



# Conference 2022

Editing in a diverse world

Saturday 10 to Monday 12 September 2022  
Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes, and online



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The Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading (CIEP) is a non-profit body promoting excellence in English language editing. We set and demonstrate editorial standards, and we are a community, training hub and support network for editorial professionals – the people who work to make text accurate, clear and fit for purpose.

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## **#CIEP2022**

This year's CIEP conference was a hybrid conference, from 10 to 12 September. Attendees from all over the world logged on or travelled to Milton Keynes to learn and socialise with their fellow editors and proofreaders, and a number of delegates kindly volunteered to write up the sessions for us.

## Saturday 10 September

CIEP 2022 delegates mixed and mingled by taking part in a bunch of events, which included a pre-conference tour, speed networking, a #StetWalk, Run On run and various informal social activities topped off with the post-dinner quiz.

First-timers were invited to pre-dinner drinks to meet members of the Council and were welcomed with some comforting words from the CIEP chair Hugh Jackson.



### Welcome remarks for first-timers

CIEP chair Hugh Jackson

I've been thinking about it and there are lots of different reasons why you're in this room right now.

Perhaps you've been a member for a little while and this is the first time you've been able to come to conference. Perhaps you've been an editor for some time and you've only recently joined the CIEP. But I suspect quite a few of you are brand-new editors who've launched a career or changed a career or struck out on your own in the middle of what is already being euphemistically called a 'difficult time'.

The truth is, however you've got here, you already have the respect and admiration of everyone else. You've done something remarkable,

extraordinary – and brave. You will be rewarded richly for your braveness, I promise you! After the first little bit of time as a freelancer, or in a new editing job, the scariness will fade but the joy will carry on – that never leaves. As for this conference – we've all been there – no matter how scary the first one is, I can guarantee you that you'll leave with new friends, new confidence, new understanding.

At its heart, that's what the CIEP is all about. I hope very much that you will come to call this your home in the profession, and that you will have many more wonderful conferences in towns just as exotic and exciting. We'll do our very best to help you on your journeys.



# Sunday 11 September

CIEP chair Hugh Jackson opened the 2022 conference with a true-to-form moving speech that saw many of us fumbling for a tissue.



## Opening remarks

### CIEP chair Hugh Jackson

Hello. I'm Hugh Jackson and I'm the chair of the CIEP ... and this was an awful lot easier when it was being broadcast from the comfort of my own study.

Welcome to conference! I am of course so very pleased that you could be here. To see the crowds and hear the laughter, to shake hands again and simply be with each other, that's almost overwhelming. But we always knew that we'd be here again. Very little can keep editors away from a decent coffee maker. This is already shaping up to be a wonderful conference, filled with new ideas and, of course, renewed life.

It feels like a very long time indeed. We last met in person in Birmingham in 2019. Before the war in Ukraine, before the pandemic, before Brexit. What a different world. If only we'd known then how long we'd be kept apart. And, of course, it won't surprise you to hear that I've had to rewrite a lot of this speech even in the last couple of days. I'm afraid there are fewer jokes, but anyone who's heard my jokes may well be relieved by that.

After the last three years, every new crisis has felt, as Evelyn Waugh wrote, like:

a blow, expected, repeated, falling on a bruise, with no smart or shock of surprise, only a dull pain and the doubt whether another like it could be borne.

It feels awfully like we've suffered more than our fair share of blows upon bruises just lately. When we were together last, my predecessor announced to well-deserved rejoicing that the Queen had granted us a Royal Charter. Three years ago. To stand before you now in the immediate aftermath of Her Majesty's death is a heartbreak. But I will talk a little more about that at another time.

For now, the rejoicing can be that we are together again, thanks to exceptional efforts by Beth, the conference team and the office staff, and my wonderful colleagues on the Council. I also want to thank Kents Hill Park. I'm sure they're used to people turning up later than expected, but we are now *two years* late checking in, so thank you for having us.

When I spoke to you last year, I promised that we would once again meet in person, but I said that we would have to find a way to do so as one body, moving forward together and leaving nobody behind.

We are better when we are one.

Alongside the in-person delegates, around two hundred are joining us through cables and satellites from every part of the UK and the world, right through the lenses of the cameras that are now part of our conference landscape.

We are one professional body, and no matter which way we come to conference, we can proudly say that we are members of the same community, striving *together* to achieve ever greater things, to learn more, to understand more, to do better for the authors and words we care about.

I can't deny that we have lost so much over the past few years. We've lost people we love, we've lost relationships, we've lost work, and ways of working that we've become used to.

Many of us have also lost our precious personal space, or our peace and quiet, as spouses and children and roommates have crowded back into our homes, milling around aimlessly and raiding the fridge and generally getting in our way.

More abstractly, we've lost a rather complacent trust that things will just carry on getting better because all at once and without warning the storms poured down and tore up the stones that over the years we'd so carefully laid in their right places.

We've occasionally lost our confidence. We've certainly lost faith in the people who lead us. We've lost our cool, and sometimes even our tempers.

The road ahead has been unpaved and unclear.

But that has to change.

For too long now we've felt lost.

For too long we've felt tired.

We've had to pretend to be brave for so long that it hurts.

But it is darkest just before the dawn.

I don't want to talk about what we've lost. What haven't we lost?

We never lost hope. Not even when we doubted whether we could bear another blow upon the bruise.

We haven't lost our heads, or our way, or our focus. We didn't lose our courage to stand up for what was right and fair and decent.

And we never, ever lost our compassion.

In our spaces and indeed in every space populated by editors, kindness has fallen like rain.

And it's washed me away.

We are better when we are one.

This community is a perpetual source of inspiration and comfort, more than we ever thought possible before that was what we needed it to be.

You've reminded me, every day, that kindness is not a vice, and compassion not a weakness.

It goes to the very core of our humanity, and, as professionals, particularly in our field and with the blurry lines between our personal and professional lives that so many of us enjoy – or suffer – our humanity isn't something to be overcome, something to be locked away during office hours and brought out when convenient. It's part of who we are, why we do what we do, and it's among the many skills that we bring to bear on our own work and for which we are rewarded.

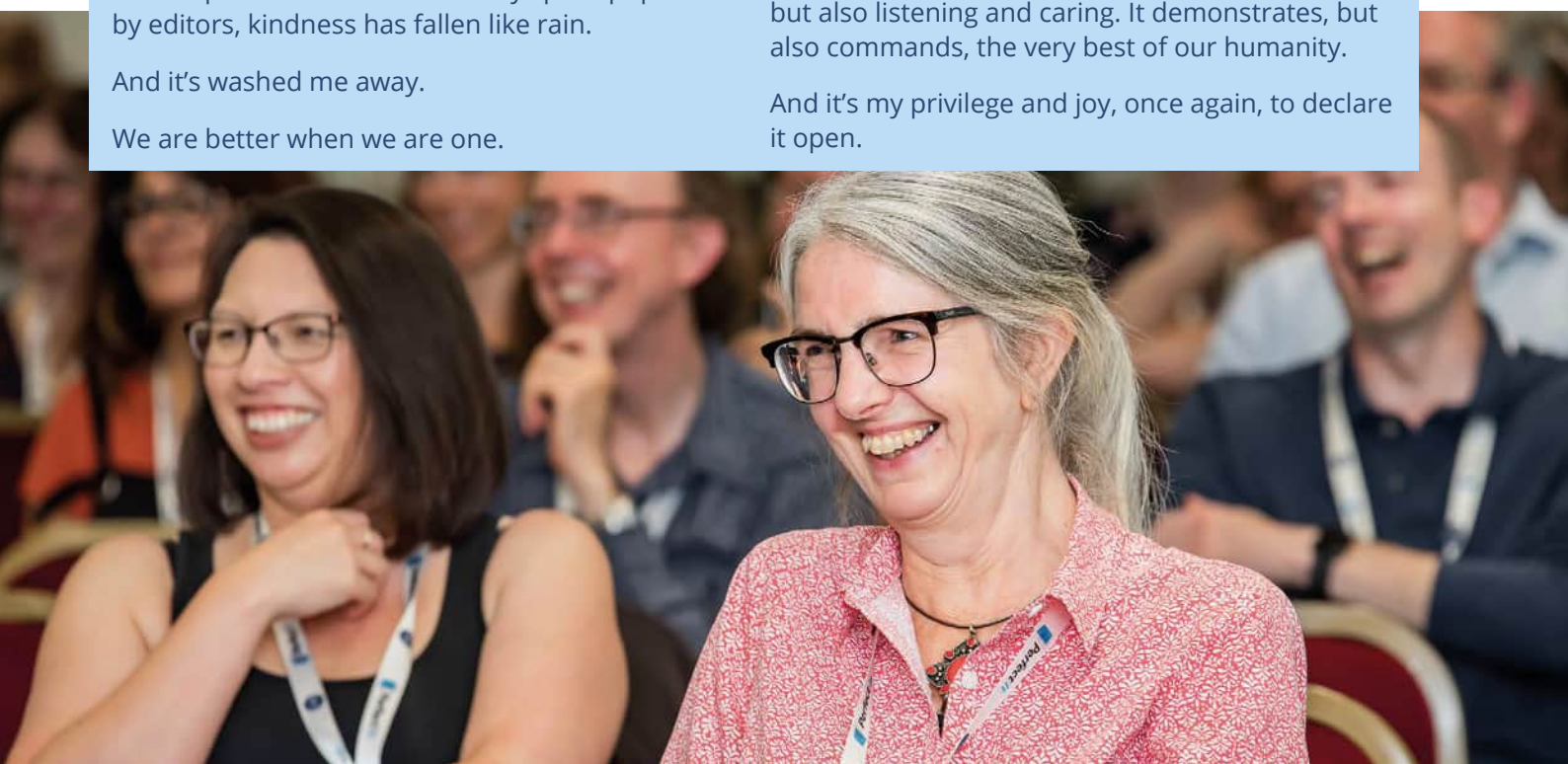
This isn't a time to retreat, to shy away from what is hard and right.

