

# Edition

The journal of the Editors' Association of Canada, Toronto branch

MAY 2008

## How the EAC e-forum rescued me (again)

- ■ ■ Past program  
report: Finding a  
niche 4
- ■ ■ The Online  
Directory of  
Editors 19
- ■ ■ Canadianizing  
British books 16
- ■ ■ Review of *Robert  
Weaver: Godfather  
of Canadian  
Literature* 22



# Edition

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## *Editor's Note*

I PINCH MYSELF, UNSURE I CAN TRUST MY SENSES THAT IT is indeed spring; this is not a dream.... My muscles have that satisfying ache from spring cleaning, and my windows will soon receive my undivided attention. But before I put my magic gloves on again I must get this issue of *Edition* out to you.

As I read these pages I am inspired by the workings of the Association, our branch in particular (of course): the generous and helpful spirit of our membership, as is exemplified in Christa Bedwin's piece on the support she received from members on the e-forum; the vision and hard work of our branch and national executive (past and present), as is demonstrated in the executive reports and my own piece on the Online Directory of Editors; the branch community that meets every month to listen to interesting speakers, as Irene Peters has been reporting on for those of us who can't make it; and the volunteers who make this newsletter and the successful function of the branch possible. I am, as always, edified by our regular columns, Freya Godard's monthly column on grammar, the book review, and our members' corner. Enjoy!

*Sara Promislow*  
Newsletter Co-chair  
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# Contents

## May 2008

### Past program report **4** *Finding a niche*

By Irene Peters

### Your Toronto branch **6**

*EAC Toronto executive*

*For your diary pages*

*Welcome new members*

*Branch co-chair report*

*Nominating committee report*

*Hotline report*

*May seminars*

### How the EAC e-forum **13** rescued me (again)

By Christa Bedwin



### Freya Godard's Grammar **16** food for thought

*Canadianizing British books*

### The Online Directory **19** of Editors

By Sara Promislow

### Book review **22**

*The Weaver effect:  
the legacy of Robert Weaver*

By Cindy Marie Law

### Members' corner **25**

Amusing sign-posts



*Above: March's general meeting. Below: Association-branded items from the new CafePress shop.*

## Finding a niche

by Irene Peters



*Mike O'Connor, publisher, Insomniac Press and Alana Wilcox, editor-in-chief, Coach House Books.*

**H**OW DOES ONE SURVIVE AS A SMALL publisher? You must find a niche.

The presenters at EAC's Monday, March 24, 2008 meeting (Alana Wilcox, editor-in-chief, Coach House Books and Mike O'Connor, publisher, Insomniac Press) shared their small-press experiences and graciously answered innumerable questions from the audience. We were invited to jump in with questions at any time during the presentation and this call was answered with zeal. And, yes, it's true. I was particularly (although not singularly) guilty of monopolizing the floor. Here is the lowdown in a nutshell.

At Coach House Books, three people do everything, which means that everyone pretty well needs to know how to do everyone else's job. On the plus side, there is plenty of variety and hands-on exposure to all areas of publishing—Coach House even has its own printing press. So, at Coach House one will always be busy and feel useful. On the minus side, there is always loads of work and tons

of responsibility, but *teensy* bits of profit. In particular, because Coach House isn't able to pay \$100,000 advances to already published writers, they deal primarily with first-time writers who require a great deal of personal attention and guidance (read: more work). Coach House also publishes more experimental writing, innovative writing that is considered too risky for the larger, more mainstream publishing houses.

It seems that small publishers must be risk-takers. What is Coach House's niche, then? What are its big successes? Launching the careers of successful writers (e.g., Margaret Atwood, Michael Ondaatje, and Ann-Marie MacDonald), publishing poetry, running its own printing press (virtually publishing on demand) and developing and using a fetish type of specially made paper that feels good to the touch.

Mike O'Connor, publisher of Insomniac Press, listed the following challenges a small press faces:



... *small publishers  
must be  
risk-takers.*

- Competition from others
- Inability to afford advances
- Small margins
- Difficulty getting small voices heard in mainstream marketing
- Developing a niche
- Traditional problems of cash flow
- Securing investors

Insomniac's niche is money-management how-to books and books about religion, politics, or philosophical ideas. One of Insomniac's big successes is its strong international market.

What does the future hold for small presses and the publishing industry in general? Changing technology, such as Internet publishing, is affecting the book publishing industry. Although, overall, more people are now buying traditional books than ever before, the publishing industry is likely going to face the same challenges that the music industry faced four to five years ago. What is a record company anymore? One can't really define it. What will happen to the publishing industry, and when? No one knows. Having a niche, however, may be useful.



