

Edition

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

DECEMBER 2009

The trials and tribulations of self-publishing

- The freelancing life
- Ready, set, GoC!
- Wordplay: Gangbusters



Edition

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Edition

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Editor's note

DEAR READERS,

A recent Marist poll indicates that 47 per cent of Americans find “whatever” to be the most annoying word used in conversation. I have to say, I am guilty of using this one! When all else fails (language and time and patience), I fall back on this standard (usually as I walk away in a huff). Other words and phrases that came up were “you know”, “it is what it is”, and “anyway.” Poll results and further selections can be found at <http://tiny.cc/HvoGz>.

This issue has good pieces on tips for working with the Government of Canada (GoC) and an insightful article on the freelancing life. If you missed the general branch meeting last month, you can discover what tips author Kent Allan Rees and editor Jennifer Glossop had to offer on self-publishing.

It's been a while since we've had any books reviewed, but I'm quite happy to report that reviews are back on track. Please email me at edition@editors.ca if you'd like to do a book review.

The next issue of *Edition* is set to come out in February. Articles are being accepted for that and following issues. The submission deadline for February's *Edition* is January 15, 2010. Volunteers are always needed for copy editing and proofreading, so if you're interested in one of these tasks for an upcoming issue, please email me at edition@editors.ca.

Have a safe and happy holiday.

Alethea Spiridon
Newsletter chair
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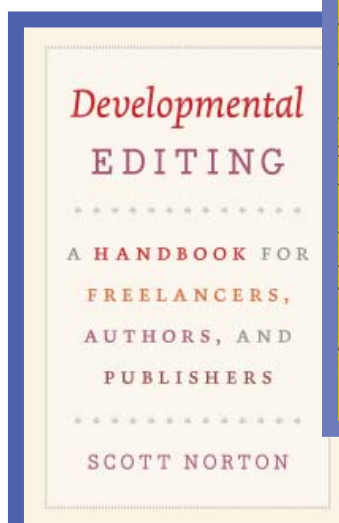
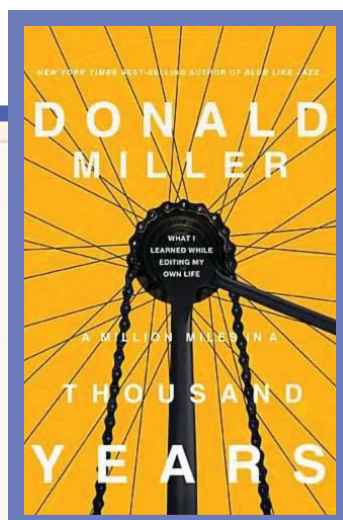
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Above, guests at the October monthly meeting; below, books reviewed for Edition.

Past program report: The trials and tribulations of self-publishing

By Elizabeth Trew

EVERY BUDDING AUTHOR WONDERS, “IS IT MORE daunting to self-publish your book or to find someone to publish your book?”

At the October membership meeting neophyte author Kent Allan Rees and veteran freelance editor Jennifer Glossop educated the audience about the benefits and drawbacks of self-publishing.

Kent Allan Rees, author of the self-published children’s book *Molly Withers and the Golden Tree*, had a dream: to write and publish a book. Like most first-time authors, he knew that it would take a long time to find a publisher willing to take him as a client; so he self-published his book. At the meeting, he shared a few lessons he learned along the way.

He spoke about the pitfalls of relying on self-publishing experts. “There are many so-called self-publishing experts who will charge you to go through the self-publishing process with them. But the more you do yourself—working with printers and graphic artists to do the cover and layout—the cheaper it is,” said Rees.

Rees speaks from experience when he says the most important part of a book is its cover, as it



Kent Allan Rees, Author of Molly Withers and the Golden Tree



Jennifer Glossop, Editor



attracts people to buy the book. The cover of the first edition of his book appealed to girls and not to boys. The cover of the second edition was dark and foreboding—much like the *Harry Potter* series—and appealed to both girls and boys, resulting in double the sales of the first edition.

Rees knew he needed a copy editor, but could not afford the \$40 to \$50 an hour to pay one. He admitted to cutting corners; he found a friend who agreed to edit his book without getting paid. He paid a copy editor—current EAC newsletter chair Alethea Spiridon—to edit the second edition and, sure enough, she found mistakes in his book. When Rees found out the cover of a *Harry Potter* book had a mistake, he didn't feel all that bad about having mistakes in his book!