Yes, these are hard times. They may get harder still. And, yes, to get through them we are going to have to draw on our reserves of humanity. But what the last three years have shown is that those reserves are deep, and our capacity to care virtually limitless.

And so, thank you, for being there.

And thank you, too, from the bottom of my heart, for being *here*. Conference is about people as much as it is about words. It is connections. It's ambition and inspiration. It's laughter and chatter but also listening and caring. It demonstrates, but also commands, the very best of our humanity.

And it's my privilege and joy, once again, to declare it open.







## Whitcombe Lecture 2022

Speaker: Katherine May

Reviewer: Geoff Poundes

We found ourselves thrown together first thing on a Sunday morning – under the conference title **Editing in a diverse world** – to hear the excellent Katherine May's Whitcombe Lecture, which proved to be not only thoroughly enlightening but also acutely apposite.

For the unaware, Katherine is an internationally best-selling author and podcaster whose hybrid memoir *Wintering: The power of rest and retreat in difficult times* became a *New York Times* and *Sunday Times* best-seller and was shortlisted for the Barnes & Noble Book of the Year. Her other works include *The Electricity of Every Living Thing*, her memoir of a midlife autism diagnosis, and the novel *The Whitstable High Tide Swimming Club*. Her next book, *Enchantment*, is due to be published in 2023.

Katherine invited us to join her on a metaphor-laden return to the South West Coast Path that formed the backdrop to her journey of self-discovery in *Electricity*: 'a difficult craggy and bloody-minded route which exhibits a wilful refusal to provide any kind of a shortcut even where it's obvious that any sane person would take one'.

Veering between 'popcorn brain', when her creativity was at its height, and a 'velvety and luxuriant' silence as she stumbled across the difficult terrain, Katherine found the experience profoundly transformative – rousing 'the boundaries of myself to dissolve' and 'imagine a new self when the time came'.

The arrival of that new 'self', a startling recognition of her own autism, exploded in, of all places, her car. It was prompted by a Radio 4 interview during which an interviewee talked about a 'sense of otherness' that Katherine immediately recognised in herself.

Katherine attributed this epiphany to the cathartic process of her journey: 'It was the walk that primed me and cracked me open ...' Her subsequent attempts at making sense of her diagnosis were as treacherous as

the walk itself – from 'novels in which autistic people are hopeless naifs, or cold calculators, or violent abusers' to depictions of autistic mothers 'incapable of love'.

Katherine drew comparisons between her own awakening and that of a society adjusting to notions of 'wokeness'. Prompted by interactions with a man on a train insisting that we're all 'living in a simulacrum and Joe Biden is a robot' to the midlife crises that have turned friends into triathletes and her father into a PhD student of 17th-century mercantile culture, she turned to her own writing to bemoan the fact that 'we are the deep-bone tired of people who no longer feel at home'.

Concluding, Katherine related the tortuous experience of having *Electricity* published in the United States, where truth and subtlety and nuance have floundered in the face of Trumpism (my words, not hers): 'I was patronised; I was spoken down to; I was lied to sometimes by editors who assumed that I did not have the mental capacity that they did.'

She ended on an optimistic note, reading from her own introduction to *Electricity*: 'When I imagine us [those she invites us to consider as presenting with ASC – Autism Spectrum Condition] I think of a constellation instead, or perhaps a galaxy. Millions of different stars shining, each expressing their fire in a different way.'



**Geoff Poundes** is a professional editor, proofreader and publisher. After a successful 20-year career in business, he obtained a BA (Hons) in literature and turned to writing and editing. For two years he was chief editor for Electronic Sports Media, while also contributing articles to business and sports publications. He published his first novel, *The Religion of Birds*, in 2016.

## Session 1: Workshops/longer seminars

### Development editing romantic fiction

**Presenter: Sarah Calfee**

*Reviewer: Manda Waller*

I'm a romance and women's fiction copyeditor and have been thinking for some time about adding development editing to my (not extensive) suite of services. Imagine my surprise and delight when the planets aligned, and the CIEP 2022 conference offered a session entitled **Development editing romantic fiction** with Sarah Calfee. Now I was even more excited to be heading to Milton Keynes.

The first thing I'll say about Sarah's excellent session is *Woah!* – so much information! Although I attended the session in person, I also watched the replay so I could pause it to drill deeper into her words (and not just to use the loo/answer the door/clear up the dog vomit).

#### *An uncontroversial question*

Sarah started the session with an uncontroversial question: 'What is the best romance novel ever written?' (*Pride and Prejudice*, obv.) And she proceeded to use that novel to demonstrate the beats necessary to ensure a successful romance novel.

It goes without saying that in a romance novel the interplay between the main protagonists needs to be carefully woven to create an engaging story. Not only this, but the two main characters also both need their own (separate) positive character arcs. Romance readers expect certain beats, and without them they will be disappointed. To qualify as a romance novel, it either needs to end with a Happy Ever After (HEA) or a Happy For Now (HFN). Marketing a book as a romance novel and not giving it either an HEA or an HFN will result in bad reviews and low sales.

#### *It's all about the beats*

Sarah explained how there are four main types of beats:

- the set-up beats
- the falling-in-love beats
- the retreating-from-love beats
- the fighting-for-love beats.

On top of this, each of the main characters needs to have:

- a goal (Darcy: marry a woman of wealth)
- a motivation (Darcy: upholding the superiority of his family)
- and a conflict or flaw that's initially stopping them from achieving this (Darcy: pride and the fact that he's attracted to a woman with low connections and an embarrassing family).

Without these beats, it's likely that a romance novel will result in a Did Not Finish (DNF).

Effectively there are at least three stories going on: the love story and the journey of the two (or more) main protagonists from a place of conflict to a place of resolution.

As you can probably tell by now, meeting the requirements of a romance novel is *not* an easy thing to achieve!

#### *Prejudice*

As a romance editor, I am constantly coming up against prejudice. Romance novels are perceived as being somehow less credible than those of other genres. They are perceived as being easier to write. And easier to edit.

In support of this prejudice, Reedsy recently reviewed **average freelancer development editing rates**, and broke this down by genre. And yes, you guessed it. Romance editors earn the least.

Given what we learned during Sarah's session, we need to overturn this prejudice. Clearly, writing (and editing) a successful romance novel is harder than it seems!



**Manda Waller** is a fiction editor living in a hamlet in the heart of Winnie-the-Pooh country (deepest, darkest Sussex, England). She works primarily with indie women's fiction authors. When not editing, you'll find her taxiing around her three teenage daughters, vegetable gardening (badly) and looking after her two black Labradors and five rescue chickens. Manda is a Professional Member of the CIEP.

## Live proofreading

**Presenter: Ian Howe**

*Reviewer: Claire Langford*

**Live proofreading** did exactly what it said on the tin. We looked at three types of document – Word, PDF and a hard-copy proof – and the different ways of marking these up. An initial poll established that there was a mixture of experience among those attending the session, and the hope was that we could learn from each other's ways of working.

First things first. We looked at 'what is a proofread?' and how it is important to clarify what a client is expecting from a proofread. Assuming that the work is a proofread rather than an edit, the focus should be on leaving good enough alone. Ian urged us to 'think like a proofreader, not like an editor' and to avoid imposing our own style and preferences when proofreading. He pointed out that the client is unlikely to be happy receiving reams of queries and suggested that we should trust the author to be right most of the time. It was good to hear that, as a proofreader, you shouldn't be checking the facts (unless specifically asked to do so).

We then looked at a Word document and the use of Track Changes. We discussed the tasks that should be carried out prior to a proofread (such as running macros and sorting the spacing) and the importance of making diligent use of the tools that work for you. Ian advised not to trust Word completely when it highlights errors and recommended removing any spaces before paragraph breaks as the proofreader's job is to make the text as clean as possible for publication.