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*Note: Please check the podcast on the EAC website.*

## EAC Toronto Executive



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 Hours: 9 AM to 1 PM Monday to Thursday

■ **For your diary pages**

**Executive meeting**

Monday, May 12, 2008  
6:30 PM  
EAC National office, 27 Carlton Street,  
Suite 505

All members welcome

RSVP: [toronto\\_br\\_secretary@editors.ca](mailto:toronto_br_secretary@editors.ca)

**General meeting**

Monday, May 26, 2008  
6:45 pm New members Q & A  
7:30 pm Business meeting & branch elections  
8:00 pm Mix and mingle  
8:30 pm Program

23 Prince Arthur Avenue  
Members free/non-members \$5

■ **Welcome new members!**

As of April 1, 2008, the Toronto branch has 703 members: 354 voting (including 3 life members and 5 francophone members), 286 qualifying (formerly associate category), 49 student members, and 6 emeritus members. Seventeen people have joined since March. The new members are:

Shari Burnett  
Kelly Handley  
Amanda Lastoria  
Leata Lekushoff  
Douglas MacRae  
Krista Marinuzzi  
Lori Mason  
Twyla Nafziger  
Katherine O'Brien

Roberta Osborne  
Véronique Ponce  
Bethany Rae  
Tom Rogers  
Elly Takaki  
John Unruh  
Jennifer Wallace  
Arthur Wenk

## Branch co-chair report

A RECENT THREAD ON THE E-FORUM illustrates that our members have diverse communications needs. More than a handful of participants in the thread, many delurking for the first time, weighed in on printed vs. electronic newsletters, e-forums vs. Web forums, one list vs. two lists, and EAC's chatty e-forum vs. CE-L's (Copyediting-L, the listserv for copy editors) not chatty e-forum. This diversity helps justify the lengths we go to on the branch executive to reach our members in as many ways as possible. How do we reach thee? Let me count the ways:

1. **BROADCAST E-MAIL:** We send messages to our branch members with important announcements. Examples include a new seminar season, a new issue of the newsletter, an upcoming meeting, the minutes of a previous meeting, and a full-time job opportunity. We consider it a privilege to use your inbox. (See also Newsfeeds below.)
2. **TELEPHONE:** Brian Cardie, our branch administrator, contacts members by phone when necessary concerning seminars and the Hotline.
3. **CANADA POST:** Due to the cost of printing, stuffing, and mailing hard copy, we have limited our use of this

## How do we reach thee?

communication method to seminar promotion. For the fall season, we plan to spend even less on this.

4. **WEB PAGES:** We maintain a set of Web pages about all our branch activities at <http://editors.ca/branches/toronto/index.html>. Maintenance of these pages is made easier by the efficient content management system that was implemented a couple of years ago. No knowledge of HTML programming is required to create or update the pages.
5. **PODCASTS:** For members who cannot attend the monthly branch meetings, we record, produce, and post MP3 files of the educational programs. Our members can listen to or download the recordings from our Web site.
6. **LIVE WEB CASTS:** Over the last couple of years, we have experimented with providing live video and sound of our monthly programs over the Internet. Despite improvements in hardware and software, we have had mixed results due to the lack of fast and reliable Internet access at our meeting location. We will



## Let me count the ways:

continue to work on this and keep you informed.

7. **NEWSLETTER:** Our branch newsletter, *Edition*, is a wonderful combination of branch communications and a high-profile demonstration of volunteer talent. We send an e-mail with a direct link to the issue to members every month. The issues are accessible on a public page of our Web site.
8. **MONTHLY BRANCH MEETINGS:** On the fourth Monday of each month (except July, August, and December), members of the branch executive present oral reports on the state of the branch, committee activities, announcements of events, calls for volunteers, and other member-related matters. We e-mail members a summary of the reports in the minutes each month. Plans to archive the minutes on Interactive Voice, our Web forum, are in development.
9. **NEWSFEEDS:** To help members stay informed of Web site changes and other branch announcements, and cut down on the number of e-mail messages

they have to read, the branch publishes an RSS newsfeed to which members can subscribe. Using a newsfeed reader or a Web page with newsfeed aggregation built-in, you can collect all your important news, blog postings, and other updates in one place, and read them at your convenience.