“Don't cut corners with an editor,” Rees emphasized. He said that some editing services will charge \$500 for unlimited time, but some deals are too good to be true. Ask what their fee will cover. Does it include an index? Does it include the book cover and the inside flaps?

Rees shipped his book to almost every Chapters bookstore in Canada, but they would not stock it, although some stores took his book on consignment. He said books do not sell just sitting on a bookstore's shelves. He found by holding book signings, sales of his book increased substantially.

The main advantage of using a traditional publishing house is that the publisher will work with the writer to market his or her book. With self-publishing, writers are on your own.



It took Rees only one year to write and publish his book. His long-term goal is to find a traditional publishing house to work with, and says he's looking forward to that day.

Veteran editor Jennifer Glossop said that before considering whether to self-publish or to go the traditional publishing route, writers must consider what they want to achieve and the best route to get there. The main advantage of using a traditional publishing house is that the publisher will work with the writer to market his or her book. With self-publishing, writers are on their own.

Glossop said that when considering self-publishing versus finding a publisher, consideration should be given to the type of book one wants to publish. Self-publishing is the way to go when you are selling to the converted: a cookbook for family and friends or a book about writing sold from your professional website.

There are distinct drawbacks to self-published books. For one, major newspapers, including the *Toronto Star*, will not review them. In addition, most publishing houses will not look at books that have been self-published. They prefer to have material that hasn't already been published in one way or another. [Ed. Note: An argument can be made against this—look at Christopher Paolini's success with *Eragon*, which



was originally self-published and had such success that a traditional publisher (Alfred A. Knopf) wanted to take advantage of that success.]

Glossop noted that working directly with authors can be very rewarding, but also poses certain challenges. Self-publishing authors often demand more of your time and pay less than publishers do. As the money for editing is coming from their own pockets, authors often feel they own your time.

When working with authors, Glossop discovered she needed to do more



than just editing; authors wanted her to be available to help them through their personal crises as well. Glossop reiterated that one needs to inform clients that they are editors, not cheerleaders, ghostwriters, agents, or marketers. Editors need to have a contract with their clients and clarify what each party needs to do every step of the way. She stressed the need to talk about money upfront and about getting a partial advance before beginning to work for a client.

One of Glossop's clients was a 95-year-old woman who had lived a very interesting life and decided to write her memoirs as a personal legacy to her family. The woman asked Glossop to be her editor and, unlike most authors, she said the cost of editing was immaterial to her. Glossop talked her client into having seven copies published and hand-bound, up from the five copies originally requested. By the time her client's book was published, each copy had cost the author about \$2,000, which she gladly paid.

Both speakers agreed that it is vital for writers looking to self-publish to connect with an experienced editor who has the skills and the time to properly edit the manuscript, rather than with someone they find on the Internet who charges a low flat fee and doesn't provide quality service. ■■■

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EAC Toronto Executive 2009–10



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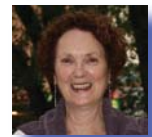
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■ For your day planner pages

Executive meeting

There is no meeting in December. The next meeting is January 11, 2010
6:30 PM

EAC National Office
27 Carlton Street, Suite 505
All members are welcome.

RSVP: toronto_br_secretary@editors.ca

General meeting

There is no meeting in December. The next meeting is January 25, 2010.
Please visit the Toronto branch main page at www.editors.ca for more information.

The Women's Art Association of Canada
23 Prince Arthur Avenue
Members free/non-members \$10

■ Welcome new members!

As of November 2009, the Toronto branch has 613 members: 322 voting (including two honorary life members), 255 qualifying, 21 student members, and 13 emeritus members.

The new members are:

Kristin Adams	Andrea Parker Simhon
Johanna Bailey	Maureen Smithers
Laura Buckley	Nathan Stark
Vidya Chadawada	Crystal Steeves
Jennifer Smith Gray	Scott Williams
Alex Newman	

Hotline and National Job Board registration

ONE OF THE GREAT BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP IN EAC IS THAT employers advertise employment and contract opportunities to members. Full-time positions are available through the National Job Board on Interactive Voice, EAC's Web forum.