When proofreading in Word, you make live changes to the document, whereas with a PDF you can only mark up the changes (to be made by someone else). We discussed how changes to a PDF, being listed in the Comments panel, are easy to spot. This means that you can mark up a single letter within a word without worry that the change will be missed. Three tips for using PDF markup tools were: to use the Text Callout tool to highlight any double spaces; to use alt codes for clarity in instructions to the typesetter; and to put any explanatory comments in the Reply box rather than in the Comment box itself.



The technology gods were not smiling on this session, and it was 15 minutes before Ian declared, 'We have lift off!' We therefore didn't have long to spend on hard-copy proofreading; however, Ian did make a point of singing the praises of BSI symbols, which have evolved over time and are generally the clearest and most economical way of showing a change.

Following this session, I will definitely give more consideration to how much editorial input a text has had before I start proofreading it and to where I am in the workflow. It was good to be reminded of the importance of having a proofreader's mindset, not an editor's, and to ask oneself, 'What is my remit to intervene in this text?'

One final piece of advice was not to fear error-free pages. I will certainly bear this in mind the next time I'm panicking that (a) I've missed something and (b) I'm not giving my client their money's worth.



**Claire Langford** works in-house as the senior proofreader for Link Group, a financial services company. Prior to becoming a proofreader, she worked in the travel industry for 14 years. She is a Professional Member of the CIEP and lives in Exeter with her husband and her spaniel, Milly.

## Non-fiction developmental editing

**Presenter: Claire Beveridge**

*Reviewer: Nadine Catto*

Many non-fiction editors have searched for more information about developmental editing and drawn a blank. There is training for developmental fiction editors, so why not for non-fiction? It was therefore with great enthusiasm that I attended Claire Beveridge's **Non-fiction developmental editing** workshop at CIEP 2022. The packed room was evidence of the appetite for more knowledge. I was excited to learn more.

Claire explained what developmental editing is, what it involves and how to approach it, and her session included group work on examples.

Developmental editing is big-picture work, and the main things you need to consider are content, structure, clarity, tone and flow. The main purpose of developmental editing, as with all editing stages, is to help an author clarify their message to the intended audience. There's a wealth of texts for developmental editors to work on: trade non-fiction, instruction manuals, financial statements, guides, academic and educational resources, research papers and web content.

In a developmental edit, the editor needs to consider the content – what the central argument or key point of the text is – and to analyse whether that is clear as the book progresses. Claire recommended making a list outlining every time the subject changes and the page number. Then review the list. Which subject is covered most? Follow this review with a close inspection of the structure: does each paragraph have one subject in it? Do the transitions lead the reader smoothly from one point to the next? Is the order of subjects logical and is it clear how one connects to the next? Is the tone consistent throughout and appropriate to the audience? Think about clarity – is the language too simplistic or is there too much jargon?

When working as a developmental editor, whether directly for authors or with publishers, it's important to get to know the motivations, needs and drives behind the manuscript. Developmental editing needs a three-way collaborative approach between publisher, author and editor. It's a long-term relationship, and Claire pointed out that sometimes an editor can spend more time on people skills than actually editing! The work can be intellectually engaging, satisfying and potentially lucrative.



I was surprised to discover that, in Claire's experience, there is a significant overlap between tasks that I had assumed were done by the commissioning editor and those of the developmental editor. These tasks, such as liaising with the marketing team, researching potential titles and putting together content outlines and competitor analysis, can fall in the developmental editor's remit.

We then broke into groups to see how these considerations work in practice and discussed three exercises that had been provided in advance: a marketing brochure for a family holiday park, an extract from a book written for people with sleep apnoea and an introduction to a practical guide to personal finance. We had an enjoyable discussion about whether the text was fit for purpose (it wasn't!), and we made constructive suggestions for restructuring.

Having got a taste for developmental editing, I was keen to know where I could get more training, but unfortunately there doesn't really seem to be much out there. Given the obvious enthusiasm, hopefully it's something that will change in the future. In the meantime, it is possible to volunteer to work with publishers to put forward ideas and critiques, or even to ask for mentoring. Claire has also set up a Facebook group, which aims to provide a supportive community for non-fiction editors, called the Non-fiction Editors' Support Group.



**Nadine Catto** is a Professional Member of the CIEP. She edits and proofreads general non-fiction. She is a qualified lawyer who worked in-house for a legal publisher for eight years. Nadine is an advocate for plain English in legal writing and also edits articles, how-to guides and books for legal content providers and publishers. You can also find her on [LinkedIn](#).

## Building a conscious language style in PerfectIt

**Presenters: Daniel Heuman and Sofia Matias**

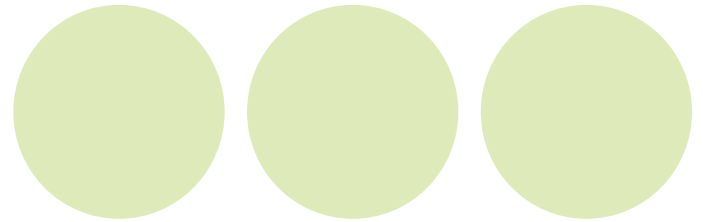
*Reviewer: Lisa Robertson*

I've always been a bit of a point-and-click photographer – never changing the settings or learning what I can really do with my camera. I was always a bit like that with PerfectIt, too – just selecting the UK Spelling style sheet and pressing Start.

Then earlier this year, I took on a new client, proofreading a monthly magazine for a health-related member organisation. They gave me the beginnings of a style guide, which included a section on 'How to describe people'. This covered things like saying 'older people' instead of 'the elderly' and 'people with diabetes' instead of 'people suffering from diabetes'. Having watched Daniel's PerfectIt session at the 2020 online CIEP conference, I started to experiment, adding various *Phrases to avoid/consider* from this new client's style guide into my usual PerfectIt style sheet. I've done this for a few issues now, and it has definitely flagged things that I wouldn't normally have paused at in a basic proofread. So, could I take it further? That's what I wanted to find out from this session.

My question was answered immediately when Sofia introduced the conscious language style sheet she has created for PerfectIt. Using a variety of credible sources covering a broad spectrum of historically excluded communities, she has created a huge bank of *Phrases to avoid/consider* and made it into a free, downloadable **conscious language style sheet**. She set this in the context of what conscious language means, giving examples of recent media cases where writers have unintentionally used words that may be harmful to some, or have made assumptions about their audience through the words they have used.

Daniel then took the reins and got into the nitty gritty of how this works in PerfectIt. Using *Manage Styles > Import* within PerfectIt, he imported the latest version of Sofia's style sheet, which he had already downloaded. He then ran it on an example document, which flagged terms like 'elderly' and 'handicapped'. The beauty of PerfectIt is that with each flag you can



pause and consider the word or phrase within its context. Just as you might want to hyphenate 'catch-up' in some cases but not others, not all incidences of the words 'poor' or 'black' will be inappropriate. This really brings the 'conscious' into conscious editing.

Sofia's conscious style sheet has all other PerfectIt checks turned off, so it can be run as a stand-alone set of checks. You can then run your usual style sheet as well, so all your regular checks will still be made. The other option is to use the *Manage Styles > Combine* function to merge the conscious style sheet with your own. This will give you one comprehensive style sheet to run at the click of a button. It's entirely up to each editor as to which approach works best for them.

Daniel and Sofia ended by reminding us that computers can't enforce conscious language for us: it's always evolving, vast and dependent on context, so we can't ever say we've got something that will automatically capture it all for us. But tools like the conscious language style sheet can certainly educate and help us in our work as editors, especially when Sofia has done so much of the groundwork and generously made it available to us all. I will certainly be downloading it to run on some of my documents, and I will look at adding further 'flags' from this list into the client style sheet that I've already created.



**Lisa Robertson** is a Professional Member of the CIEP and has been freelancing since 2015. She works largely for businesses and individuals, providing a range of proofreading, plain English and business writing services. Her previous life was in local government, and she has several clients in the public, charity, health and education sectors. You can also find Lisa in the **CIEP directory**.

## Session 2: Seminars

### Editing and mental health writers

#### Presenter: Jason Pegler

##### Reviewer: Magda Wojcik

CIEP 2022's theme, **Editing in a diverse world**, was nothing if not on point for the session **Editing and mental health writers**, presented by Jason Pegler. As the world has changed, so have we, and increasingly more people have been sharing their experiences of living with mental health conditions.

But Jason Pegler is not a novice in the matter – having started with his memoir about living with manic depression, Jason has published more than a thousand books over two decades. Jason runs **Chipmunka Publishing**, a social enterprise working with editor-volunteers, who exclusively publish mental health authors.

Jason's talk was structured around iterating three points, presented as the fundamentals of editing mental health writers:

- Writing is a catharsis.
- Different processes are required.
- Stay positive at all times.

##### *Writing is a catharsis*

This first point stems from Jason's experience of publishing a personal memoir titled *A Can of Madness*, which tells an account of overcoming struggles with manic depression and a years-long stay in a psychiatric ward as a young adult. Jason recounted that the editor who helped to prepare *A Can of Madness* for publishing made Jason feel disempowered and attempted to tone down the elements of the storyline that they considered too violent. Jason thought they handled him as a patient rather than a human being sharing a story.

