

# THE CANBERRA editor

Newsletter of the Canberra Society of Editors

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## From the CSE President and Committee

Welcome back to the Canberra Society of Editors in 2017! We trust your Christmas and festive season was full of peace and joy, and that you returned refreshed and invigorated from whatever holidays you were able to take from your busy schedules, and are now well and truly into a successful year.

After the usual Christmas quiet time, your Committee began the year with a bit of excitement.

Out-of-session in January, a small group in your Committee followed up on a new member's information that a particular (non-ACT) editing company had proposed to Australian universities that they should move towards directing all their external academic editing through this single company to only those editors that had been registered and 'accredited' by the company.

Among its many challengeable claims, this company actually states on its website: 'We are not another editing business. *We organise the academic editing industry!*' [Their emphasis. No. Seriously.]

After a detailed analysis of the proposal, CSE wrote to IPEd proposing a joint communication to the Australian Council of Graduate Research (ACGR), the universities' organisation previously known as DDoGS (Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies). That communication would alert ACGR to the editing profession's concerns that adopting the proposal could adversely affect university researchers and other academics in terms of the cost, quality flexibility and appropriate skill levels of the professional editors whom the researchers and academics seek to engage.

After considerable consultation with IPEd in February, the joint communication was sent to ACGR early in March, also seeking the ACGR's collaboration in IPEd-CSE initiatives to update and keep improving the quality and ethical delivery of academic editing services. Some productive discussions and collaboration with ACGR should be expected over the coming months. CSE expects to collaborate in those discussions and in the intended update of the IPEd's *Guidelines for editing research theses* and other initiatives.

Another IPEd-CSE collaboration that we negotiated in February is the continuation of the reciprocal member discounts for 'events', which had previously prevailed among the seven independent editors' societies. This includes a member discount to the IPEd biennial national conference in Brisbane in September.

Having not had a CSE General Meetings Coordinator for some months now (volunteers are welcome!), your Committee brainstormed the next few months' General Meetings, and settled on a schedule of interesting

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subjects, speakers and panels through to the AGM in August. These are listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Committee has also agreed to continue holding the Society's monthly General Meetings at the Ferguson Room in the National Library, despite the NLA's new policy of having to charge even not-for-profit groups to use its facilities. But we are considering alternative venues ... again!

At our March Committee meeting, we learnt that a longstanding and always active member, Karin Hosking, has offered to organise at least one networking lunch ... and soon. If it is as popular as those that Malini Devadas organised over the past three years, we may be able to prevail on Karin to do more. These lunches have proven to be a popular and valued networking opportunity for members who have difficulty attending evening General Meetings.

Two other initiatives were agreed at February and March Committee meetings. The first is the production of two 20–25-page booklets: one on plain English, and one on grammar. Two of your Committee members have initiated writing the text for these booklets, which we hope to publish this year.

The other is the trialling of a new email discussion group, to replace the long-running Yahoo discussion group that Honorary Life Member Peter Judge managed for years. Expect to see some communication about this in the near future.

Finally, our March meeting also confirmed your Society's very strong and stable financial position, as well as the very satisfying membership numbers in the first year after members voted to remain an independent society, rather than to wind up and become a branch of a head-office IPEd. In the year before the 'transformation' (2015–16), CSE membership was around 180. In March 2017, total membership was still well over 140. A new corporate member and eight new full members were approved at the March meeting.

These developments are very encouraging. And we thank all CSE members—both old and new—for their continued support and commitment to the Society.

#### **CSE President and Committee**

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## **Membership**

A warm welcome to the following new members!

### **Full members**

Dr Kathryn Brown  
Richa Carneiro Alphonso  
Julia Church  
Geoff Dawson (previously an associate member)  
Lisa Fuller  
Frances Glavimans  
Emily Hazlewood  
Dr Nicola Van Dijk (Dr Nicola Watson)

### **Corporate members**

Dr Lisa Lines (also full member)  
Beth Rogers

### **Associate members**

Timothy Barrett  
Moira Byrne

I confirm that the Society's membership stands at 142, with a couple of outstanding applications.

I am starting a new email discussion group on Google for our CSE members. It's still in the setup phase. Over the next few weeks, all current members will receive an invitation to join the group. The now-retired Yahoo email discussion group managed by life member Peter Judge was very popular; I'm hoping members will enjoy our new group just as much. All interesting discussion threads will be welcome.

#### **Dr Linda Weber AE**

Membership Secretary and Public Officer

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## Professional development

Our Professional Development Coordinator, Dr Lisa Lines, has had to make an unexpected return with her family to Adelaide, and is now seeking willing helpers to be her 'feet on the ground' in Canberra for the three specialised workshops (some details below).