That's the list as it stands today, and that's just the list of ways we communicate with members. We also need to communicate with clients and prospective members, but that's a report for another issue. It wasn't that long ago that we communicated with our members using only live meeting reports and postal mail. At the executive meeting on Monday, April 21, we agreed to keep communications from the nominating committee very general until its proposal is finalized and presented to the executive for approval. The branch executive will continue its work to ensure that our communication with members remains accurate, timely, and effective.

If you have any suggestions or questions about branch communications, please call, write, or e-mail the branch office. ■■■

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## Nominating committee report

**T**HE NOMINATING COMMITTEE—ALAN Yoshioka, Elizabeth d’Anjou, and Annie Leung—met on Tuesday, March 25, 2008. The committee discussed the program subcommittee’s recommendations to restructure the order and length of events at future Toronto branch meetings. These recommendations would affect not only branch meetings, but also future branch activities as a whole.

The nominating committee explored how executive responsibilities could be reassigned to enable the branch to serve its members’ needs more effectively. As of the deadline for this issue of *Edition*, details of the committee’s proposal were being refined by the Toronto branch executive.

At its meeting on Monday, March 17, the branch executive decided that this year’s branch elections should be held at the general meeting on Monday, May 26. If you are interested in serving the association at the branch executive level, please contact one of the committee members.

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| Hotline Report                               | April 2008  |
|--|---|
| Members registered                           | 23  |
| Clients registered:<br>Hotline opportunities | 4   |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Technical brochure for a trade association (French)</li><li>• Undergraduate level history paper</li><li>• Children's book, non-fiction (ages 3-7)</li><li>• Master's thesis</li></ul> |

## Hotline Registration

Clients call to be matched with branch members who have registered with the Hotline for work.

When you register, please note these guidelines:

If you are listed in the EAC Directory of Editors (print or online), note any changes to your listing.

If you are not listed in the Directory and have not previously registered with the Hotline, send your résumé in Directory or Hotline style. You can find guidelines to the Directory format at [www.editors.ca/hire/ode/search\\_tips.html](http://www.editors.ca/hire/ode/search_tips.html). Hotline style follows the Directory format. However, you may include as many interests as you wish and write your profile in point form.

Please limit your résumé to one page.

If you have registered before, send your résumé only if it has changed.

Hotline registration begins on the first of each month. Please contact the branch every month to be listed again.

Telephone: 416 975-5528 Fax: 416 975-5596  
[toronto@editors.ca](mailto:toronto@editors.ca) (.rtf attachment; subject: Hotline)

## May seminars

Meet people and learn new skills. Why wait? Sign up today!

To register for a seminar, please visit our Web page at [www.editors.ca/branches/toronto/seminars](http://www.editors.ca/branches/toronto/seminars) or contact the EAC Toronto branch office at 416 975-5528.

**Taking the Plunge as a Freelance Editor** – Elizabeth d’Anjou  
\*\* New Date \*\* Saturday, May 3, 10 AM to 5 PM (rescheduled).

Presented for the first time in Kitchener!

This popular seminar offers concrete strategies and advice on how to launch a successful freelance editing career. The main concern for people who want to freelance is how to get clients. In this workshop, you will learn to effectively network and market your services in a way that works best for you.

Instructor Elizabeth d’Anjou has 16 years’ experience as a freelance editor with a diverse clientele, from textbook publishers to corporations to non-profit agencies. She teaches copy editing at Ryerson University.

**Punctuation and Mechanics** – Frances Peck  
Monday, May 12, SOLD OUT

**Usage Woes and Myths** – Frances Peck  
Tuesday, May 13, SOLD OUT

## CALL FOR WRITERS

**OPPORTUNITY:** Volunteer to be a contributing writer for *Edition*, the EAC Toronto branch newsletter. We are seeking a volunteer to write a **feature article** for the June issue. **SKILLS:** Hone your writing skills in articles on a variety of topics of interest to fellow members. **BENEFIT:** Showcase your work in an important communications vehicle with a target readership of some 700 Toronto branch members.

**CONTACT:** [edition@editors.ca](mailto:edition@editors.ca)

# How the EAC e-forum rescued me (again)

by Christa Bedwin

**T**HE EDITORS' E-MAIL LIST IS A FAMILY I feel blessed to belong to. Though we occasionally squabble like siblings, I'd say we're more like cousins, drifting in and out of each other's lives, mostly on our good manners, sometimes closer for a while, sometimes further away, not always totally familiar, but bonded nonetheless. And we have so many philanthropic benefactors among us! These aunts and uncles and cousins don't throw money around, usually, but they toss out job opportunities, which is the same thing. And the information

we share makes us all so exotically rich.