Based on this experience, as well as several other books Jason has written and years of working with mental health authors, Jason restated the ultimate takeaway for the editors. Editors should remember that these books often serve as therapy, a catharsis for the authors, and their language, creativity and

experiences should be respected. In a nutshell, treating mental health authors with the same dignity as one would extend to any other client is a must.

##### *Different processes are required*

The second fundamental of Jason's talk was that, from an editor's perspective, different processes or approaches should be involved when working with mental health authors. Often, they might be unwell, anxious, sleep-deprived or acutely affected by their condition; the editors must recognise these struggles and remain patient and professional. Jason also pointed out that setting deadlines, helping the author visualise the finished book and encouraging or even coaching them can also be an element of working with mental health authors. Such duty of care to the author has been an essential part of Jason's publishing experience.

##### *Stay positive at all times*

Poetry, fiction or memoirs recounting mental health experiences published by Chipmunka often include content that may be upsetting to the editor – that may 'trigger them', in Jason's words. That's why editors need to look after their mental health hygiene, for example, remember to take a break or go for a walk so that the stressful experiences described in the material they edit do not affect them. This should also be reflected in communications with the authors: editors need to remain positive and encouraging.

To summarise, in Jason's words, referring to mental health writers and editors: 'Brave authors need brave editors.'



**Magda Wojcik** is an academic, business and non-fiction editor. She is also a translation editor preparing texts translated from Chinese for publication. Before becoming an editor, Magda completed a PhD in Chinese literary history at SOAS, University of London. Outside work, she spends time with her partner and two spaniels, hiking and travelling.

## Marketing for people who hate marketing

**Presenter: Kia Thomas**

*Reviewer: Alison Smart*

I hate marketing. I worked in marketing for more than 20 years, so I know what I'm talking about. If I liked marketing I wouldn't be an editor, and I'd be earning three times what I currently earn. So when I saw that Kia Thomas was to present a session at conference on marketing for people who hate marketing, I knew that was for me.

In an interesting and engaging session, Kia made it clear that she wasn't about to present us with a series of quick and easy fixes, shortcuts and techniques to magically transform us all into experts at marketing. I suppose that would have been too much to hope for.

Kia acknowledged that we may be put off marketing our services because we're reluctant to be seen as pushy or thought to be asking potential clients for a favour. However, she pointed out that marketing is not about asking clients to do us a favour but more about offering them a service that can enhance their career, their product and even their lives. She then gave us some positive mantras to reset our approach to marketing our own services:

- I'm not asking; I'm offering.
- I've done a lot of marketing without even realising it.
- I am a good editor, and I deserve to make a decent living as one.
- Many other people can edit. No one else can be me.
- I can do scary things.
- Marketing doesn't stop me from editing; it enables me to edit.

The thrust of Kia's talk was that we each have something unique to offer to our clients. The secret to effective and (nearly) painless marketing is to understand what our unique offering is, who our ideal clients are and what we can do to make their lives easier. Once we know that, we can work out where they are and how to inform them how our services can help. There's no point in using Facebook, for example, to promote yourself if your ideal client is a businessperson who's more likely to be found on LinkedIn.



Kia advised taking baby steps in the right direction, testing out marketing efforts to see which are effective and which aren't. Offering examples of things to try, she also stressed that it's important to do marketing regularly. Little and often is best, so we need to incorporate marketing into our work routine. She also advised doing the marketing activities we like best first on the grounds that we'll be more enthusiastic and therefore authentic in a situation where we're comfortable.

The session gave me plenty of food for thought. I already had a clear idea of my ideal client, but now I know I'm going to have to put a bit more effort into being where they are and making myself, and my unique services, visible to them. Kia's session has given me some useful pointers, but it's up to me to follow them in the right direction.



**Alison Smart** worked in IT and online marketing for 25 years before realising that what she really wanted to do was become an editor. She specialises in non-fiction editing for businesses of all sorts, especially tech-related material, and has a sideline in academic editing in business, management and STEM subjects. Alison is a Professional Member of the CIEP.

## Creating accessible PDFs: Discoveries, pain points and practical steps

Presenter: Margaret Hunter

Reviewer: Robert Holden

With one simple illustration, Margaret Hunter spotlighted a world of accessibility considerations that apply to everyone involved in creating written content: imagine a magazine or book with no titles, no headings, no index or contents list, and with all the images collected in one place unrelated to the text. It sounds like something that would wake an editor up in a cold sweat, but it's what readers who use accessibility software, such as screen readers for those with visual impairments, could experience if texts are not structured with them in mind.

How can writers and editors work towards facilitating this level of accessibility, which is a matter of equality and inclusion? And if you're like me and thought that creating PDFs was someone else's concern, this session was an eye-opener. Margaret used her experience to cut through much of the complexity and jargon involved in the field to highlight the elements that editors need to concentrate on.

If there was one message that came through in this comprehensive seminar, it was to use styles in the source document, typically in Word, InDesign or PowerPoint. Keeping to this good editorial practice automatically embeds the most important features that will be needed at the PDF stage: tags. Accessibility software uses these electronic labels to navigate the document, so each element needs to incorporate them, including complex items like images, tables and lists. Making consistent use of the automatic features in software such as Word does a lot of the work for the editor in this respect, laying the foundations for an accessible PDF down the line and avoiding the need for time-consuming and expensive alterations to the PDF itself.

As well as tags, providing alt text for images and graphics is vital so that visually impaired readers can still access meaning from them. Creating this alt text is a job for the author or editor, as is ensuring that the document's metadata is included, which not only helps the accessibility software but also feeds into SEO for web content.



Margaret pointed to many useful resources to become familiar with, especially the accessibility checkers within Word and other packages and the various ways of checking and improving the final PDF and experiencing the text for yourself through a screen reader, almost like an auditory proofread. All these resources and related courses are included in the comprehensive handout that accompanied the session.

Although the title of Margaret's session focused on PDFs, the principles she includes apply to anything that will be published digitally. It opened my eyes to the importance of ensuring that not only the text but what lies beneath it is in good shape and provided an excellent companion to Alison Shakspeare's conference session **Working with Self-publishers**. It increased my awareness that people who use accessibility software are part of the readership I am working to serve, making it my responsibility to know how to do that.



**Robert Holden** is a freelance copyeditor based in Ireland who works mainly on non-fiction, including academic works in humanities and social sciences.

Trading as Draftproof Editing, he is an Intermediate Member of the CIEP, and 2022 was his first conference. You can also find Robert on [LinkedIn](#).



## Working with international organisations

### Presenters: Rosie Tate and Peter Clayburn

Reviewer: Suzanne Arnold

#### *What do we mean by international organisations?*

Bodies such as the United Nations or World Health Organization, government departments, regulators, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), multinational companies ...

#### *Why work for them?*

It can be varied and interesting work, and there's a lot of it – many organisations are keen for an expert eye to polish text written in English as a second language. Their budgets can make this more lucrative than some types of editing, and there's often a rewarding emphasis on quality.

#### *What does the work involve?*

It depends – of course!

One thing to be aware of up front is that it can be more bureaucratic than you're used to. And there may be restrictions that aren't familiar in some areas of publishing. Rosie and Peter discussed five top tips:

1. *Know who you're working for*  
What are the aims? Who's the intended reader? What's the organisation's usual tone of voice? The answers affect word choices and what can and can't be said, and how.
2. *Bear in mind key areas of sensitivity*  
Watch out especially for country names – for example, Turkey is now **Türkiye**; Czech Republic, **Czechia**. These changes aren't a matter just of style or preference but of respect. International organisations that depend on diplomacy need to tread carefully.  
There may also be words and phrases that must or must not be used, for various reasons.
3. *Know how to make the style guide work for you*  
These organisations often have lengthy or complex style guides, so make sure your fee allows time to read the guide or frequently look up details. Tools may help you with this – for example, PerfectIt 5 includes United Nations style.
4. *Know what to do with abbreviations*  
For example, some audiences don't want terms written out in full on the first use. Make sure you know what's needed before starting work.



5. *Know how far to go*  
Can you use plain English or does (some of) the jargon have to stay? Can you suggest improvements or is the text final?

#### *How do you find this work?*

The first piece of advice may be surprising and intimidating to many editors: tenders.

There are websites that list opportunities open for tender, such as the **European Commission's Tenders Electronic Daily**, **United Nations Global Marketplace** and government contract sites. Two top tips:

1. search for variations on a phrase: for example, proofreading, proof-reading, proof reading
2. restrict your search to results from (for example) the past week or month to avoid seeing opportunities that are no longer available.

It can be worth setting up a **Europass CV** – many organisations like to receive the information in this format. Be prepared for a fair bit of paperwork, but you'll often find that you can copy and paste passages of text for multiple applications.

And remember to make it easy to navigate your tender: make sure the reader can find each element quickly, and don't forget to show awareness of their needs.