Members who offered to help with 'training', we know who you are! Please contact one of CSE's office bearers or the Immediate Past President (Alan Cummine, 0407 488 927) to avoid being harassed!

'Professional development' for CSE members (and others) includes not only our specialised one-day or half-day workshops, but also the lively presentations that combine with conviviality and networking to make our monthly General Meetings so popular.

Here are your Committee's forward plan for 2017—so far.

### General Meetings

(Last Wednesday of each month in the Ferguson Room at the National Library. Drinks and nibbles from 5:45 pm. Business and presentations from 6:15 pm to about 7:45 pm.)

#### Wednesday 26 April

**Topic:** Practical aspects of using EndNote™

**Speaker:** Dr Farid Rahimi

EndNote™ is a reference-management software now in version X8 and available for both Mac and PC platforms; see [here](#). This presentation will use the PC version of EndNote™ X8 and show how to 1) generate an EndNote™ 'library'; 2) insert citations into a Microsoft® Word document using an existing EndNote™ library; 3) generate a bibliography of cited references in a written manuscript; and 4) apply a specific formatting style to a bibliography. Install the PC version of the 30-day trial version of EndNote™ X8 on your laptop and bring your laptop PC (or Mac) with you to the meeting. Make sure you also have Microsoft Word installed (Microsoft Word 2007, 2010 (32 bit), 2011, 2013 (32 bit), 2016 (32 bit)) on a PC with the Operation System Windows 7 SP1 or later versions. You may wish to work along with Farid as he demonstrates those EndNote™ functions.

#### Wednesday 31 May

**Topic:** BMA magazine: Issues 1–500

**Speaker:** Allan Sko, managing director of BMA Magazine

December this year will see the 500th issue of the BMA magazine. Allan will speak about the journey from Issue No. 1 to the present day, and about the job of a managing editor and the relationship the magazine has with text editors.

#### Wednesday 28 June

**Topic:** Academic editing

A panel of speakers will present on facets of academic editing and answer your questions.

#### Wednesday 26 July

**Topic:** Web accessibility

**Speaker:** Cathy Nicoll will speak about writing and editing for web accessibility.

#### Wednesday 30 August

CSE's Annual General Meeting, followed by dinner.

### Specialised workshops

The subjects most requested in the professional development survey conducted last year included the topics now scheduled for our monthly meetings, described above.

Other requests were the three topics now being planned as one-day workshops. They are:

- Basic copyediting
- Grammar
- Accreditation exam preparation

Significantly, all three are subjects that emerged in the IPEd Accreditation Board's analysis of the low pass rate in the 2016 AE exam—candidates making basic grammatical and editing mistakes, plus being inadequately prepared for a high-standard test of experienced professionals.

These CSE workshops are being scheduled to fit in with other parts of the CSE calendar, as well as with the IPEd Biennial National Conference in Brisbane in September.

**Eris Harrison**  
Vice-President

**Lisa Lines**  
Professional Development Coordinator

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## Editing research theses ... update and reminder

In the past several months, 'academic editing' has been gathering momentum as a field of particular interest within the editing profession and its representative bodies.

The changing needs of researchers in the higher education environment, combined with advances in technology and internet usage, are revealing some challenges for editors and for users of editing services, especially with respect to editing for students.

Academic editing will be the subject of a panel discussion at CSE's General Meeting in June, and will be the focus of a session and perhaps a workshop at the IPEd Biennial National Conference in Brisbane in September.

Editing of research theses is the subject of current communications between IPEd and CSE (jointly) and the Australian Council of Graduate Research (ACGR). ACGR was previously known as DDoGS (Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies), which worked with IPEd to develop and approve the IPEd *Guidelines for editing research theses*.

Embedded in those communications with ACGR are three IPEd–CSE initiatives: to review and update the Guidelines; to examine how to achieve more nationally uniform professional development for current and aspiring academic editors; and to develop a system to test and certify academic editing as part of the successful IPEd accreditation program.

While these initiatives are being implemented, it is timely to remind those taking on academic-editing jobs of the importance of ethics and integrity in the different elements of academic editing.

First, university policies do not permit professional editing of undergraduate work, and it should never be agreed to except when approved in rare and specific circumstances by a student's direct supervisor. Second, both substantive and copyediting of journal articles by qualified academics is acceptable. Third—and most crucially—editing of postgraduate theses is confined to copyediting and proofreading; substantive editing in any form is not permitted, and should not be agreed to.

CSE expects to be involved in the review and update of the IPEd Guidelines.