**It's such a great group of people to have at your back.** Our EAC e-mail family almost always comes through when

you're in a crunch, and they do definitely if you wail "heellllpppp! I'm in despair!" I did that myself this spring. Here's my note to the list:



*I am really struggling with this one and I decided to cry on the shoulders of some folks who might have some wise words for me. I have a conference call in an hour and I feel like I need a boost before it.*

*Textbook project, no different than a dozen I've done before. Except this time the author plagiarized 90% of his stuff without telling anyone.*



*Okay. Luckily someone caught it. He's rewriting.*

*But I could cope with all that, and have been, for three months now, cheerfully, not worrying about the delay. I've had a little contact with the author, such as sending him copies of...the things he plagiarized....*

*Anyway, he's telling the new project manager that I'm horrible to deal with and a bad communicator, even going so far as to forward my e-mail to her (AND, he doesn't respond to my e-mails, either...)....*

*The project manager reviewed the e-mail he sent [me] and concluded I had said nothing at all out of line. Yet, she still tells me "be gentle with the author, we have to be very kind to him, this is difficult for him, he's feeling sensitive, etc., etc." What I don't understand, and I am starting to get fed up with, is why someone just doesn't say, "Mr. X. What you did was wrong. Your editor has been nothing but professional and you have to accept that she is going to discuss the rewriting work that you have to do."*

*But instead, I keep getting told, "be more gentle, be more careful" when I've BEEN that the whole entire time! I can't very much help it that we've got a job to get done, can I? I have not been rude, or mean, or even sarcastic! But that doesn't stop him from choosing me*



*as his scapegoat for the fact he doesn't like that he has to actually do the job he's been paid for. Thinking on it, really, he's acting like a bully. And the other people on the team are allowing this—allowing him to say those things about me, and never, ever telling him to act professional.*

*The reason I am writing to the list is, if this guy is starting to slander me anyway, maybe I should just ask them to replace me with another editor and cut my losses? I'm getting really weary.*

*And WHY on earth is it set up that we have to baby the guy who did something wrong, anyway?*

*Thanks for any words of wisdom,  
Christa*

As you might gather from my note, I was at the end of my tether. I was ready to give up and didn't want to go into a conference call in that state of mind.

My EAC family came through so beautifully for me. Aunts and uncles replied, in force and fast, with news that surprised me: they'd been through almost identical situations, quite a few of them. Apparently it's quite common for authors who know they are in the wrong to try to deflect the blame to the editor.



(It seems like the same principle as the murderer in an Agatha Christie novel trying to lay the blame on someone else.)

Knowing that I was not even a little bit alone was so empowering. Being able to go into the conference call and say “I know how other people have handled this” was a position of strength instead of the quivering, weak-kneed, confused position I’d been in before I cried for help.

As well, it was so happy-making just to have people say “yes, you’re right” and “they should apologize for the author/defend you against the author/reprimand the author” and “though they should, they probably won’t, but I’ve been there, too!”

Not only that, but my list mates provided me with food for thought that was invaluable. They outlined questions to ask myself before taking any action. It’s not that I hadn’t considered most of the same questions, but somehow having somebody else ask makes it stronger and more valid. “Could I afford to ditch the job? Could I afford to sustain further abuse?” And most importantly, they told me not to worry about getting slandered. And since they’d been over the territory and survived, I believed them. My heart was eased. And that was enough to carry on a successful phone conversation, to keep the project on a happy, positive, productive footing.

I know there are others with similar stories of being rescued by the list. It’s amazing how the right fact or shared

*My list mates  
provided me with  
food for thought that  
was invaluable.*



experience can completely revamp your perspective on a situation or a job. The close, caring family we have in our list has daily cheering-up benefits, not-alone benefits, humour benefits, and grammar benefits... But all of these and more add up to more money for all of us, too, because it helps us keep at it in times we might otherwise have tossed in the towel.

If you haven’t tried the list yet, don’t hesitate a minute longer! Go to the EAC Web site, sign in to the members’ area (phone or e-mail our friendly office if you don’t remember your password), and sign on! You needn’t read it every day. Messages are completely “deletable,” and if you don’t know the answer at the end-of-week quiz because you missed a conversation, don’t worry. Somebody on the list will help you remember! I assure you that even if you read only a little of the list one day per week, you’ll end up richer, happier, smarter, wiser, and fitter, too (without face cream!).