To receive National Job Board postings via email, go to the National Job Board using your EAC website username and password and follow these steps:

1. Click "Forum subscriptions" near the top of the screen.
2. Select "National Job Board" under the New Subscriptions heading near the bottom.
3. Click "Subscribe selected."

Temporary positions are posted through the hotline. If you are a Toronto branch member and looking for temporary or freelance work, you can opt to receive employment opportunity notices by email as they become available. Register to receive hotline notices by sending your name and email address to toronto@editors.ca. Registration expires at the end of each month. 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

Email: toronto@editors.ca



Seminar chair report

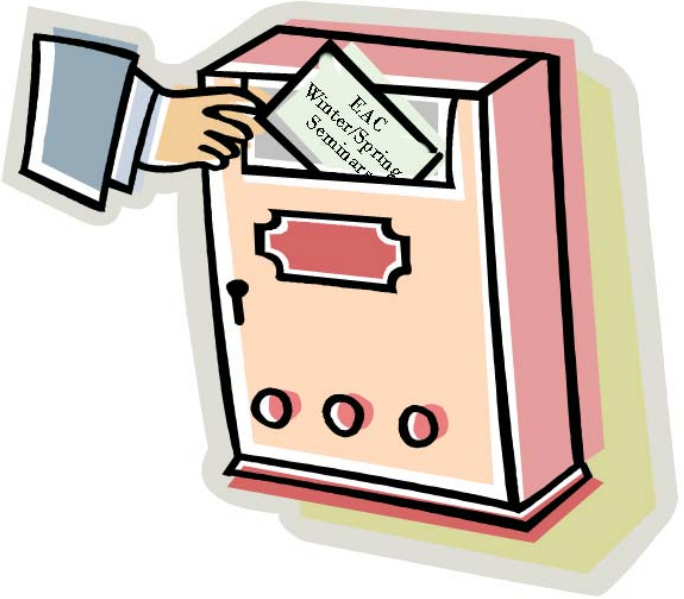
By Emily Dockrill Jones

WITH OUR FALL 2009 SEASON drawing to a close, the seminar committee is busy planning the winter/spring 2010 lineup, which will be announced the first week of January. Once again, we are planning some great new offerings to complement our slate of returning favourites. Complete listings and details will be available on the website by January 8, 2010.

At this time, I would like to thank all of the instructors, volunteers, and participants who helped make this season so successful. We had four sold-out seminars, and responses to all offerings have been positive. We look forward to continuing this momentum in the new year.

If you are interested in volunteering with the seminars committee, or if you have an idea for a seminar topic, please contact Emily Dockrill Jones at toronto_br_pd_chair@editors.ca.

Have a safe and happy holiday, and we'll see you in 2010. ■■■



The freelance life

By Larke Turnbull

WHO HASN'T DREAMED ABOUT THE freedom of working at home, imagined throwing away the alarm clock, taking time off whenever you like, with no boss hovering over your shoulder?

Modern technology has made freelancing easier, and it's, no doubt, a tempting option for some of the thousands of people who have lost their jobs in the past year.

There are definitely many rewards. Those who freelance love the flexibility of setting their own hours and scheduling work around important family events. They also appreciate the freedom to focus on doing work they enjoy and to choose projects that interest them.

There's a trade-off, however, as freelancers must also deal with economic challenges, isolation, and the need for self-discipline.

For anyone who has worked for someone else, freelancing means giving up a regular paycheque for a job that doesn't pay until a project is finished. That often means you will wait a month or two before a cheque arrives. In the meantime, there are groceries to buy and bills to pay.

Diane Sewell is a freelance marketing and communications specialist in Stratford, Ontario, who worked as a reporter for

the local daily newspaper before starting a freelance career in 2000. The first thing she did was check her bank accounts and investments to make sure she had enough money to live off of while she was getting started.

"You want to make sure you've got some kind of financial cushion or a partner who's willing to carry your financial obligations while you get yourself up and running, because it doesn't happen overnight."

