

PUBLISH, PERSIST, AND PROSPER
Northern California Publishers & Authors
Saturday, April 25, 2009

*Editing: The Invisible Art that Takes Your Book
from “Self-Published” to “Professionally Published”*

Sandra K. Williams, Williams Writing, Editing & Design

When asked recently how they felt about self-published books, nearly one in five of the news media who responded specifically mentioned the poor quality of editing. General readers are no more forgiving, as demonstrated by reviews at Amazon.com.

What is editing? Can anyone do it? What skills and tools are needed? You will learn:

- The different kinds of editing
- How to know which kind of editing your manuscript needs
- How to find the right editor for your manuscript
- Your role as author or publisher in the editing process



Sandra K. Williams has been a freelance editor since 1996, working with clients large and small to produce clear, effective communications. In recent years she has succumbed to her lifelong passion for books and focused on projects that involve books, authors, and independent publishers. She has formed her own imprint, Idle Spider Books, and hopes to release her first title this fall.

Before going freelance she ran a three-person marketing office and edited a weekly newspaper. A long-time member of NCPA, she has served as president, built the organization's first Web site, and during her stint as newsletter editor named *The Pen & Press*.

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WHERE TO FIND EDITORS, COPYEDITORS, AND PROOFREADERS

Bay Area Editors' Forum, www.editorsforum.org
http://www.editorsforum.org/search_editor.php

Copyediting-L Directory of Freelancers, www.copyediting-l.info
<http://www.copyediting-l.info/freelance.html>

Editorial Freelancers Association, www.the-efa.org
<http://www.the-efa.org/dir/>

Association of Earth Science Editors, www.aese.org
<http://www.aese.org/shell.html?page=freelancers>

Board of Editors in the Life Sciences, www.bels.org
<http://www.bels.org/findeditor/>

Council of Science Editors, www.councilscienceeditors.org
<http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/jobbank/services.cfm>

INDEXERS

American Society for Indexing, www.asindexing.org
<http://www.asindexing.org/custom/locator/>

TYPICAL RATES

Editorial Freelancers Association, September 2008

<http://www.the-efa.org/res/rates.php>

Substantive editing	\$.03–.26/word	1–6 ms pgs/hr	\$40–65/hr
Copyediting, heavy	\$.03–.10/word	2–5 ms pgs/hr	\$35–50/hr
Copyediting, basic	\$.01–.03/word	5–10 ms pgs/hr	\$25–40/hr
Proofreading	\$.01–.03/word	5–10 ms pgs/hr	\$25–35/hr

BookSurge, April 2009

<http://www.booksurgepages.com/services.html>

Comprehensive Plus	\$.032/word
Comprehensive	\$.019/word
Basic Copyediting	\$.0175/word

NOTE: Copyediting is an add-on service of BookSurge's printing business.

A 100,000-word manuscript could cost \$1,000–\$3,000 to copyedit.

STYLE GUIDES AND DICTIONARIES

General Fiction & Nonfiction

Primary

The Chicago Manual of Style. 15th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. 11th ed. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 2004.

Supplemental

Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged.
Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1993.
Words into Type. 3rd ed. Based on studies by Marjorie E. Skillin, Robert M. Gay, and other
authorities. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1974.
The Gregg Reference Manual: A Manual of Style, Grammar, Usage, and Formatting. 10th ed.
William A. Sabin. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005.
Geographic Names Information System (GNIS). <http://geonames.usgs.gov/domestic/>

By Subject Area

Cooking

Recipes into Type: A Handbook for Cookbook Writers and Editors. Joan Whitman and Dolores
Simon. Newton, MA: Biscuit Books, 2000.

Journalism

The AP Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law. 43rd ed. Edited by Darrell Christian, Sally
Jacobsen, and David Minthorn. New York: Basic Books, 2008.
Webster's New World College Dictionary. 4th ed. Edited by Michael E. Agnes. Cleveland, OH:
Webster's New World, 2004.

Law

The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation. 18th ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Law Review
Association, 2005.

Life Sciences

Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers. 7th ed.
Compiled by the Style Manual Committee of the Council of Science Editors. New York:
Council of Science Editors in cooperation with the Rockefeller University Press, 2006.

Literature, Arts, Humanities

MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing. 3rd ed. New York: Modern Language
Association of America, 2008.

Medicine, Health

AMA Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors. 10th ed. Edited by Cheryl Iverson et
al. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007.
Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary. 31st ed. Philadelphia: Saunders, 2007.
Stedman's Medical Dictionary. 28th ed. Baltimore: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2005.

Religion

The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies.
Edited by Patrick H. Alexander et al. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999.

Social Sciences

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. 5th ed. Washington, DC:
American Psychological Association, 2001.

CHAPTER 1

"Quick, get out of the wagon! Now!" [Au: This early in the manuscript there is little connection with the unseen speaker. Perhaps it would be better to set the scene first.]

Hazel scrambled out from beneath the tarp, her shirt catching on a splinter. Her father grabbed her, ripping her shirt free, and hefted her over his shoulder. [Au: I like the use of the strong and descriptive verb "hefted."] He sprinted into the thick trees lining the ancient road. [Au: The (adj.) (noun) pattern is a little repetitive. Cut one of the adjectives?]

She could hear their pursuers, a medley of hoofs and shouts. [Au: "Medley" doesn't convey the sense of urgency that the events suggest. Rework?] She wrapped her arms tighter about her father's neck, terrified of their followers. She didn't know who they were, but her daddy feared them. "Be very quiet," he had warned her as he arranged the tarp over her the previous afternoon. "If they catch us..." She had never seen his face so serious. [Au: These sentences are out of place. It would be better to put them at the beginning of the chapter, in chronological order, which would also allow an opportunity to build sympathy/empathy with the characters before they're attacked.]