#### *Find out more*

Rosie and Peter's website, **Tate & Clayburn**, includes case studies giving a flavour of what's involved.

**Suzanne Arnold** is an Advanced Professional Member who copyedits and proofreads non-fiction for businesses, publishers and indie authors. You can also find Suzanne on **LinkedIn**.



## Session 3: Something for everyone

### Lightning talks

#### Moderators: Lucy Ridout and Robin Black

*Reviewer: Claire Beveridge*

Sunday afternoon's **Lightning talks** session was once again coordinated by Lucy Ridout and Robin Black. In his introduction, Robin noted that editing represents a spectrum ranging from moving an apostrophe to changing people's lives, and the breadth of the interests and work of CIEP members showcased in this session proves that this is true.

#### Andrew Hodges

##### *Culture and power in fiction editing*

Andrew's talk was a worthy opener to the 2022 session. He described how some languages use a wider range of dialogue tags than English and that it's possible there are dialogue tags that are invisible to other cultures and groups. Extending this further, he noted that it can be useful to think about the context of the writer and where they're coming from when editing, because conventions in one culture may not apply to others.

#### Magda Wojcik

##### *Finding my place: From Sinology to editing*

Magda described her personal journey from studying Chinese poetry in academia to editing. She outlined how she has been able to incorporate her love of Sinology into her editing business and shared some interesting facts about the complexities of the Chinese language.

#### Karin Horler

##### *Dangling modifiers*

Karin illustrated her talk with a cocktail of editorial bar jokes, illustrated by some unintentionally hilarious scenarios produced by dangling modifiers. She pointed out that dangling modifiers often appear in sentences that describe experiences. For example, 'As a child, my mother was loving and devoted' could either be interpreted as describing when the writer or the mother was a child.

#### Bhaskar Raman

##### *How to win the hearts of your packagers*

Bhaskar described the pressures that packagers face and how editors who freelance for this type of company can make the work profitable. The biggest

pain point for packagers is time, and author queries should be kept to a minimum because changes will often not come back to an editor.

#### Cathy Tingle

##### *A sprint through the CIEP's virtual running group, Run On*

Cathy's talk was uplifting and made me contemplate dusting off my trainers. Members include those who run long distance, those who don't run at all, newbies, people who are resting and even runners who prefer cycling. The proofreading symbols created by recording runs on map apps were particularly impressive.

#### Suzanne Arnold

##### *Are capital letters really harder to read?*

Suzanne took us on a journey to investigate whether words written in all caps really are harder to read. A study published in 1949 that used eye-tracking technology found that reading all caps rather than mixed case requires more effort and that the resulting understanding of the reader is lower. More recently, lawyers and the US military have stated that mixed case is easier to understand. All caps can also be perceived as shouting.

#### Jane Turner

##### *Networking for introverts*

Jane gave us insights into how book blogging can be a great way of being visible without feeling like you're 'putting yourself out there'. She showed how you can use book blogging to tell people about your skills and how it gives you something to write about. It also gives you content to post on social media, points people to your website and gives you a chance to enhance your editing skills from a developmental perspective.



### **Bridget Coulter**

#### ***Starting out as an editor and proofreader***

Bridget took the plunge and went fully freelance just under a year ago. She described the pros and cons of freelance life and compared them with academia. Despite having had some dry spells, like so many of us, her main challenge has been learning to multitask and manage her calendar.

### **Anna Williams**

#### ***Out of the archive and onto the music stand***

Anna gave us the final talk, describing her work with Multitude of Voyces editing sacred music by women composers, with the aim of redressing the balance of representation in the classical music world. She described the complexities involved in editing musical scores when the composer is deceased and the resulting copyright considerations.

**Claire Beveridge** is a developmental editor, copyeditor, writer and Advanced Professional Member of the CIEP. She has over 15 years' experience and founded Beveridge Editorial Services in 2013. She specialises in non-fiction, particularly biomedical sciences, loves crafts and has an unhealthy interest in personal finance. Claire runs a **Facebook** group for non-fiction editors and is also on **Twitter** and **LinkedIn**.



## Yoga tweaks for desk jockeys

**Presenter: Vanessa Wells**

*Reviewer: Joelle Young*

I've been doing yoga regularly for about eight years now. I feel the benefit in terms of improving posture, maintaining flexibility and muscle strength and calming my breathing. However, after a few hours of working at my desk, fully immersed in a tricky proofreading or translation project, my shoulders are up around my ears, my neck is rigid and my jaw feels like it's wired shut.

I was keen to find out if Vanessa's yoga tips could help me take a few minutes every day to breathe, release some tension and keep my joints from seizing up.

Vanessa's session was held in a bright room that had enough space for people to join in if they wanted to. Some attendees watched throughout, and others tried some or all of the poses. It was a relaxed atmosphere, very much encouraged by Vanessa.

She emphasised that when attempting these yoga poses it's important to ground yourself, take your time and never push yourself to the point of pain. She expertly took us through yoga moves to release and gently stretch the parts of the body that tend to get sore or tense for us editorial folk.

I particularly liked that Vanessa also gave us versions of the poses that could be done sitting in a chair or wheelchair. I've recently found myself doing the chair versions of cat/cow and pigeon pose when I've had a 30-second break after completing a set of checks, for example.

It was good to get a reminder of the simple wrist exercises that can help us avoid carpal tunnel syndrome, and that something as simple as a forward fold (whether sitting or standing) can calm the nervous system and release the spine. One of my favourite poses to release the lower back and improve circulation is the 'legs up the wall' pose, and Vanessa also showed us this with the feet and lower legs resting on a chair, which is easier to hold for longer.



The session covered a lot of ground in 45 minutes, and, afterwards, I was glad to have the aid of Vanessa's easy-to-follow slide pack that shows all the poses and variations. I'm now more aware of how hunched I am when working at the computer and have managed to build a few yoga poses into my working day. Like many of the things that are good for us, yoga tweaks need to become part of our routine for us to get long-term benefits. But even stopping now and then to scrunch up the face and release the jaw or do a somatic stretch for the arms (see slide 7) will help. At the very least we can get a good shoulder stretch and a bit of emotional comfort by giving ourselves a hug!

All conference attendees have received links to the session handouts, including the **slide pack** for Vanessa's session.



**Joelle Young** is a freelance proofreader and translator working with UK and international businesses, non-profit organisations, publishers and students. She's a Professional Member of the CIEP and is currently translating documents relating to the Second World War and proofreading essays on post-war international politics.

## What can I do to reduce the environmental impact of my business?

### Hybrid session with members of the CIEP Environmental Policy Working Group

*Reviewer: Jane Simmonds*

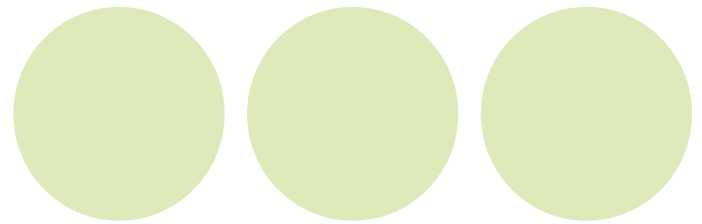
Martin Walker (chair), Abi Saffrey (council liaison) and Melanie Thompson, all members of the CIEP Environmental Policy Working Group (EPWG), offered a summary of their work since the group was set up in January 2021. The EPWG is made up of ten CIEP members. They have created the **Environmental and Energy Policy** and are developing and implementing an Energy and Environmental Management System (EEMS). Broadly, this aims to enhance the CIEP's environmental performance, reduce its adverse impacts and support CIEP members and stakeholders. The EEMS covers direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions, waste management, travel, procurement with climate in mind, conservation and biodiversity.

The session aimed to increase awareness and to support members to reduce the impact of their (largely digital) businesses on the environment. The EPWG emphasised the importance of talking to people and businesses about what can be done, asking questions and trying new ways to be more environmentally aware in work and other areas of life.

Martin explained that the EPWG has been looking at the CIEP's digital footprint. The aim is to reduce this considerably as the new CIEP website and other functions (blog, training, file storage) will be all hosted in one place by Amazon AWS, due to run on 100% renewable energy globally by 2025. The group has also been looking at future conference venues and how to minimise environmental impact – though it was noted that Kents Hill Park is taking action to minimise its emissions.

The members of the EPWG then offered their planet-positive editorial business practices and aspirations. (In addition to those present, there were contributions from Christina Petrides, Jo Johnston, Anne Turner, Robin Black and Caroline Petherick.)

- Use no paper/minimise printing (being mindful of an increased digital footprint).
- Buy second-hand equipment where possible.
- Find green internet providers.
- Research green credentials of business website providers, domain and email hosting companies.