The drop in income was also a challenge for Susan Brown, an editor and writer in Waterloo, Ontario, who had worked for a



Diane Sewell



*Susan Brown*

local design firm, writing job proposals for architects and engineers, before deciding to become a freelancer. After giving birth to her son, who is now seven, she said, “I realized the work I was doing day in and day out of writing proposals for parking lots and trailer parks and things was not the direction I wanted my career to go. I wanted to be writing about things that were interesting to me, important to me.”

The switch was a hit financially, but she and her husband “have never been the kind of people who wanted to be massively rich if it meant never seeing each other or being miserable at our jobs or never seeing [their son], so we just did what we had to do, financially.”

For Brown, that meant taking part-time jobs to keep cash flowing in between freelance cheques.

“You have to do whatever it takes to make

it work...whatever works for you until you’re established.”

Once the decision to freelance has been made, another challenge is to create a place to work. For Sewell, that meant having an office built in her basement. As the mother of two daughters who were teenagers at the time she began freelancing, and with a husband who also works from home, she advises freelancers to have a separate phone and computer.

“You don’t want kids wanting to get on your computer to do research for school projects when you’re in the middle of writing a story or editing a story, whatever the case may be.”

Her daughters also learned they weren’t to disturb her when she was in her office with the door closed. “They knew that I had a job to do—just because I worked at home didn’t mean the job was any less important than if I had to go to a downtown business. Work was work.”

Support and understanding from family members is essential for freelance writers and editors. For Brown, whose son was very young when she started freelancing, a supportive husband made the transition easier. He even gave her a card congratulating her on her new job. “He’d always been a huge help with our son and he just basically said, whatever you need, I’ll do. Whether it meant daycare pickup or school pickup, he was able to do that.”

Never a morning person, Brown now



enjoys the more flexible working hours that freelancing allows. She often works at night, especially if she's writing, because she's found that's when she's most creative. She edits during the day, when her son is in school. One problem she has encountered is a result of modern technology, which sometimes breaks down. Freelancers can't call on an in-house technology person for help.

"Having your computer away for a couple of days can make a huge difference in the amount of work you can get done," she said.

The solution? Go low-tech.

"I just had to go back to the old days of researching. Check out the library again, because there's still a lot of good stuff there, and just write things down."

Isolation can be another challenge for freelancers.

Working in an office environment does have its perks, as Lynn Schellenberg, a Stratford-based editor, discovered when she left the book publishing industry for a freelance career. She found she missed having other editors around when she needed a second opinion.

"When you're in an office there's always an extra layer of communication...in terms of running things by people, like sometimes you'd just pop your head around the door of another editor and say, 'What do you think about this?' So you miss that."



Lynn Schellenberg

Many freelancers, especially at the start, find it harder than they expected to be their own boss. For Brown, discipline was a challenge.

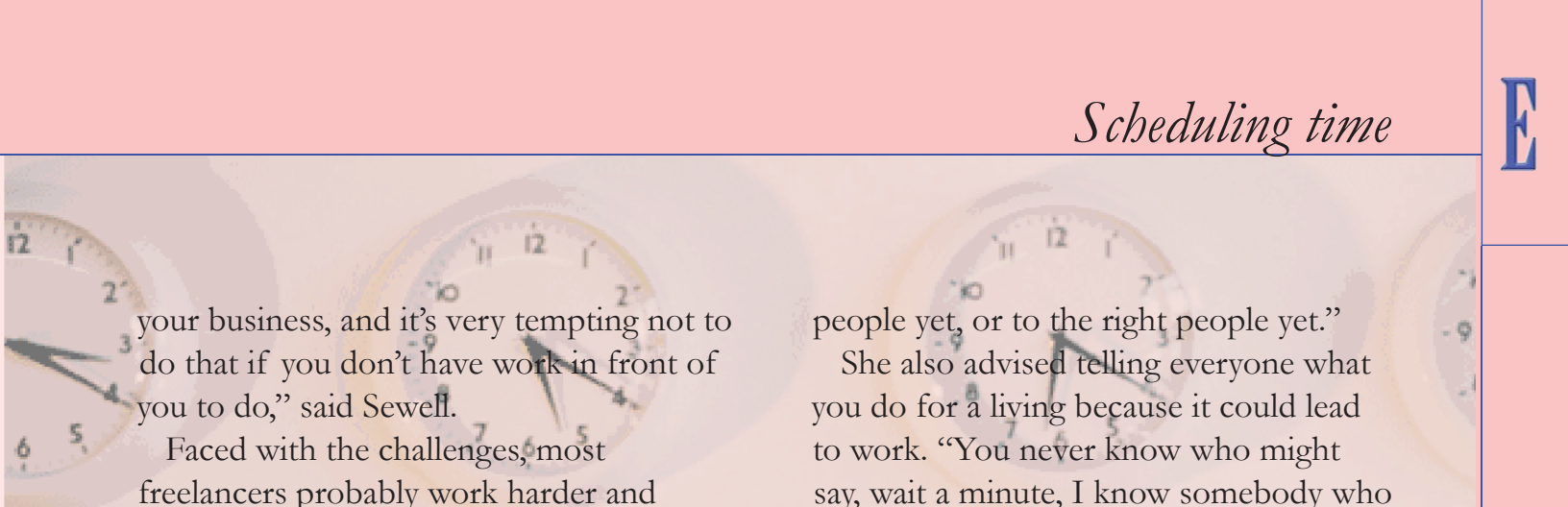
"It's easy," she said, "to get sidetracked and spend a whole day doing household tasks rather than working. I have to make sure, even when I'm not working, that I spend time in the office, either doing research on potential new work or following up with people on emails or phone calls linked to work."