The primary purpose of this review must be to ensure the Guidelines continue to be the benchmark for thesis editing, but to be more explicit and less open to (mis)interpretation than 'guidelines' can be. Rather, they should constitute a very clear 'code of practice' for those who specialise in thesis editing, and give clear guidance to universities, postgraduate students and their supervisors as to the limit of permissible editing that is ethical from all perspectives and that preserves the integrity of scholastic endeavour.

Experienced editors specialising in thesis editing tend to be diligent in applying the IPEd Guidelines. But the expanding demand for thesis editing is attracting less experienced editors whose interpretation of the Guidelines is not as strict as was intended.

### Oxford comma, Harvard comma, or serial comma—well worth it

In the 2016 July–August issue of *The Canberra editor*, Francesca Beddie (Director, Make Your Point), wrote a column about the Oxford comma. Francesca wrote, 'For me there's only one rule: use punctuation to aid clarity. So when the Oxford comma helps, go ahead and use it; when it doesn't, save yourself a keystroke.' Bryan A Garner in *Garner's Modern English Usage, Fourth Edition*, writes, 'But it's [argument] easily answered in favor of inclusion because omitting the final comma may cause ambiguities, whereas including it never well ...'. Apparently, a saved keystroke (or pen stroke), which did not aid clarity, now cannot save a company millions of dollars in compensation. See *The New York Times* report by Daniel Victor (March 16, 2017) headlined, 'Lack of Oxford Comma Could Cost Maine Company Millions in Overtime Dispute'.

**Farid Rahimi PhD ELS**  
Newsletter Editor

Until the Guidelines are updated, CSE urges all its members to thoroughly understand the current edition—as it applies to editors, students and their supervisors—and to treat it as more than a guide, but as a code of practice for all to follow.

**Alan Cummine**  
Immediate Past President

**Elizabeth Manning Murphy DE**  
Honorary Life Member

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## IPed National Mentoring Program

### Who are we?

We thought you might like to know what the current Mentoring Coordinators around Australia look like, with a bit of an update on each of them. A lot of our mentorships are interstate matches, which means that two coordinators are involved. It's nice to have an idea of the person at the other end of the coordination. So, for this issue, we feature two of our state coordinators: Adele Walker in South Australia and Shannon Kelly in New South Wales. If you are looking for a mentor, or wanting to give a bit of time to mentoring someone in an aspect of editing (or anything related), and you live in either of those states, contact Adele or Shannon direct.



**Adele Walker AE** has been a member of the Society of Editors (SA) since 2005 and is currently the membership secretary as well as mentoring coordinator.

Adele works as a freelance editor and a translator of French to English. She is also a Hansard reporter at the Parliament of South Australia, part of a team preparing transcripts of parliamentary proceedings.

To contact Adele, email [adeleanderson@aapt.net.au](mailto:adeleanderson@aapt.net.au).



**Shannon Kelly** works as a senior legal editor at Thomson Reuters. Prior to working full-time as an editor, he worked as a lawyer during the day and a freelance editor in the evenings. He enjoys genre fiction (speculative fiction in particular) and has a love of long novels with deep characterisation and creative magic systems. Shannon has a bit of experience with starting off a career in editing in the 21st century, having completed his university degree in 2013. Perhaps someday there will be a clear path from tertiary to professional life for editors, but until that day he will be working to help young editors like himself.

To contact Shannon, email [shannon.tyler.kelly@gmail.com](mailto:shannon.tyler.kelly@gmail.com).

Next time, we'll feature two more state coordinators, but you don't have to wait—here are all the other coordinators' email addresses—they would like to hear from you:

Catherine Schwerin (WA) [caschwerin@gmail.com](mailto:caschwerin@gmail.com)

Roberta Blake (Qld) [roberta.r.blake@gmail.com](mailto:roberta.r.blake@gmail.com)

Louise Zedda-Sampson (Vic) [louisezed@gmail.com](mailto:louisezed@gmail.com)

Sheelagh Wegman AE (Tas) [wegmans@internode.on.net](mailto:wegmans@internode.on.net)

Geoff Dawson AE (ACT) [geoffdawsoneditor@gmail.com](mailto:geoffdawsoneditor@gmail.com)

## CSE February General Meeting talk: *What exactly is mentoring?*

We were asked this question recently, so it became the theme of a talk. Geoff Dawson AE and Elizabeth Manning Murphy DE gave a talk on 22 February to members of the Canberra Society of Editors. We tried to answer this question and many others that members brought up. So what is it?