- Rejig file and email storage so there is less in the cloud.
- Use a timer on the modem so that it is off overnight.
- Use and research buying electricity from a supplier that offers 100% renewable.
- Fit LED light bulbs.
- Wear extra layers in winter rather than using heating.
- Install thermally insulated windows.
- Investigate a ground source heat pump.
- Do your clients have good environmental practices?
- Value individual efforts in the areas of food, simplifying life and caring for ecosystems, while acknowledging that action from large corporations is also critical.
- Consider books in your home as an excellent insulator and draught excluder (this made me feel better about my book-acquiring habits).
- Enjoy the benefits of working with others to address climate issues.

Delegates' questions and suggestions were then welcomed. There was support and discussion of the suggestions made already as well as further ideas:

- How wood burners compare with central heating – both release carbon into the environment, and it's good to reduce all heating if possible.
- Consider insulation to maintain an even temperature.
- Make the most of the benefits of online contact rather than travelling – but balance this with in-person contact and collaboration.
- Use purchasing power to drive inclusion of energy-saving features (on new houses and retrofitting existing houses).

The EPWG will have some vacancies in the near future – look out for details or contact current members if you're interested in joining.



**Jane Simmonds** is an Advanced Professional Member of the CIEP. She edits, developmental edits and proofreads non-fiction.

## Getting involved with the CIEP

**Moderator: Vanessa Plaister**

*Reviewer: Philippa Hammond*

From my experience as a member of other membership organisations, the more you put in, the more you get back. I'm relatively new to the CIEP, but from where I'm sitting it always seems like a well-oiled machine. So, I was curious to learn more about how the CIEP works behind the scenes at this hybrid session on 11 September, moderated by Vanessa Plaister.

### *Social animals*

Community was a common theme. Not all members had been involved with the CIEP for a long time, which was refreshing to hear – it's encouraging that newer editors and proofreaders are welcomed into the fold as volunteers. All panel members spoke about how getting involved with the CIEP brought a sense of community that had previously been missing from their working days as freelancers. Several panel members had had careers in sociable workplaces where they developed speaking and organisational skills and launched into getting involved with the CIEP because they didn't want those skills to become stagnant or disappear. Through the CIEP forums, they found ways to network and get involved with their local groups (online and offline), organise events, help with social media, speak at conferences and much more. For several panel members, this was also a good source of work in their early days of freelancing.

### *Moving with the times*

It was said that change has been a constant over the past few years. As alluded to in the earlier **Whitcombe Lecture**, we must allow ourselves the grace to change. But this session reiterated that it's always easier to do this with support from others.

The panel spoke about big culture shifts in the CIEP in recent years. For example, the recognition that, as editors and proofreaders, we're all small business owners, and the Institute as a whole having become more welcoming and more accepting of people's different journeys. The pandemic has also opened up the CIEP as a more global entity. There are now more opportunities for people to get involved no matter where they are in the world. Not only that, but the processes within the CIEP have become more transparent, namely its recruitment processes. It is now more obvious how you can get involved and how you can apply.



### *Comfort zones and safety cushions*

All panel members said how rewarding it was to give back to their professional community. One panel member even described this as 'finding a way back to herself' – remembering the things she was good at doing but no longer had an outlet for as a freelancer.

As a membership organisation, the CIEP *is* its members, in all their diversity. It can't exist without them, or without their ideas. The member pack was mentioned repeatedly as a resource to help members familiarise themselves with how member-led working groups function. There is also now a framework for following up new, big ideas. Special interest groups (SIGs) are one such new initiative and are growing all the time.

We were advised to keep an eye on member-facing vacancies, including micro-volunteering opportunities such as researching partnerships with similar organisations or associations. There are always knowledge gaps, so members were encouraged to go for it if they have a new idea that might help solve a problem.

This was my first CIEP conference, and I was struck by how genuinely welcoming everyone seemed – it really does feel like a community of approachable, supportive professionals that welcomes member-led initiatives.



**Philippa Hammond** is a copyeditor and translator with 18 years' experience of working with and within international organisations. She specialises in food security and humanitarian affairs and is an Intermediate Member of the CIEP. She loves getting to grips with tricky concepts and messages in the original text and conveying these in clear and engaging English. Find Philippa on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

## Gala dinner 2022

In keeping with conference tradition, we were treated to a repeat rendition by The Linnets of 'An Editor's Psalm', first performed in front of a conference audience at Lancaster in 2018.

### An Editor's Psalm

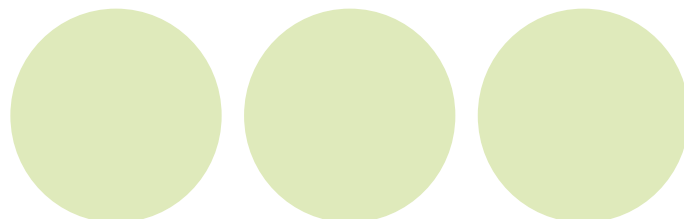
#### Julia Sandford-Cooke

##### *[Tune 1, minor key]*

1. Deep from my desk have I sworn about you,  
O Word : You crashed when I forgot to save you.
2. I cry out into the darkness : Why did I take this job?
3. Blessed is the editor who resteth at close of day :  
With all their work complete.
4. My time fleeth into the night : Tonight the deadline  
looms; caffeine is my only friend.
5. For the author loved the text box tool and used it  
well : Along with Comic Sans.
6. I am stuck fast in the deep mire of poor grammar :  
I must hack through the dark forest of comma  
splices and errant semicolons before weariness  
overcomes me.
7. I am become a stranger unto my family : Even an  
alien unto my unkempt children.
8. I am become feral and my office is as a wilderness :  
Why did I take this job?

##### *[Tune 2, minor key]*

9. Save my work! : For now the proofs have come in :  
Which were due last week.
10. I must download the mighty PDFs : And gird myself  
to wrangle reams of typeset tosh.
11. For while this book has suffered reproof after  
reproof : Its press date draws not nigh.
12. And lo! Now I must mark up the longest sentence  
I have ever seen, which has no clear content no  
comma no colon no full point nor any point at all  
as far as I can tell except to confound me in my  
state of trouble and to vex me to new levels of



vexation immeasurable as it goes on and on and  
on until the end of time or maybe even longer : A  
bit like this job.

13. I am weary of reading, my eyes are dry : My sight  
faileth me for working so long upon these proofs.
14. The rates are low and my spirits lower : Again, I  
say, why did I take this job?
15. O yes, I was flattered when the client emailed unto  
me : When they said it was me and only me in  
whom they put their trust.
16. Why did I believe them when they said it was an  
easy job? : I should have been suspicious when  
someone said : 'Do you know this client? PM me'  
in the forums.

##### *[Tune 3, major key]*

17. And yet. There is a strange beauty in the ordering  
of text : A sense of satisfaction when that tricky  
phrase untangles.
18. Guiding the typescript from darkness into light is  
a joy beyond riches : Which is just as well because  
the client has lost my invoice.
19. Glory be to PerfectIt and to Saint Google : and to  
the Editors' Association of the Earth Backroom.
20. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be :  
Work without end. Amen.

## An editor's psalm\_short score

J. GOSS from J. CLARKE



1. Deep from my desk have I sworn about | you, O | Word : You crashed when I for | got to | save – | you.
2. I cry out | into . the | darkness : Why | did I | take this | job?
3. Blessed is the editor who resteth at | close of | day : With | all their | work com - | plete.
4. My time fleeth | into . the | night : Tonight the deadline looms; caffeine | is my | on-ly | friend.
5. For the author loved the text box tool and | used . it | well : A - | long with | Co-mic | Sans.
6. I am stuck fast in the deep | mire of . poor | grammar : I must hack through the dark forest of comma splices and errant semicolons before (\*) | weariness | over | comes me.
7. I am become a stranger | unto . my | fa\_mi\_ly : Even an alien | unto . my | un-kempt | children.
8. I am become feral and my office is | as a | wilderness : Why | did I | take this | job?







- 9. Save my work! \* For now the proofs | have come | in : Which | were – | due last | week.
- 10. I must download the mighty | P D | F's : And gird myself to wrangle | reams of | type-set | tosh.
- 11. For while this book has suffered reproof | after . re - | proof : Its | press date | draws not | nigh.
- 12. And lo! Now I must mark up the longest sentence I have ever seen \* which has no clear content no comma no colon no full point nor any point at all as far as I can tell \* except to confound me in my state of trouble and to vex me to new levels of vexation immeasurable \* as it goes on and on and on \* until the end of time \* or maybe | ev-en | longer : A | bit like | this – | job.
- 13. I am weary of reading, my | eyes are | dry: My sight faileth me for working so | long up - | on these | proofs.
- 14. The rates are low and my | spi-rits | lower: Again, I say \* | why did . I | take this | job?
- 15. O yes, I was flattered when the client emailed | unto | me : When they said it was me and only me in | whom they | put their | trust.
- 16. Why did I believe them when they said it was an | ea-sy | job?: I should have been suspicious when someone said \* "Do you know this client? PM me" | in - | the - | forums.