---

Christa Bedwin  
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# Grammar food for thought

An editor's observations on grammar and usage

## Canadianizing

## British books

by Freya Godard

For many editors, the Canadianization of an American book is a familiar task. Recently, however, I have been editing a book originally published in England (and written by two English academics). This project reminded me that Canadian English is much more American—and getting more so every year—than it is British. Although many of the differences between Canadian and British English can be ignored from the point of view of editing, there are a number of British words and conventions—in spelling, punctuation, and even grammar—that may need to be changed to conform to a publisher's or client's house style or to make the meaning clear to Canadian readers.

### *Spelling*

The most conspicuous way in which British spelling differs from Canadian may well be the fondness for the hyphen in compound nouns. I found it necessary to verify the spelling, in the Canadian dictionary specified by the publisher of the Canadian edition, of every hyphenated compound noun. Among those were *drug-addict*, *field-work*, *money-laundering*, *road-block*, and *rule-breaker*, which after editing became *drug addict*, *fieldwork*, *money laundering*, *roadblock*, and *rule breaker*. Words with prefixes, such as *under*, *over*, *non*, and so on are also likely to be hyphenated in British style.

Even though many hyphens have been done away with in the latest edition of *The Shorter Oxford*, their use is not likely to disappear overnight.

Another place where the hyphen is often encountered in British writing is between an adverb ending in *ly* and the adjective it modifies, such as





*carefully-written*. This practice is incorrect on either side of the Atlantic, but it is more common there than here.

Something else to watch for in British spelling is the use of *ise* instead of *ize* in verbs, such as *organise*, *realise*, and *recognise*. Even though those spellings are not the first choice of Oxford, they are extremely common. And because *The Concise Oxford* is the authority for British spelling used in *Editing Canadian English*, the *ise* spelling doesn't appear in the list of the differences between British, Canadian (and American) spelling.

### *Punctuation*

The most conspicuous difference in British usage is the preference for single quotation marks where we would use double, and vice versa. In Canada, a few university presses follow this style, but they are the exception. Less obvious is the treatment of periods and commas at the end of quoted material; contrary to the usual North American practice, they are placed outside the closing



quotation mark unless they are part of the quoted material.

Another characteristic of British writing is a frequent use of the colon as a way of joining clauses. When the number of colons seems to be excessive or to be creating unnecessarily long or jerky sentences, a Canadian editor may wish to replace the colon with a semicolon or, as I would do in the following example, simply break the sentence at the colon: *Sociologists may, indeed, have no great interest in deviance but may search for answers to analytic puzzles which have their roots elsewhere: thus Cicourel explored probation and police practices in order to illuminate some general properties of social interaction; Durkheim treated crime and law as indices of social cohesion; and Merton took crime to be a demonstration of the processes by which a society maintains itself.*

### *Vocabulary*

The differences in vocabulary between Canadian and British English are surprisingly numerous, but as with any kind of manuscript, an editor needs to





be alert mainly to words that may be misunderstood, or not understood at all, by the intended readers. Something I discovered only recently is that in England *pavement* means *sidewalk* and that a *housing estate* or simply *estate* is what we would call a *housing development*. A trickier word is *high street*. As a noun, it means the *main street* of a town, but more often it is used as an adjective to refer to the kind of businesses or merchandise usually found on such a street, as in *high-street banks*. The best way of translating *high-street* into Canadian English depends on the context.

A special difficulty can be posed by acronyms, which tend to be written with only the first letters capitalized or even uncapitalized. One of the newest acronyms is *Asbo*, which stands for *anti-social behaviour order* and which will be found to be in only the most recent dictionaries.

## Grammar

Canadian editors need to be aware that a distinction between *which* and *that* is rarely observed on the other side of the Atlantic. Consequently, an editor who does observe a distinction will need to make many changes to a book with a British author.

When it comes to outright grammatical mistakes, a peculiarity that has become

common in British writing in the last few decades is the use of the indicative rather than the present subjunctive after verbs such as *insist*, *require*, *request*, and *demand* and adjectives, such as *essential*. Thus it is not uncommon to see sentences, such as *One of the men allegedly rang the witness demanding that his call was* [instead of *be*] returned. This usage would not only be unacceptable in Canadian English, but also very unusual.

While looking for the source of the quotation to the effect that England and the United States were two countries divided by a common language, I came across a book called *Divided by a Common Language: A Guide to British and American English*. Though intended for travellers, it would probably be useful or at least entertaining for editors.