It's a partnership between someone with knowledge and experience in a particular aspect of the editing profession that they are willing to share, and someone who needs guidance in that aspect of editing. It's a two-way informal learning process, strictly confidential to the partners, and a great way to find out about improving skills or moving to a new area of the editing profession. This was almost an international event with CSE members from ACT, NSW and even Antwerp in Belgium, contributing their thoughts, in person or by email, about the value of mentoring to both mentor and mentee. The evening is written up in this issue of *The Canberra editor*. We would be happy to present the talk again to any groups of editors who would like to hear more about the program first-hand. We can do it in person or by Skype. Contact Elizabeth (details below).

**Elizabeth Manning Murphy DE**

[emmurphy.words@gmail.com](mailto:emmurphy.words@gmail.com)

Joint National Coordinators

**with Ted Briggs AE**

[tedbriggs@grapevine.com.au](mailto:tedbriggs@grapevine.com.au)

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## Mentoring in the ACT

IPEd National Mentoring Program for editors is going strong. There were interesting reflections on a mentoring relationship in the September–December newsletter, summed up by the mentee, 'I was very grateful for having this contact, especially with the solitary nature of being a freelance editor.' Elizabeth Manning Murphy and I gave a talk on mentoring to the CSE's General Meeting on 22 February. A gratifying number of the attendees asked for further information, so we hope to have some new mentors and mentees on board in the ACT this year.

If you missed the talk but you're interested in being mentored or offering to be a mentor, you'll be welcome. Any aspect of editing or related business topics is fair game (there are suggestions in the [Guidance Notes on the IPEd website](#)). Throw me an email, as the French say.

**Geoff Dawson AE**

ACT Mentoring Coordinator, and CSE Treasurer

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## February General Meeting

### All about mentoring for editors

The CSE's February General Meeting heard a most informative presentation on IPEd's mentoring program for editors. Elizabeth Manning Murphy DE (one of the creators of the mentoring program) and Geoff Dawson AE described the key elements of the mentoring program:

- The coordinators match members who would like to have a mentor with those who have volunteered to be mentors.
- The mentoring focus can be any aspect of editing or related business topics (the IPEd [Mentoring Program Guidance Notes](#) provides topic suggestions). Mentors list their special interests and experience, and the coordinators match them with prospective mentees who would like advice on those matters.
- The arrangement is quite flexible, and the focus can be adjusted by mutual agreement as the relationship develops.
- Eight hours of advice over about three months is the suggested default; but again, this is very flexible, and mentorships can be extended or shortened by mutual agreement.

- The program is not training—applicants are expected to have at least a basic knowledge of copyediting. The mentor is a friendly guide as the mentee builds on those skills and develops new skills.

Thanks to Ara Nalbandian and Karin Hosking who shared reflections on their experiences as mentors in the program. Thanks also to other mentors or mentees who provided comments for sharing: Melissa Faulkner, John Linnegar and Anna Boots. They showed what a valuable experience a mentorship can be for both mentors and mentees.

The coordinators are always glad to hear from anyone who would like to be mentored or who may be interested in volunteering as a mentor (new mentors attend a short workshop, usually held by Skype, and are supported throughout a mentorship). To find out more, contact your local coordinator.

**Geoff Dawson AE**

ACT Mentoring Coordinator, and CSE Treasurer  
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 0410 251 063

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## Book review

### Garner’s Modern English Usage, Fourth Edition Bryan A Garner

2016, Oxford University Press, New York, USA  
 Printed: 1056 pages, (ISBN13: 9780190491482)  
 eISBN: 9780190632373  
 DOI: 10.1093/acref/9780190491482.001.0001  
 Booktopia price: 35% off at \$64.75 (at time of publishing this newsletter)  
 Book depository: \$53.90

**Review by Farid Rahimi PhD ELS, Newsletter Editor**

**About the author**

Bryan A Garner is a Texas-born lexicographer, lawyer, and scholar. He has written or edited 27 publications on English usage, lexicography, grammar and style; and legal drafting, editing, advocacy and ethics. Examples of his work include *Black’s Law Dictionary*; *The Chicago Guide to Grammar, Usage, and Punctuation*; *The Chicago Manual of Style*, ch. 5 ‘Grammar and Usage’; *The Elements of Legal Style*; *The Rules of Golf in Plain English*; and *Garner’s Modern English Usage* (GMEU). Bryan is the founder and president of LawProse Inc. and serves as a Distinguished Research Professor of Law at Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law.