The sounds of pursuit followed them into the forest. Branches cracked behind them; a woman yelled, "Hold the horses." Low-hanging branches and vines snapped in her face [Au: At first read, I thought the branches were snapping in the face of the woman who shouted. Perhaps the paragraph should be recast to be more clearly in the viewpoint of the little girl.] as her father ran faster, and the stout cane shoved through his belt dug into her leg. Coming to a brook, [Au: This is the only use of "brook"—change to "stream" to match other instances?] he plunged into it and headed upstream. Their pursuers drew closer, harsh voices amplified in the stillness. Her father veered toward a weeping willow on the stream bank and shoved her under its foliage. He motioned her to silence and thrust his cane in the soft earth,

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Huddled against the tree, Hazel peered through its leaves at her father's retreating back. "Don't leave me, Daddy," she pleaded silently, but her father dashed down the shallow stream, following its course farther and farther away. She was still watching, eyes glassy with tears, when he was spotted. A man emerged from cover, yelling, and a second man cut through the trees downstream from her father.

Comment [skw1]: Au: This early in the manuscript there is little connection with the unseen speaker. Perhaps it would be better to set the scene first.

Comment [skw2]: Au: I like the use of the strong and descriptive verb "hefted."

Comment [skw3]: Au: The (adj.) (noun) pattern is a little repetitive. Cut one of the adjectives?

Comment [skw4]: Au: "Medley" doesn't convey the sense of urgency that the events suggest. Reword?

Comment [skw5]: Au: These sentences are out of place. It would be better to put them at the beginning of the chapter, in chronological order, which would also allow an opportunity to build sympathy/empathy with the characters before they're attacked.

Comment [skw6]: Au: At first read, I thought the branches were snapping in the face of the woman who shouted. Perhaps the paragraph should be recast to be more clearly in the viewpoint of the little girl.

Comment [skw7]: This is the only use of "brook"—change to "stream" to match other instances?

Comment [skw8]: Au: This "abruptly" and the "urgently" of the previous sentence seem a little repetitive. Replace with stronger verbs or just cut the adverbs?

Comment [skw9]: Au: "Glassy with tears" feels like it's out of the child's viewpoint. Is the manuscript supposed to be in close third-person viewpoint? The phrase "her father" is also distancing, because I would expect her to think of him as "Daddy."

Wilda leaned her brow against the cool glass. Through the kalidoscope of diamond shaped panes, the cypress grove wavered and danced. The brick lane curled through the grove, now visible now hidden, and bits of Lovell Lake glinted through the trees. As The daylight faded, and lamps winked on in the distant carriages. Guests were arriving, their carriages shrouded in the deepest black that was Upton's due.

She had traveled alone from Marsden, the plain silver urns escorted by none but her and the attendants she'd had the foresight to take with her. Foresight. A rough laugh scabbled from her throat. She had believed the child of Alarice and Upton would re-unite the two families, and their two cities. Yet Upton and the child both rested in the urns below

She quit her chamber. Silence blanketed the hall the doors closed, all mist prepare still for the evening to come. She hesitated at the landing and turned back. She would see Culver before descending-- he might have changed his decision.

Culver answered Wilda's tap. He smiled at the unexpected visit and held the door open in welcome.

"Mother!" Merritt rose from the dressing table. "Is all well?"

"I must name a successor", Wilda had meant to broach the subject with more care, but her disquiet overwhelmed her.

Culver guided her to a chair before going to Merritts' side, where he watched Wilda's mirrored reflection with concern.

Meritt watched as well, her gaze lifting at intervals from the black ribbons she wove into her braids.

"I am not fit to serve as governor, Mam". Culver looked at to the pale yellow envelope that lay on the dressing table.

"I have no knowledge of war." Culver said.

Wilda' chest tightened. "There is no war."

Meritt ceased her braiding and. Their eyes met in the mirror, and he placed one hand

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2

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"I am not fit to serve as governor, ma'am." Culver looked at the pale yellow envelope that lay on the dressing table. "I have no knowledge of war."

Wilda's chest tightened. "There is no war."

Merritt ceased her braiding and looked at Culver's reflection.

Author/Title Williams/*An Example*
Copyeditor Sandra K. Williams, skw@williamswriting.com
Date 4/25/09

References used

The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th ed.
Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed.

Permissions & credits

n/a

Tables, figures, captions, footnotes, endnotes

n/a

Numbers & dates

Spell out round numbers and numbers up to one hundred
Use numerals for time decades: the 1950s or '50s; spell out age decades: in her thirties

Punctuation & style

Enforce serial comma
Hyphenate compound adjectives
Capitalize first word after colon only if it begins complete sentence
Headings: cap all words with four or more letters

Type marking

Styles applied in MS Word
FM head, front matter head
Heading 1, chapter number
Body text, regular text
Block quote, extract

Characters

Alarice – Hazel's mother (27)
Culver – adult son of Wilda (27)
Hazel – a child (1)
Merritt – Culver's wife (27)
Upton – Hazel's father (1)
Wilda – governor (27)

Places

Lovell Lake (27)
Marsden (27)

Words and phrases

alright – instead of "all right" for interjection, adjective, or adverb (author preference)
okay – not OK (author preference)
outstink – no hyphen
river-runner – hyphenate noun and adjective
seatback – one word