---

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# The Online Directory of Editors

by Sara Promislow

AS OF MAY 2008 THE EDITORS' Association is re-instituting a fee for members who wish to be listed in the ODE. Announcement of the \$75 fee has raised concern and the debate has been heated<sup>1</sup>. Some members feel that this service should be included in their membership fees. They argue that the fee will deter many from being a part of the directory. Some have even considered allowing their EAC membership to lapse as a result. A decrease in the number of members listed will, opponents argue, severely diminish the directory's efficacy, both for members and potential clients. Some argue that while they are willing to pay for the service, \$75 is too high a price, considering the low cost of maintaining this electronic service. Other members point out that a \$75 directory-listing fee, while not cheap, will pay for itself with one client. In addition to generating business, some said, the list helps maintain

<sup>1</sup> If you are interested in learning more about (and/or participating in) the ongoing ODE fee debate, check the EAC e-forum.



members' visibility and credibility as professional editors.

It is important to remember that listing in the directory was not always free. As Rosemary Tanner, EAC member since 1985, points out:

Until about seven years ago...the Directory was a book, and it cost over \$50 to have one's name listed in that book. A lot of volunteer effort went into the annual production, and it was sent to most clients and potential clients in the country, a limited market. The online directory can be accessed around the world, and I know several people received jobs from clients who never would have received the print directory.

So why will this electronic service cost members \$75 a year? Greg Ioannou explains:

The online directory—the database that drives it and various other association services—has been the bane of the staff's existence for four years now, soaking up huge numbers of staff (and volunteer) hours. Although I can't put an exact number on the cost of developing the new ODE (because



many of the costs are buried in such overhead items as payroll), I can comfortably say that the overhaul of the online directory has been one of the association's most expensive projects of the past few years...

Furthermore,

The new ODE is not envisioned as a static service, like the current ODE. We have a long list of improvements, additions, and tweaks we'd like to see, and our hope is that it will evolve and develop. As well, we're going to put a lot of effort into promoting it. I expect it to be a much more effective tool for promoting our members' services.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to bear in mind that many members who are listed in the ODE have been contacted by potential and actual clients, and have found work through their listing.

In March 2008 I asked members on the online e-forum about their experiences with the ODE. Here are some of their responses:

Listing in the ODE pays for my membership year after year. It is the number one benefit of being a member—without it I'd have no real need for membership. I get many jobs from it.

**Alethea Spiridon**

Anyone who wants work but hasn't yet created an ODE listing is doing themselves a real disservice. I wish I'd made one a long time before I finally did so last year. So far, though I've received just three calls from people who

found my listing there, each of them has turned out to be among my best regular clients. My income this year almost tripled last year's because of that listing, with my Web site and referrals accounting for the rest.

I also found that the people who sought me out on the ODE understand the value of our work more than do most we might come across by other means, so we can actually charge what we're worth—or at least a lot closer to it. Another advantage is that clients we get via the ODE tend to know others who might also need and value our services. If we do a good job they tell someone else about us and refer them to our ODE listings so they can contact us.

**Carolyn Bishop**

The online directory is invaluable. I have received a great number of leads (and work) through it. Of course, you get the wannabe writers who want you to write their book for them at practically no cost, but you have to expect that. Combine the directory with the EAC standard contract and you have a terrific set of marketing tools. Work from the directory has paid for many years of EAC dues.

**John Millyard**

While some of those listed have not received many (or any) jobs through their listing, those who have only been contacted a few times since joining the ODE noted that the clients they did find through their listing have become long-term clients, and provide lucrative projects.

I'm envious of those of you who get regular calls from your ODE listing. I get one every couple of years, if that.... I've been an EAC

<sup>2</sup> Keep your eyes open for Greg's article on this topic in the upcoming issue of *Active Voice*.



member since 1994 and have been in its directory pretty much since the start.... Having said that, one of my best clients found me through the directory about eight years ago, and accounts for a big chunk of my business every year. So it really only takes one client. But I am always interested in exploring new ones.

**Laurel Hyatt**

I have gotten enough jobs by being listed in the online directory to pay for my EAC membership for the rest of my life. I don't get calls every week or even every month (or every quarter even), but enough to definitely make it worth having a listing.

**Donna Dawson**

Some of those responding to my query about the ODE reflected on the success of their listing. Their reflections provide some helpful advice:

I've never been able to determine what it is about my listing that attracts people. I do try to edit it regularly, adding new information and deleting old stuff. Perhaps not everyone knows that you can edit your entry anytime. I think that's a great feature that isn't promoted enough.