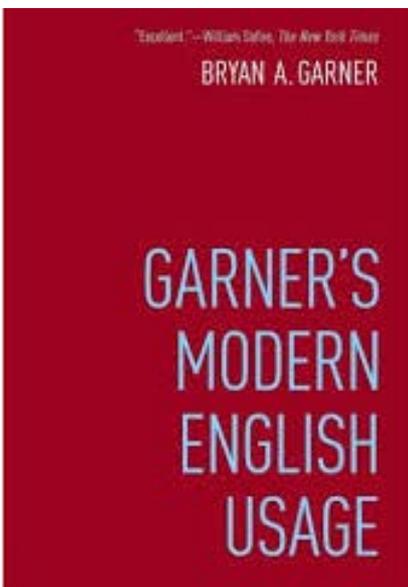
In *Making Peace in the Language Wars*, an essay that Garner has included in GMEU, he describes himself as

‘... a prescriber who uses descriptivist methods—in effect a descriptive prescriber. I don’t doubt the value of descriptive linguistics—up to the point at which describers dogmatically refuse to acknowledge the value of prescriptivism. Each side in this age-old debate should acknowledge the value of the other.’

In the same essay, Garner quotes DJ Enright’s suggestion on relabelling prescriptivism: ‘... And since prescriptivism is the only brake we have on the accelerating spread of chaos, let’s find another name for it, one less reminiscent of the National Health Service.’ Rather than trying to *relabel* this class, Garner reminds us of, and discusses, the three fundamental principles that may aid *reconcile* the two schools of thought:

1. Linguistically, both speech and writing matter.
2. Writing well is a hard-won skill that involves learning conventions.
3. It’s possible to formulate practical advice on grammar and usage.

GMEU certainly helps with all the three principles if one can ignore the two classes—or any of their labels—and try to write well and clearly.



## Author's approach in GMEU

Garner takes an empirical approach by calculating ratios of word-usage frequencies and phrase frequencies in World English and its two major subtypes, American and British English. He presents this collected information after researching the largest database of English-language literature printed globally until 2008, and made available through the [Google Ngram Viewer](#). The Viewer shows graphs of the relative frequency of specified words or contextualised word sequences—used as search terms within a selected corpus of the English literature—and compares them with variant word sequences or variant usages. Thus, Garner eliminates the guesswork on word-usage frequencies or trends by using the powerful tool of a big database and revolutionises English lexicography in a way that would have been unfathomed and uncharted by lexicographers in the past.

In the book, Garner uses real-life published examples—and cites their chapters and verses—of all imaginable blunders that a modern English writer or speaker is likely to make, whether in vocabulary, spelling, syntax, phrasing, punctuation, or pronunciation.

Along with usage frequency ratios, Garner still keeps the [Language-Change Index](#), which he introduced in the third edition of *Garner's Modern American Usage*. According to this index, a specific word usage in Stage 1 is rejected; Stage 2, widely shunned; Stage 3, widespread but ... ; Stage 4, ubiquitous but ... ; and Stage 5, fully accepted. To clarify the Change Index more, in the fourth edition, Garner provides ten 'serviceable analogies' to 'help readers envision the levels of acceptability intended to be conveyed by the idea of stages'. I would like to share the Olfaction and Etiquette analogies here:

- Stage 1, Foul; Stage 2, Malodorous; Stage 3, Smelly; Stage 4, Vaguely odorous; Stage 5, Neutral
- Stage 1, Audible flatulence; Stage 2, Audible belching; Stage 3, Overloud talking; Stage 4, Elbows on table; Stage 5, Refined.

Garner describes and discusses the Stages of verbal change in his second enlightening essay, *The Ongoing Tumult in English Usage*—which he ends by writing, 'It's sad, of course, to know that many teachers have given up the idea that they should teach good English. But the proliferation of error can definitely be the source of a perverse joy. Let there be no doubt about that. Or about the fact that not everyone is incorrigible.'

## About the book

*GMEU* trails as the fourth edition of *Garner's Modern American Usage*, but renamed this time. As Garner explains in the *Preface to the Fourth Edition*, the Oxford University Press decided to rename the book, using *English* instead of *American* based on the inclusive approach of GMEU to World English rather than merely American, British, or other variants thereof.

To start with (and to show how useful GMEU can be—is), the front pastedown endpaper of the book presents a handy *Quick Editorial Guide* that lists 100 common editorial quirks or 'comments' that an editor would most likely make. This *Quick Editorial Guide* allows an editor (or a teacher) to save time when commenting on or marking text by referring an author (or a student) to those GMEU sections that provide relevant editorial explanations. For example:

- item 6 discusses 'Apostrophe misused', pp. 704, 705, 747
- item 33 discusses '*Historic & historical*', p. 464
- item 64, 'Phrasal adjective—hyphenate', pp. 690–93
- item 74 discusses the misuse '*reason is because*' on pp. 770–71
- item 86, 'Subject–verb agreement' on pp. 195, 866–68
- item 92, '*Their & they're & there*'
- item 99, 'Zombie noun', p. 983.