For Sewell, discipline wasn't a problem when she was working on a project, but when she didn't have work to do, "sticking to the job of finding work was the challenge."

And freelancers have to find their own work. They can't just finish a job and wait for their supervisor to assign the next task.

"You have to put in the hours to build





your business, and it's very tempting not to do that if you don't have work in front of you to do," said Sewell.

Faced with the challenges, most freelancers probably work harder and longer hours than someone who works for an employer. It's important to pace yourself, to get out with friends, and to try not to become discouraged. For example, Schellenberg feels freelancers should make sure to allow for downtime and time to recharge.

"It's pretty hard to say no to work, but sometimes there's a project that's just not right for you or that puts that one extra thing on your plate that's too much."

Scheduling time to spend with friends or for networking is also important to keep your sanity, she added.

Both she and Brown are members of the Editors' Association of Canada, which gave them opportunities for networking, fellowship, and support from others doing the same work. For Brown, EAC "let me meet people who were like me, who cared about words, who cared about editing...It's nice to know that, although you're alone in your room, in your office doing your work, you're not alone; there are others out there."

"It's also important not to get discouraged," said Brown. "Remind yourself why you're doing this: that you are good at what you do, and the only reason you're not working is because you haven't gotten that message across to enough

people yet, or to the right people yet."

She also advised telling everyone what you do for a living because it could lead to work. "You never know who might say, wait a minute, I know somebody who does editing. They may mention it to their husband or wife or friend or whatever."

Another piece of advice Brown had for freelancers is to not charge too little for your services. "You've got to charge what you're worth to not undercut your abilities and not undercut the necessity of editors."

So, with all the challenges, is freelancing worth the extra effort? Definitely.

"I can schedule what I need to do around family events, so it's rare that I have to miss something important. I can schedule out-of-town meetings or have my deadlines organized so they fit around important things. So I would say that's a big reward," said Schellenberg.

Sewell has no regrets.

"The beauty is you've got a flexible life, and that's worth an awful lot. Every time we turn around, we're reading in the media about the importance of flexibility in our lives. That's one of the number one concerns in the working world, that you have some control over your life, and this does give you control. It's a bit scary sometimes, but it's great when things are going well." ■■■

Ready, Set, GoC!

By Marion Soublière

AS PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR FOR the National Capital Region branch of the Editors' Association of Canada (EAC), my goal for 2010 is to alert Government of Canada (GoC) communications personnel to the wealth of talent for hire within EAC. Our association boasts more than 1,600 English and French editors across the country, while the GoC is suffering from a shortage of skilled professionals.

But a little homework may be required first for those wishing to sell their services to the federal government. Federal bureaucrats often can't just pick up the phone and hire a supplier. The supplier must be pre-approved by the federal government through an existing procurement vehicle.

If you want the GoC to consider your services, here are some tips for updating your Online Directory of Editors profile, your website, your LinkedIn profile, or any other digital presence you have.