**Dawn Hunter**

I believe the best ODE listings are the ones that don't intimidate or put off clients. If I'm

## Listing in the ODE pays for my membership year after year.

seriously shopping for an editor, I don't think I want to see anything too personal, or too jokey, or too uptight. On the other hand, responses to the listing may be based on other things, such as area code, areas of interest, alphabetical placement, who knows. I get regular bites from my listing (every month or two), some great and some awful. I once thought it might have to do with some very specific credentials I have related to the field of financial editing, but a lot of the inquiries I've

received have nothing to do with financial editing.

**Sandra Otto**

I think some of the traffic is tied to what you've listed as your interests and areas of specialization, so perhaps the more of those you can honestly include the better. I also think it helps to have a Web site and to place a link to it on your listing so you can further sell your services to potential clients who are shopping around.

**Carolyn Bishop**

Only time will tell whether members (and how many of them) continue to view their listings in the ODE as valuable. I myself am voting with my credit card....

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# The Weaver effect: the legacy of Robert Weaver

By Cindy Marie Law

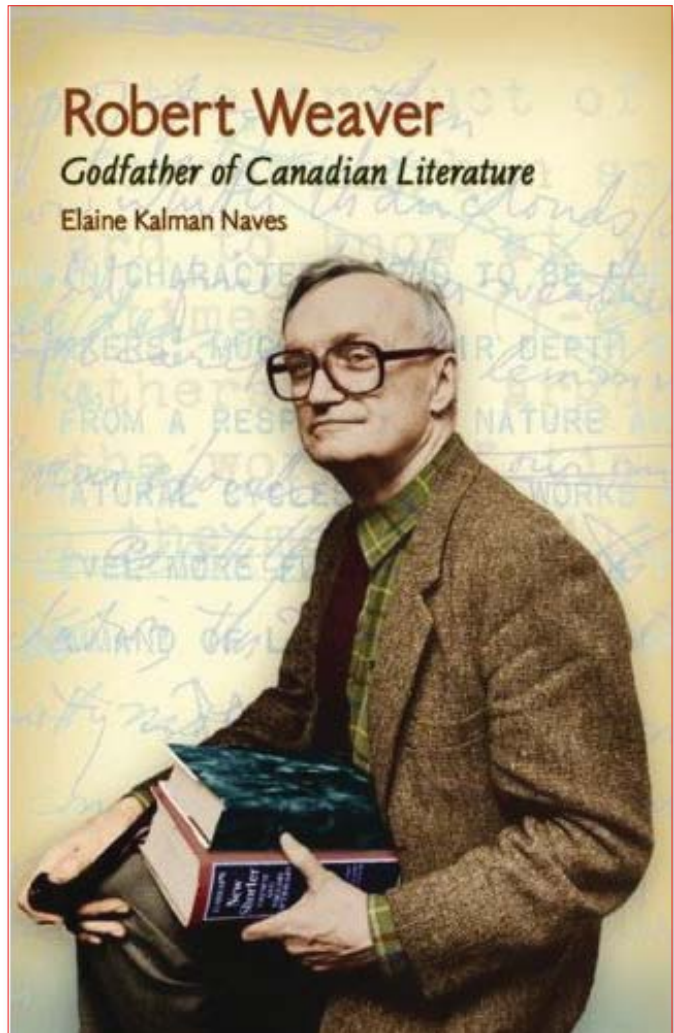
*He didn't want to be seen as some kingpin of literature.*

When Robert Weaver died at the end of January this year, obituary writers had the enviable task of being able to craft heartfelt praise for this extraordinarily capable man who helped to create the body of work now casually referred to as CanLit.

Weaver, the subject of the recent biography, *Robert Weaver: The Godfather of Canadian Literature*<sup>1</sup>, was a remarkable person at a remarkable time. Elaine Kalman Naves's biography is a warm tribute to the qualities of the man who worked to promote homegrown authors, here and abroad.

The biography is divided into three parts: "The Man and the Career," "In

<sup>1</sup> *Robert Weaver: Godfather of Canadian Literature*, By Elaine Kalman Naves, Véhicule Press



Conversation with Robert Weaver," and, perhaps the most revealing, "The Legacy," in which Kalman Naves interviews Margaret Atwood, Barry Callaghan, Robert Fulford, Alice Munro, Alistair MacLeod, Eric Friesen, and Janice Kulyk Keefer.