To make use of the Guide, the editor (teacher) and author (student) should both own copies of the book or have access to it.

## DISCOUNTED AMOSS ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION FOR CSE MEMBERS

In the last edition of *The Canberra editor* for 2016, CSE members were told to watch their broadcast emails for advice on a **DISCOUNT CODE** to use when subscribing to the Biotext science writing and editing resource, the *Australian Manual of Scientific Style* (AMOSS). (Members were given that code in a CSE broadcast email in December 2016.)

At that time, we advised that Biotext expected to issue a new discount code for CSE subscriptions in 2017.

Biotext has now advised that the 2016 discount code for CSE will continue to apply in 2017.

Given the influx of new CSE members since December, we have decided to re-send the code in a new broadcast email. Watch 'that' space!

**Alan Cummine**  
Immediate Past President

With more than 1000 pages, GMEU has more than a thousand new entries, more than 2300 word-frequency ratios and over 6000 entries. GMEU's main text comprises essentially two types of entries: word entries—which discuss usage of certain words or certain sets of words and provides frequency ratios or change indices, and mini-essays—which deal with important issues of lexical usage, style or others. Mini-essay titles appear as small capitals throughout the book, so they can easily catch one's eyes while browsing to find out the answer to something else—one can never get enough of any single page of GMEU. Titles of some mini-essays, which I found interesting in my skimming of the book, include:

- AIRLINESE, which 'relies heavily on DOUBLESPEAK, with a heavy dose of ZOMBIE NOUNS ...'
- CANNIBALISM, which is 'H.W. Fowler's term for constructions in which certain words "devour their own kind" ...'
- FUDGE WORDS, which will eventually cause readers' 'energy and attention' to wane or 'fly away'
- GALLICISMS, whereby you'd hit a *cul-de-sac peu à peu sans* stopping
- HYPERCORRECTIONS, which means *between you and I, apparati* is correct ...
- OFFICIALESE, 'characterized by bureaucratic turgidity and insubstantial fustian; inflated language that could be readily translated into simpler terms.'
- POSTPOSITIVE ADJECTIVES, which 'follow the nouns they modify, generally because they follow Romance rather than Germanic (or English) syntax'
- PREVENTIVE GRAMMAR, which advises a rewrite in most cases
- SKUNKED TERMS, 'when a word undergoes a marked change from one use to another'
- ZEUGMA, 'This figure of speech ... involves a word's being a part of two constructions', perhaps like working in two construction zones at once
- ZOMBIE NOUNS, which are (I would say *fatigued* or *fatiguing*) nominalised verbs.

After the main body of the text, a 52-page *Glossary of Grammatical, Rhetorical, and Other Language-Related Terms* is included. Each page of the glossary offers something new to me.

After the glossary, GMEU presents *A Timeline of Books on Usage*, another interesting reference list for lexicographers and researchers—and novices like me. List of *Select Bibliography* at the end refers to books on English usage, grammar, writing style, style manuals, etymology, literary terms, pronunciation, and the English language.

### Verdict

Well ..., I can perhaps describe what is in the book and use a classical megaphone to say, 'GMEU is immensely useful', but I can't do fair justice to the book and Garner himself any better than a previously published praise:

[goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com) writes, 'GMEU is the liveliest and most compulsively readable reference work for writers of our time. It delights while providing instruction on skilful, persuasive, and vivid writing. Garner liberates English from two extremes: both from the hidebound "purists" who mistakenly believe that split infinitives and sentence-ending prepositions are malfeasances and from the linguistic relativists who believe that whatever people say or write must necessarily be accepted.'

'No matter how knowledgeable you may already be, you're sure to learn from every single page of this book.'

And, I experienced the same firsthand while I reviewed this book. When I opened to any page of GMEU, I was deeply attracted, absorbed, and enthralled. Brilliantly, entertainingly, and winningly written, GMEU covers everything a writer, an editor, or a logophile or lexophile would need to, or love to, look up: lexical usage, grammar, punctuation, pronunciation. I emphatically recommend GMEU to all CSE members. I'm sure your bookshelf, too, will be proud to hold it neighbouring your other reference books, but GMEU perhaps stands a few storeys higher than the others. Enjoy owning and using it.

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## Word from the Western Front

**John Linnegar**

CSE member studying in Belgium  
Photographer: Michael Hartwigsen.