Canada

1. **Are you a registered supplier on the GoC's Professional Services (PS) Online database? Are you a qualified supplier through another supply arrangement, such as the Task-Based Professional Informatics Services supply arrangement? If so, state that in your profile.**
2. **Do you hold a federal standing offer? If so, indicate which department the standing offer is with and what the standing offer number is. Rumour has it that the Standing Offer Index database used by the federal government is not a great search engine, so it's best to state your standing offer number in your own profile.**



3. Do you have government security clearance? If so, state that where possible—although the GoC advises those who hold secret facility clearance not to advertise that. You should indicate your government security clearance information on your PS Online profile, as well as your profile on the Supplier Registration Information system. That's the database that gave you your Procurement Business Number, which is necessary for Public Works and Government Services Canada, along with other federal departments and agencies, to do business with you.
4. Have you worked on federal government projects? If so, indicate them.
5. Are you bilingual (English/French)? Do you work in other languages? If so, state that.
6. Are you certified, either through EAC or another industry certification process? If so, mention that as well.

I hope these hints will be helpful to you. ■■■

Federal bureaucrats often can't just pick up the phone and hire a supplier. The supplier must be pre-approved by the federal government through an existing procurement vehicle.

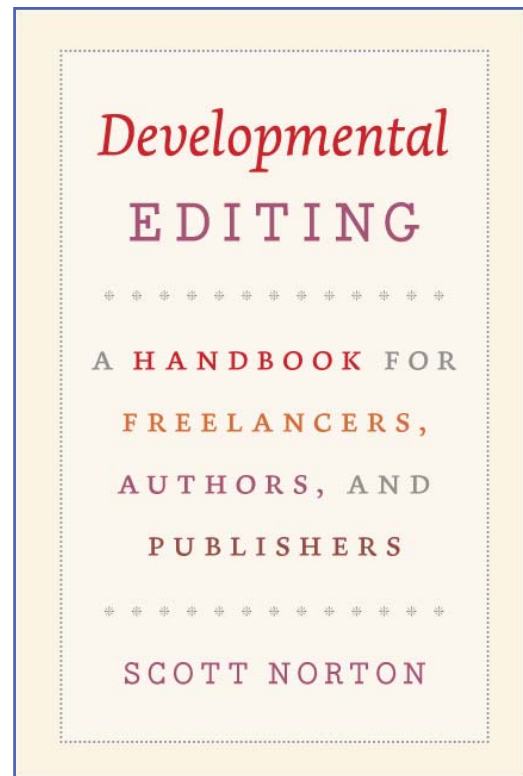
Editor's note: This article is available in French.

Book reviews

Developmental Editing: A Handbook for Freelancers, Authors, and Publishers

By Scott Norton
University of Chicago Press

Reviewed by Lindsay Hodder



THE SUBTITLE OF *DEVELOPMENTAL Editing* suggests a lofty goal—to be “a handbook for freelancers, authors, and publishers”—and the text remarkably fulfills that role. Scott Norton has included something for everyone in this book: It is a great resource for freelancers who often feel isolated when working on projects; it effectively demonstrates storytelling techniques for authors to follow; and it helps publishers address the decision to edit a book on this level by weighing production costs in a realistic fashion.

The advice for editors throughout the text offers both fresh perspectives and the rephrasing of practical advice, such as, “Don’t say anything about the author’s prose that you wouldn’t say about her toddler.” Certainly that is sound advice for

any editor. With coherent tables, definitions, and case studies, this book is an excellent tool for new editors branching out into the field of developmental editing. It’s a witty refresher from English classes gone by that creatively demonstrates rhetorical gestures with examples on the subject of writer’s block. The case studies are useful for publishing students, as they are relevant to current events.