For those of us of a certain age, and others of us who do not listen to CBC Radio, the importance of that institution to the success of our national literature cannot be underestimated. Kalman Naves evokes the long-gone, heady days of an arts-centred, flourishing CBC that hired



Robert Weaver after WWII and allowed him to create a venue, and thus an audience, for writers creating a Canadian voice in fiction. Weaver explained: “I took books seriously and also radio seriously. I didn’t see why the two things couldn’t go side by side.”

Kalman Naves reveals that a great part of Weaver’s success as an editor was due to a self-imposed retreat from a writing career of his own. “I discovered I have more talent to be an editor,” he told her. Add to that his desire to discover and develop new talent and a new era in literature was born. As Alice Munro, one of Weaver’s best-known protégés, relates, it was once a sign of culture not to have read any Canadian literature. It was also unheard of to pay Canadian authors “American rates” for their stories. Into this literary wilderness Robert Weaver ventured. As Robert Fulford remembered:

There had been books published in Canada for a long time. There had been writers for a long time, many writers. But in terms of a national—that is national in English-speaking Canada—literary community, it didn’t exist, and it was the CBC that helped call it to existence. And I think it was Weaver in the CBC who did more than anyone else to call into existence this national community.

The personality of Robert Weaver was as important to his work as the writing and editorial skills he brought to it. He

was affectionately regarded and highly respected. He is referred to countless times throughout the book as “encouraging” and “kind,” yet he was also an editor who insisted on the best quality writing. A shy man, Weaver downplayed his extraordinary accomplishments throughout his life, insisting that he fell into a CBC career and “accidentally” created a radio program that broadcast Canadian writing coast to coast for close to 50 years.

One of the more important things Weaver did was connect writers to one another, by correspondence, by visiting them where they lived, and, despite being a quiet person, by being famous for holding rather raucous parties. The other significant thing that Atwood, Munro, Callaghan, and others remember is that he paid them properly in order for them to “keep going.” In a manner unheard of today, “Bob was prepared to waste money in the interest of supporting in a general sense a writer or a group of writers.”

Margaret Atwood tells us that it was difficult to dislike Weaver, and the reader needs no convincing. Barry Callaghan rounds out the strengths of the man, conceding that Weaver “was a shy man, dealing with egomaniacs.” Story by story, book by book, anthology by anthology, Robert Weaver helped build our CanLit library. But Weaver was much more than just a collector of stories by Canadians. He



was receptive to many different kinds of writing, but he accepted only what he judged to be fine work. As Munro fondly recalled,

The most precious encouragement was not in what (his letters) said, but in what they took for granted... He was keeping us going... He never limited his interest to one kind of writing, to any particular kind of material or set of preoccupations. He (understood) the breadth and diversity we need to have a literature.

First at the CBC, then with his work at the *Tamarack Review*, and finally through a series of anthologies, Weaver fostered and created a body of work and a group of writing talent that Canadians—and the international literary scene—now take for granted. He really was the godfather of our national literature. The measure of his success is not only the accolades of his contemporaries and his writer friends, but also the universal and now-familiar acceptance of the volume and quality of Canadian literature for which we as a country are renowned.

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*... Atwood, Munro,  
Callaghan, and  
others remember  
... he paid them  
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going.”*

## Members' corner

### Amusing Sign-posts

Photos by Lisa Moses



Next month's topic:

*Summer Editing*

Send your contributions to Members' Corner (75 words max/ images/poems/etc.) to [edition@editors.ca](mailto:edition@editors.ca)



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June 6–8 at the Shaw Conference Centre, Edmonton.*

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Keynote speaker, Ruth Kelly, President and CEO of Venture Publishing

Sessions on cross-cultural editing, translating, and editing comic books, and film subtitles.

Jalal Barzanji—an accomplished Kurdish poet and editor, and Edmonton's first official writer-in-exile—and award-winning writer and translator David Albahari discuss writing and editing in exile.

Distinguishing fact from fiction on the internet at the Senior Editors' Roundtable.

Global outsourcing, the future of publishing and the effect of new technologies are the focus of the closing plenary session, "Editing in the Global Village: Whither—or Wither?—Canadian Editing."

A wine and cheese reception in the scenic River View Room, on Friday, June 6th.

A banquet on Saturday, June 7th, with special guests Ted Blodgett, Edmonton's poet laureate, and comedian and television personality Barbara North, and

*Presentation of the  
Tom Fairley Award for Editorial Excellence*



For information on registration, please go to the conference website at

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