The last months of 2016 and the first quarter of 2017 have been a particularly active time for professional editors, interpreters and translators here in Western Europe. The SENSE SIGS, active as ever, held their regular meetings around the Netherlands and SENSE staged its annual Professional Development Day, hosted an international guest speaker and put on a year-end dinner. Besides its Summer Workshop series, SENSE staged its 11th annual autumn conference, METM16. This took brief pride of place on the shores of the Spanish Mediterranean in beautiful Tarragona, from 13 to 15 October.

The new year has in turn begun with a vengeance, with proactive moves towards greater intersociety liaison in this part of the world (for starters) as the heads of MET, SENSE and the Institute of Translators and Interpreters (ITI) in the UK emerged from hibernation for a weekend summit in February, the SENSE UniSIG held a lively session on plagiarism in academic writing, the first stirrings of Conference 2018 were felt, and the society held its AGM on 25 March.

### SENSE-ationally busy

For SENSE members, a lively Professional Development Day was staged in Utrecht. The September day's program focused on starting/running a freelance business and marketing one's service offering. It's now slated to be a biennial event aimed at advancing professionalism among members and attracting prospective practitioners.

### A foretaste of Cargill

Having discovered that Australian researcher–author Margaret Cargill would be a keynote speaker at METM16—her special subject area is the collaboration between academic authors, their supervisors and editors of their texts—SENSE twisted her arm to make a detour via Utrecht on 7 October to give the annual free lecture. She gave us a foretaste of her conference topic, 'Ethics, editing and education in academic publishing: What is needed to enhance mutual understanding of intersecting roles, responsibilities and practices?'. The interactive gathering enjoyed both Margaret's content and her engaging presentation style. Those members who attended the METM16 conference were to enjoy the benefit of a welcome 'second helping' of Adelaidian Margaret there.

What would a professional body be without its social activities? On Sunday, 27 November, SENSE held its annual dinner for members—a *feestje* that began with a *borrel* and a few *hapjes* and ended with entertainment by a world-renowned illusionist.

### SIGs for all seasons

The ins and outs of financial and legal editing are the concern of the FinlegSIG, and both this Amsterdam-based group and the Translation SIG in Utrecht held their final meetings of the year at this time.



The EduSIG—whose special interest is teaching (English) language—held its last meeting for 2016 on 3 December, offering a double bill. The topics were ‘the use of the Correspondence, Consistency, Correctness (CCC) model to empower students to self-edit and improve their writing’, on the one hand, and ‘how to motivate and inspire students through one’s approach to teaching and learning’. As diverse as these two topics may seem, there were several strong connections that led to lively interactions around the room.

### The strides of March

March has seen a flurry of SENSE activity—is spring busting out all over?—on the 10th, the UniSIG held its meeting on the reasons for plagiarism in student writing and the software and sanctions to deal with it; six days later, the planning committee for Conference 2018 held an afternoon brainstorming-cum-planning session and the society’s AGM took place on the 25th. An important new item on the agenda was the presentation of the executive committee’s strategic plan for the coming three years, which features a strong outreach thrust largely driven by a vigorous social media presence.

### METM16 Annual Conference in Tarragona

Themed ‘Raising standards through knowledge sharing and peer training’, METM16 was a cracker of a conference, MET’s eleventh, and the best attended yet! Day 1 was an encrustation of wall-to-wall workshops, ranging from keyboard shortcuts and effective paragraphing to translating contracts into English and running effective conference workshops on writing scientific articles: truly something for everyone.

Naturally, exploiting social media and other technologies for online communicating, training, translating and editing featured prominently on both days of the conference program. But familiar topics were also dealt with in new ways.

Panel discussions included topics as diverse as the degree of editorial intervention in articles destined for publication (‘Bridging the gap or a bridge too far?’) and glimpses into the future of professional associations such as ours (‘Ways forward for professional associations and communities of practice in knowledge sharing and peer training’).

### Plenaries with pizzazz

This year’s plenary speakers in the utterly memorable Sala d’Actes of ‘El Seminari’ in the ancient city were ‘new worlders’ Margaret Cargill and Mary Norris. Margaret runs a consultancy in Australia called ‘SciWriting: Communicating science effectively in English’, a theme her talk echoed. From America, the ‘Comma Queen’ spoke on ‘*New Yorker* style: the major arcana’. They were both about as delightful, punchy and insightful as



presenters get. Mary's understated style of letting her audience in on the quirkiness of life as an editor at that American institution had us thoroughly entertained.

The formal conference presentations stretched over two days, but the programme spilled over into a feature that must be unique to MET: the off-MET informal after-hours activities, which this year ranged from pairing the terminology of wine with a tasting of cultivars, a 'translation slam' in which two experienced translators took on the job of comparing notes on a literary translation in front of an audience (!) and loads of networking while out jogging or strolling, to informal discussions on topics as varied as 'Freelancing parents—the ideal lifestyle?', 'There's more to social media than gossip' and 'Learning to say "no"'.