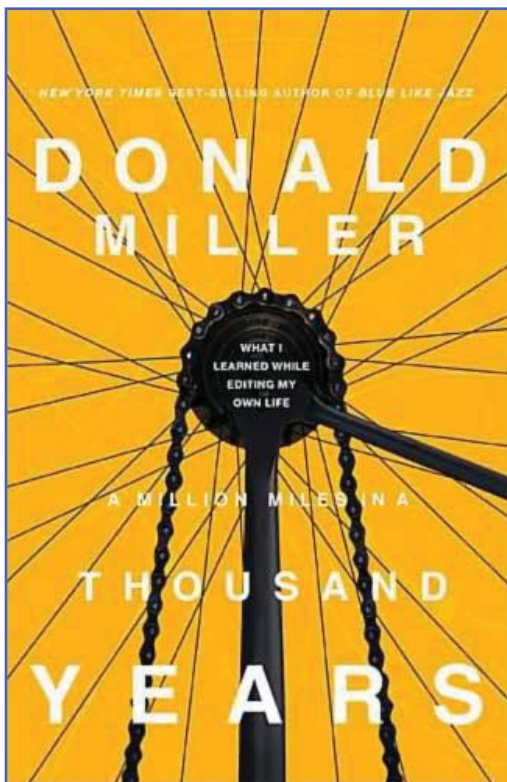
By providing sample correspondence, these studies help new editors learn how to interact with publishers and authors. Norton helps the reader understand why projects fail by showing what can happen in the process, even after careful editing. Reflecting the reality of publishing, he shows that not every collaboration ends ideally. Each chapter features a full



case study illustrating the crux of the concept, effectively grappling with the issue. However, the chapters include a little more fictitious information than the reader actually needs.

As it focuses solely on non-fiction, Norton's text may only marginally help editors working on fiction manuscripts, as there are limited crossover concepts. Others who are looking to add concrete information about developmental editing to their bookshelves will find the diversity of concepts and execution of content to be a welcome addition.

The book includes an adequate amount of back matter: the index is mostly useful, but could be even better with the use of additional cross-references for those wanting to seek other sources of information. But the list of books under further reading is coherent and extensive, and shows the depth Norton was willing to cover. Overall, this book has the quality that any desk in the industry has come to expect from the University of Chicago Press.



A Million Miles in a Thousand Years: What I Learned While Editing My Life

By Donald Miller
Thomas Nelson

Reviewed by Brooke Smith

I WASN'T SURE WHAT TO EXPECT WITH *A Million Miles in a Thousand Years: What I Learned While Editing My Life*. The title was intriguing and the author, Donald Miller, was vaguely familiar to me.

When I did an Amazon search, I saw that Miller had also written *Blue Like Jazz: Non-Religious Thoughts on Christian Spirituality*



(parked on one of our bookshelves, in an area devoted to spirituality/religion). What, I wondered was, would I learn from this book about editing and/or writing, and how, exactly, would I write a book review?

I began reading with my yellow highlighter close at hand. (At least, I thought, I could highlight some pithy phrases.)

But instead of highlighting ad nauseum, I was drawn in, captivated by Miller's casual, conversational style. I worried less about pointers of writing and editing and cared more about the principles that apply not only to story but also to life.

At the start of *A Million Miles*, Miller is in a slump. After the success of his memoir, *Blue Like Jazz*, he was uninspired and unmotivated, and, by his own admission, watching far too much television.

But when he was approached by two filmmakers who wanted to make his memoir into a film, Miller began to "edit his own life" in search of new and better stories for himself, including finding his father (who was absent through his childhood), riding his bike across the United States to raise money to build wells in Africa, and getting in shape to hike the Inca Trail.

In fact, in his opening author's note, Miller states, "... if what we choose to

"... if what we choose to do with our lives won't make a story meaningful, it won't make a life meaningful either."

do with our lives won't make a story meaningful, it won't make a life meaningful either." Wow, pretty heavy stuff. Throughout, Miller discovers how he can live a different story. He learns about narrative and life through those he meets, and readers learn not only the elements of a story (for example, a character who wants something but has to go through conflict to get it), but also a few lessons on living.

Of course, by the end of the book, I had filled the pages with yellow highlights—principles that Miller says can apply to both story and life: "If the point of life is the same as the point of a story, the point of life is character transformation."

Some may find Miller too philosophical or too spiritual, but he is never preachy. While he does draw from some more traditional sources, such as the book of Job and the experiences of Viktor Frankl in a Nazi concentration camp during the Second World War, Miller's approach is refreshing and will give readers pause to think about their own life stories.

