Editors NSW) enclosed for \$..... Or please charge \$.....to my credit card (the following cards only): MasterCard Visa

Credit card number:

.....

Expiry date:.....

Name on credit card:

.....

Cardholder's signature:

.....

Send order and credit card details or cheque/money order to T. Johnston, Society of Editors (NSW), PO Box 2229, Rose Bay NSW 2030.



BISG submissions, closing 10 December

The Book Industry Strategy Group (BISG) is calling for written submissions to inform its discussion of the future of the Australian book industry.

Submissions will be accepted from 18 October to 10 December 2010.

The BISG has been established to:

- examine how the Australian industry can prosper in the digital marketplace
- consider the immediate challenge of making the supply chain for printed books more efficient
- explore how the print and electronic supply chains might be integrated through the development of viable business models
- engage with other advisory bodies, organisations and Australian Government agencies that have an interest in this issue.

In a press release the Book Industry Strategy Group said that the views of industry practitioners and those of consumers are vital to determining how the Australian industry may be structured in the future and invited all to contribute to this discussion by making a written submission.

To participate, or to get more information, visit www.innovation.gov.au/bisg or phone (02) 6213 7898.

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.
PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007; Voicemail: (02) 9294 4999
www.editorsnsw.com.

Blue Pencil

Editor: Denise Holden

Assistants: Moira Elliott, Catherine Etteridge and Julie Harders.

Printer: Complete Design, Marrickville

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 December issue is Tuesday, 9 November 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:

January (deadline 31 December); April (deadline 30 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. New listings should be submitted using a template available from the administration manager at membership@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

President: Pam Peters

Email: president@editorsnsw.com

Vice presidents:

Susie Pilkington

Email: vp1@editorsnsw.com

Owen Kavanagh

Email: vp2@editorsnsw.com

Secretary: Shelley Reid

Email: secretary@editorsnsw.com

Treasurer: Hillary Goldsmith

Email: treasurer@editorsnsw.com

General committee members:

Terry Johnston

Email: committee1@editorsnsw.com

Julie Harders

Email: committee2@editorsnsw.com

Sonja Goernitz

Email: committee3@editorsnsw.com

Therese Hall

Email: committee5@editorsnsw.com

Jacqui Smith

Email: committee4@editorsnsw.com

Administration manager: Anna Rauls

Email: membership@editorsnsw.com

Newsletter editor: Denise Holden

Email: bluepencil@editorsnsw.com

Publicity officer: Terry Johnston

Email: publicity@editorsnsw.com

Meetings coordinator: Therese Hall

Email: meetings@editorsnsw.com

Professional development coordinator

Email: education@editorsnsw.com

Website coordinator: Abigail Nathan

Email: web@editorsnsw.com

Editorial Services Directory

Email: membership@editorsnsw.com

Conference convenor: Catherine Etteridge

Email: conf@editorsnsw.com

Professional development

Editing Intensive 1 (repeat)

Date: Thursday, 4 November 2010 **SOLD OUT**

Repeat Date: Wednesday, 1 December 2010

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

Presenter: Meryl Potter, DE

Venue: City Tattersalls Club, 198 Pitt Street, Sydney

Cost: \$195 for members, \$290 for non-members (includes lunch and refreshments).

Please register by Tuesday, 16 November 2010.

Whether you would like to brush up your editing skills or start some intensive preparation for the next accreditation exam, this interactive workshop is designed for you. It follows on from the society's Copyediting: Getting Started workshop in 2009.

The workshop will focus on the following areas:

- Style decisions that suit the text—from capitalisation, hyphens and en rules to numbers, conversions and approximations
- Developing an efficient style sheet
- Managing lists, and deciding where and how to use them
- Tables, charts and diagrams—making sure they are effective and error free

This workshop is not for beginners: you should have some editing experience to get the most from this workshop, or have completed the 2009 Copyediting workshop.

Workshop information

Registration

To register for workshops use the enclosed form or download one 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 treasurer 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 workshops (excluding computer-based workshops).

Copy deadline for the
December 2010 issue of
Blue Pencil
Tuesday, 9 November 2010

New Horizons
for Editing and Publishing

7 to 9 September, 2011
Dockside Conference Centre, Cockle Bay, Sydney