- 17. And yet \* There is a strange beauty in the | ordering . of | text : A sense of satisfaction when that | tri-cky | phrase un - | tangles.
- 18. Guiding the typescript from darkness into light is a joy be- | yond – | riches : Which is just as well because the | client . has | lost my | invoice.
- 19. Glory be to PerfectIt and to | Saint – | Google : and to the Editors' Association | of the | Earth – (\*) | Backroom.
- 20. As it was in the beginning is now and | ev-er | shall be : Work without | end – | l. A – | men.

## After-dinner speech

### Speaker: Revd Richard Coles

Reviewer: Julia Sandford-Cooke

When I found out that both Ian McMillan and Richard Coles were coming to our conference, I nearly jumped off my seat with excitement. When I found out that the CIEP scratch choir, The Linnets, would be reprising the satirical psalm I wrote for the 2018 gala dinner, I nearly hid under my desk with dread that the good reverend would be offended by my casual skewering of a Church of England trope. But – of course – he enjoyed it as much as the rest of the audience, at least once I'd assured him that the author in the lyrics who'd written the very long sentence was not him.

His brief was the conference theme of 'diversity', and certainly his 20-minute talk, given entirely without notes, covered several aspects of that term. He described his many identities, from anxious gay schoolboy to 1980s pop star to radio personality to vicar and author of several novels and memoirs. Each life stage was illustrated with funny anecdotes, one of the most memorable being his discovery that a fellow trainee priest had written the catchy camp classic 'So Macho' for Sinitta. 'I clearly wasn't the only gay in the village', said Richard.

His life has certainly been remarkable, yet he still comes across as ordinary and likeable, unspoiled and even a bit bewildered by his fame. Ever self-deprecating, he happily admitted that even his mother had nothing positive to say about his awkward performance on *Strictly Come Dancing*, although he found it worthwhile just for the opportunity to descend to the dancefloor on a fluffy cloud, clutching a golden harp.

He may in many ways fit the stereotype of the jolly and garrulous priest, but he's certainly not shallow. Towards the end of his talk, he acknowledged the reason for retiring from his parish duties as being a difference of opinion with the Church of England, in particular regarding its stance towards the LGBTQ+ community.

Fiction editors take note: authors' decisions may stem from surprising roots. Richard revealed that the only



reason the protagonist in his novel *Murder before Evensong* originated from Manchester was because, anticipating narrating the audiobook, it was the only regional accent he could do. His impression of Scottish ex-bandmate Jimmy Somerville suggested this wasn't entirely true.

His talk did not, unfortunately, cover much else about his experiences of writing and being edited – but perhaps that's an excuse to invite him back to talk at a future conference.

(Heartfelt thanks to whoever drew up the gala dinner table plan, which sat me next to Richard at dinner. You won't be surprised to learn that he is indeed absolutely lovely – but no doubt responsible for writing some very long sentences.)



Advanced Professional Member and CIEP Information Team member **Julia Sandford-Cooke** of **WordFire Communications**

has clocked up nearly 25 years in publishing. When not editing textbooks, she posts short, grumpy, book reviews on her blog, **Ju's Reviews**, and would like to get on with writing her novel if only work didn't keep getting in the way.

# Monday 12 September

## Session 4: Workshops/longer seminars

### Websites that win clients: How to create or update your online home

**Presenter: Pauline Wiles**

*Reviewer: Ema Naito*

'Do I need a website?' As independent editors and proofreaders, that's a question most of us have pondered at some point, followed by 'How do I make one? What should I put on it?' The whole idea can seem daunting.

Fortunately for us, Pauline Wiles reassures us, it doesn't have to be complicated.

These days, websites are our shopfronts. A website shows the world that we're professional. It helps us connect with our ideal client and prompts action from them. And it's a living example of our skills.

You may feel that a lot is riding on this website, but it doesn't have to be complex. In fact, Pauline advises us to keep things simple. It doesn't have to be perfect; the important thing is to have that little corner of the web of your own.

#### *Four technical bits you need*

One of the first things that many of us stumble over are the technical bits, so I loved how Pauline described the four technical bits we need to have for a website:

1. the online space – what you get with 'web hosting'
2. the 'clever bits' – often bundled with web hosting, these are the cool tools and functions your website needs to work nicely
3. your domain name – the 'www.NameOfYourBusiness.com' name; get one!
4. your content.

I think of the first three as technical; building the content is the more creative bit where many of us might feel more at home.



#### *The basic site*

For those starting out, Pauline listed the four must-include pieces of content (which can also go on a single page)

1. the homepage
2. your services
3. your bio
4. your contact information

On top of these, you could layer further content, like free resources or a blog, an email list sign-up and your fees. Whether to publish your fees is a hotly contested topic, but Pauline had a great tip: if you want to give potential clients a general idea without overly committing yourself, you could give a range, indicate a 'typical' cost or say 'starting from ...'

Make sure to sprinkle testimonials throughout your site. And on each page put a clear call to action (what you want your reader to do next, like contact you, book a consultation or sign up for your newsletter).

#### *Write for your reader and keep it simple*

When writing your text, assume that your reader is in a hurry, may be looking at your site on a phone and is

easily distracted. That means you need to be clear and to the point.

Couch your offerings in a way that the reader quickly sees what's in it for them. Pauline shared a fantastic formula we can use:

**I will provide \_\_\_ so that you \_\_\_**

This way, you emphasise the outcomes, the transformation for the client, not the process.

Also remember to use short paragraphs, bullet points and subheadings to present the information in scannable chunks.

### ***Don't forget design: Keep it sleek and simple***

Pauline reminded us that the website design can affect how trustworthy we seem to potential clients. This is daunting for someone like me with no design skills, but, here again, keeping things sleek and simple is the answer.

Use a professionally designed template with a clean look. You might find a free one, but even paid ones can be quite affordable.

Keep the menus lean. Purge the clutter (especially in the sidebar – oh, that's me), use larger text and fewer words, use high-quality images (including your headshot) and plenty of white space.

### ***Everyone can work with SEO at the very basic level***

Search engine optimisation (SEO) is another term that can be mystifying. It refers to things you can do to raise the chances your website will be found via search engines like Google.

Pauline explained that SEO efforts can be broken down into three broad levels.

1. The absolute basics: make it mobile-friendly, have an SSL certificate (your URL will start with 'https' rather than 'http'), make sure your pages load quickly, check all links work, and put tags in place like site title and alt text for images.
2. Your home and services pages: set up site and page titles, use an H1 heading for each page, and put keywords in subheadings and text.

3. Your other content pages: put keywords in your page titles, subheadings, text, images, page slug, etc.

SEO being something I've mostly avoided, I was relieved that I've at least cleared the absolute basics. And now I know to focus next on my home and services pages.

So how much effort should you spend on SEO? Ask yourself:

- Do people actually use Google to find your services?
- Is Google sending you *quality* leads?

In the end, Pauline reminded us that the search engine algorithms *will* change. The key is to keep your site and content relevant, fresh and helpful.

### ***The bottom line***

Pauline's bottom line is that creating and maintaining your website can be simple and inexpensive.

That agrees with my experience: I've had a website on a shoestring for a few years, and my annual expense is just the site hosting plus the domain and a very cheap anti-spam service. For everything else – website template, newsletter and other handy plug-ins – free versions have sufficed.

With websites serving as our shopfronts, there's no reason why we all shouldn't have one. Keep it simple and you'll find it's less daunting than you feared.



### **Ema Naito (TheClarityEditor.com)**

is a bilingual editor who loves plain English. She edits for social science academics and international development organisations. Ema grew up between Tokyo and the US East Coast and is now based in Bangkok. She has a master's degree from the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, and sings classically.

## Working with self-publishers

### Presenter: Alison Shakspeare

*Reviewer: Andrew Hodges*

Self-publishing is a growing area with lots of opportunities for work. Editors should, however, navigate this field with care. Alison emphasised that self-publishing is a group effort and so networking with other suppliers, such as typesetters and book cover designers, is important.

The workshop was incredibly useful and comprehensive. It covered three key aspects: the publishing landscape and self-publishing's place within it, authors' needs and their mindset, and self-publishing technicalities. Alison also included a helpful sheet where we could make notes on what skills we have, could deliver or just advise on. Some skills can be acquired quickly. For instance, converting a file to an ebook format is not so tricky. Other skills, such as learning InDesign, are not so simple.

I offer manuscript evaluations, line editing and copyediting. According to Alison's worksheet, I identified that I need to network with book formatters and be able to advise on cover designers. I could also further improve my antennae for legal issues by taking the **CIEP Copyright for Editorial Professionals** course, which Alison highly recommended.

#### *Author mindsets*

Authors choose to self-publish all kinds of books for very different reasons. Alison's discussion here was nuanced and took us beyond a distinction between hobbyists and author-entrepreneurs. If an author is writing as a cathartic exercise or to learn the craft, they may need coaching and developmental editing. If a book will be a family souvenir, they likely don't need an ISBN or an IngramSpark version available to purchase on multiple online marketplaces. Some businesspeople write books as a form of marketing, to share blog content in a new form or to offer insights to a broad audience at a relatively low price point. These clients will likely need ISBNs and will want their books available to buy online, but they are not so bothered about making a living through selling their books.