I like what one of Miller's friends tells him: "When something hard happens to you, you have two choices in how to deal with it. You can either get bitter, or better." In editor talk: one vowel will make all the difference in the world. ■■■

Networking: Your guide to what's going on

Compiled by Jordan Bargent

EVENTS

Canadian Society of
Children's Authors,
Illustrators and Performers
(CANSCAIP), Monthly
Meeting
www.canscaip.org

When: Wednesday, January 6, 7:30 PM
Where: Northern District Library,
40 Orchard View Boulevard, Toronto
Cost: Free
Contact: 416 515-1559 or
office@canscaip.org

READINGS

Canadian Authors Association,
Monthly Meeting
www.canauthorstoronto.org/events.html

The special guest will be Al Moritz, winner of the 2009 Griffin Poetry Prize for his collection *The Sentinel*. Moritz. Al has lived in Toronto since 1974 and teaches at the University of Toronto.

When: Thursday, January 21, 7–9 PM
Where: Above The World's Biggest Bookstore,
20 Edward Street, Toronto
Cost: Free
Contact: Bianca Lakoseljac at
biancalakoseljac@rogers.com

Wordplay

By James Harbeck

GANGBUSTERS

IMAGINE A WHOLE GANG OF BUSTER Keatons. The Keystone Kops could try to catch them, and great injuries and pratfalls would happen all around. Things would go bang. Masonry falling, people getting tossed around...and, of course, if it were made today rather than in the silent movie era, a lot of noise: police whistles, sirens, machine guns, screeching tires. It would be a huge success. Like gangbusters.

Gang Busters was, in fact, a huge success. The true-crime-case radio show, which ran from 1936 to 1957, had exactly nothing to do with Buster Keaton or with the Keystone Kops, and was the perfect inverse of a silent movie: it was all sound and no vision. And such sound! The opening of each show featured a barrage of loud sound effects: police whistles, sirens, machine guns, screeching tires. By 1940, speakers had taken this vigorous noise (and probably the great success of the radio show too) and mapped it onto vigorous being, and *coming on like Gang Busters* meant “doing really well.”

Which it has meant ever since, even though few people now know about the radio show; *like gangbusters* is by far the most common collocation for this word, and *go* (and *going*) and *come on* are the verbs that typically come before; *go(ing) gangbusters* is also common.

As to the overt sense of it, well, anyone can figure out what *gangbusters* means, and they won't be wrong: “people who bust gangs.”



When gangs were big news in the United States—the Roaring Twenties, the Dirty Thirties—law enforcement officials needed to break them up and jail their members, and one who was successful at it (Eliot Ness is now the paragon) was a gangbuster. And the word has the right sound and rhythm for a thumping success: three syllables, banging down the stairs like Buster Keaton. A primary stress, secondary stress, and then unstressed syllable, with the first syllable taking almost as long as the other two together, rather like the sound of something heavy hitting a floor and bouncing twice—or bouncing once and smashing across the floor on the second hit. The *gang* has a “bang” kind of sound, aided by the bursting *b*, and then the voiced stops with nasals give way to a voiceless fricative/stop pair /st/, like the bouncing thing breaking—followed by the scattering sound of syllabic /r/. One is put in mind of James Brockman and Leonard Stevens’s song from the late 1920s, *I Faw Down an’ Go Boom*. Only in this case it’s a smashing success.

No need to stop just yet, though: *gangbuster* is a compound word. *Gang* comes from the verb *gang*, “go,” as in Robert Burns’s “The best laid schemes o’ Mice an’ Men, Gang aft agley”—



though Burns was no gangbuster where mice were concerned: “I wad be laith to rin an’ chase thee, Wi’ murd’ring pattle!” Anyway, *gang* (noun) refers to things that go together, and has more recently narrowed in sense to mean a nefarious group of persons. And *buster* is *bust* plus the agentive *er*; *bust*, in turn, is *burst* in an American vernacular alteration. *Burst*, like *gang*, is a good, old Anglo-Saxon word, and has always meant “break.” These days we think of it mainly as the kind of breaking that happens to things that go “bang” or “boom.” Which brings us back to Joseph Frank Keaton, who got his nickname *Buster* at a very young age from surviving a fall unscathed that an observer (Harry Houdini, in fact) reckoned could have broken bones. And it appears that he, in turn, was the original and source of the nickname and nonce-name *Buster*. ■■■

Contributors

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