### **A bovine, an ovine and a porcine walked into the EU**

For this attendee, the (unintended) light relief on the program that preceded the General Assembly (or AGM) undoubtedly came in the form of an insider's presentation, 'Misused English in EU publications' ('abused English' would have been a more fitting term). Speaker Jeremy Gardner had us rolling in the aisles over the nonsensical EU-speak concocted for publications from otherwise perfect everyday words (e.g. 'financial envelope' for a budget, non-existent words such as 'planification', the use of 'to precise' to mean 'to specify', common animal names being replaced with 'Latin' forms, and so on).

### **Moves towards closer intersociety liaison**

An important spinoff of this event, the conference theme and some of the sessions, together with moves by SENSE to promote intersociety liaison, was the decision by the heads of MET, SENSE and ITI to start collaborating more closely, to the benefit of their respective members. This truly was a conference of knowledge sharing and peer training at their enthralling and enriching best—a highlight of 2016 without doubt.

And with the ensuing tripartite summit held in Barberà, Spain, in mid-February, METM16 has really borne ample fruit for the members of the three bodies.

Dates to diarise:

- SfEP 28th annual conference, Bedfordshire, 16–18 September 2017
- METM17 annual conference, Brescia, Italy, 26–28 October 2017
- ISMTE/EASE 10th annual conference, London, 9–10 November 2017
- SENSE biennial conference, the Netherlands, June 2018 (venue and date to be announced shortly)



# COMICAL COLLECTIONS

Here's more chuckle-fodder based on clever word-play. As usual, it arrived in my inbox courtesy of my literate garbo mate in Harden-Murrumburrah—mid-2016. (Be warned, I have a folder groaning with this stuff!)

This time it comprises some of the most prized gems from American stand-up comedian, Steven Wright. Wikipedia describes him as 'known for his distinctly lethargic voice and slow, **deadpan** delivery of ironic, **philosophical**, and sometimes nonsense **jokes**, **paraprosdokians** [remember them?], **non sequiturs**, anti-humor, and **one-liners** with contrived situations'.

Some of these may have turned up in earlier 'Comical Collections'. But at least now we know the 'author'!

Enjoy. They made me laugh.

**Alan Cummine**

Immediate Past President

I'd kill for a Nobel Peace Prize.

Borrow money from pessimists—  
they don't expect it back.

Half the people you know are  
below average.

99% of lawyers give the rest a bad  
name.

82.7% of all statistics are made up  
on the spot.

A conscience is what hurts when all  
your other parts feel so good.

I almost had a psychic girlfriend ...  
but she left me before we met.

OK, so what's the speed of dark?

How do you tell when you're out of  
invisible ink?

If everything seems to be  
going well, you have obviously  
overlooked something.

Eagles may soar, but weasels don't  
get sucked into jet engines.

What happens if you get scared  
half to death twice?

My mechanic told me, "I couldn't  
repair your brakes, so I made  
your horn louder".

Why do psychics have to ask you  
for your name?

To steal ideas from one person is  
plagiarism; to steal from many  
is research.

The problem with the gene pool is  
that there is no lifeguard.

The sooner you fall behind, the  
more time you'll have to catch  
up.

The colder the x-ray table, the  
more of your body is required  
to be on it.

A clear conscience is usually the  
sign of a bad memory.

If you want the rainbow, you have  
got to put up with the rain.

All those who believe in  
psychokinesis, raise my hand.

The early bird may get the worm,  
but the second mouse gets the  
cheese.

When everything is coming your  
way, you're in the wrong lane.

Ambition is a poor excuse for not  
having enough sense to be lazy.

Hard work pays off in the future;  
laziness pays off now.

I intend to live forever. So far, so  
good.

If Barbie is so popular, why do you  
have to buy her friends?

If at first you don't succeed,  
destroy all evidence that you  
tried.

A conclusion is the place where you  
got tired of thinking.

Experience is something you don't  
get until just after you need it.

The hardness of the butter is  
proportional to the softness of  
the bread.

Everyone has a photographic  
memory; some just don't have  
film.

If at first you don't succeed,  
skydiving is not for you.

If your car could travel at the  
speed of light, would your  
headlights work?

Support bacteria—they're the only  
culture some people have.

My theory of evolution is that  
Darwin was adopted.

Shin: a device for finding furniture  
in the dark.

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THE CANBERRA

# editor

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The editor welcomes contributions by email: [newsletter@editorscanberra.org](mailto:newsletter@editorscanberra.org).

All articles must be in .doc format.