#### *Do you need to use MS Word styles for bold and italics?*

Towards the end of the talk, Alison covered formatting issues and self-publishing technicalities. There was a panic moment for me and a few others in the room when she said it was important to apply character formatting (bold, italics, small caps, etc) as Word styles rather than using the buttons at the top of the MS Word. The reason for this is that many typesetting



programs will strip away all formatting and only code the Word styles.

Thankfully, this can be easily sorted with a quick Find and Replace routine (phew!), and a good typesetter will check for this before starting work. Nevertheless, while some programs (eg InDesign) retain character formatting, others (eg the Reedsy app) do not, and so using styles for character formatting is a judicious choice.

This mini-panic also underscored the importance of knowing where a copyeditor or proofreader sits in a broader self-publishing workflow. Editorial professionals have a lot to gain here from learning by doing and giving self-publishing a go, for example with a piece of flash fiction or a short story.

And that's what good editorial workshops are all about: I learned new things and questioned some of my processes. All this will inform my future work.

If this summary has whetted your appetite to learn more about self-publishing – and this is a very fast-moving terrain with lots of opportunities for work at present – then you should get a copy of **Alison's CIEP guide** on the topic.



**Andrew Hodges** runs an editorial business called **The Narrative Craft** in Edinburgh. He loves line-editing fiction and ethnography and enjoys chatting with science-fiction and fantasy authors about worldbuilding and point-of-view issues whenever he can.

## Starting out: A guide for newbies

### Presenter: Claire Handy

#### Reviewer: Louise Frith

Starting out as a new freelancer can feel overwhelming – something that Claire Handy remembers very well. Ten years ago, she was a ‘newbie’ too and recalls how daunting it was. Now she’s running a successful editorial/proofreading business yet somehow managing to find the time to help others achieve this as well.

There’s an inevitable sense of ‘overwhelm’ that comes with setting up your own business. This online workshop provided a solution: break the process down into small steps. Claire’s sensible advice and warm encouragement over one and a half hours steered us through the following topics:

- Being a freelancer
- Setting up
- Finding work
- Money
- Managing yourself

Referring to her own personal experiences brought Claire’s advice to life. For instance, she told us how she’d mentioned her new business at a volunteer-training session. It turned out that the woman next to her had written a book and needed a proofreader. She became Claire’s first client.

This was a perfect illustration of the first rule of marketing your new business: talk about what you do.

There are many stumbling blocks for new freelancers, but this workshop made the process seem much easier. Delaying your new website? Get yourself a basic website and add to it later. Putting off trading because you can’t think of the perfect business name? There’s no law against changing the name as your business evolves. Claire admitted that she was Claire Handy, Editor for a year before the obvious Handy Editorials struck her.

Is there enough work out there? Yes, there’s always work. But you can’t wait for clients to come to you. You have to go out and search for them. We were encouraged to be creative about this. Think about discussing your interests on social media, attending a local writers’ circle, advertising in a professional special-interest magazine or upgrading your CIEP membership to Professional Level and getting into the CIEP Directory (Claire said this doubled her workload).



In short, you need to go wherever your prospective clients are.

This session also covered the financial responsibilities of setting up a business, such as keeping business records, sending a self-assessment tax return every year and paying income tax and national insurance. And it explored the thorny issue of how much to charge – something that new freelancers often struggle with. The template letter for chasing late payments was a useful bonus.

Finally, we were reminded about the importance of looking after ourselves: getting outside every day, taking breaks and not working overlong hours.

I appreciated the Starting Out workbook we all received at the beginning of the class. Designed to form the start of a business plan, this mirrored the workshop content and provided a space for writing down thoughts and answers.

It takes around six months to two years to establish a new business so the sooner you get started, the better. You don’t need to have the perfect snazzy office chair, the ideal business name or the best website when you start out. You just need to take that first step and have confidence in yourself.



**Louise Frith** worked in the book industry before deciding to go freelance last year. She has been proofreading and copyediting as a sideline for the past 17 years. She’s an Intermediate Member of the CIEP but is enjoying building up the experience and training to upgrade. She also works as a copywriter for an environmental company.

## Efficient editing: It's all in the preparation, darling!

**Presenter: Hester Higton**

*Reviewer: Kelly Urgan*

Redecorating and editing have a lot in common, the most important being that the better you prepare beforehand, the better the outcome. If you've done the sanding, hole-filling and taping, when you reach the step of painting the wall, you'll reap multiple benefits: not only is it going to be an easier painting process, but the end result is going to look much better than if you just slap paint on. This is how Hester Higton would like editors to think about efficient editing.

### The four aspects of manuscript preparation

#### *Initial set-up*

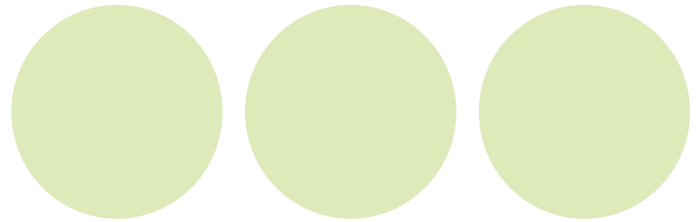
Step one is to understand the brief. Remember, editing is not about *you* deciding what the project needs but understanding what the brief is asking you to do, who the readers are, what is important and what will add the most value. Keeping the readers' needs first focuses the editing process.

Start by skimming the text. Highlight anything out of the ordinary, review any house styles and add items that you will need to refer to frequently to the style guide. Look for any missing information. For example, Hester checks the references first, and if sources are referenced but not cited, she asks the author to sort it out before she begins editing.

#### *Triage*

Step two is the textual analysis to learn what's in the text. Doing this analysis may feel like a waste of time! However, this process gives an in-depth assessment and answers to questions such as, can the edit be done by the deadline and within the budget? A thorough evaluation provides evidence if you need to negotiate with the client about the scope of the project. If the deadline or budget can't be adjusted, you can provide the client with a list of tasks that can be completed within those constraints and a list of items that will be left as is.

Hester draws up a spreadsheet listing each feature, estimates an amount of time it will take to edit each one and judges how difficult each will be to edit. Items that might appear include acronyms, annexes, citations, references, headings, hyphenations, cross-references, notes, tables, text boxes and anything unusual.



#### *Batch processing*

Step three is to edit the features in batches, and, naturally, batch processing depends on the text. For example, Hester edits references and footnotes chapter by chapter, but she'll edit headings all at once. By focusing on a single feature, editors are less likely to repeat tasks. The goal is to figure out which processes work best for you.

Hester uses a free time-tracking tool, Toggl, to track how much time it takes to edit each feature. She enters this information into her spreadsheet, and she compares her actual editing time with her estimates. The result is an analysis of the edit. By taking a similar approach, editors can learn about their editing style and areas to improve.

#### *Tools*

Step four uses tools to resolve issues and do routine clean-up tasks within the entire document. Examples include PerfectIt, MS Word macros, advanced Find and Replace (use 'Replace All' sparingly!) and wildcards.

### Redecorate your editing processes

Editors need to choose what's most helpful from these steps because all the advice won't work for everyone. Be open to experimenting. Becoming an efficient editor means trial and error. Tracking and analysing data can be key to providing better estimates while helping editors decide which jobs they should take – and which they shouldn't!



**Kelly Urgan** has been a professional editor since 2016, specialising in historical, fantasy and science fiction, but she doesn't mind the occasional history or travel manuscript. She's sought adventure by living in places like Germany, Japan, Turkey and the UAE, before she moved to the UK. When she's not at her desk, she's reading, visiting museums, hiking or travelling. Kelly is also active on **Twitter**.

## Session 5: Seminars

### Are editors changing the English language?

Speaker: Professor Lynne Murphy

Reviewer: Anne Turner

This year's CIEP conference was the fourth Professor Lynne Murphy has been able to join. Her session considered some of the changes taking place in the English language (including some **that are claimed**, but **actually aren't changing at all**) and whether editors are responsible. And, as we'd expect from the author of *The Prodigal Tongue: The love-hate relationship between British and American English*, she discussed the influence of American linguistic and editorial practices on these changes too.

English is a dynamic language, and it's changing all the time. While 'lost words' may have become an industry, the changes affecting the language are most notable in the small words: the use of 'the' appears significantly less frequently in Google Books today compared to 100 years ago. Similarly, the usage of 'of', 'be' and 'it' has declined. The loss of these small words happens quietly, unnoticed. But why?

Using comparable corpora from 1931, 1961, 1991 and 2006, linguists have identified four language change processes in British and American English:

- Using fewer markers of power and authority in text and speech: the **democratisation** of language
- Reducing the social distance between authors and readers and preferring writing to be more speech-like: **informalisation** and **colloquialisation**
- Choosing fewer function words, shorter spellings and contractions: the **densification** of the language.

It's in this last change process – densification – that the small words disappear.

Consideration of inclusive language, plain language, voice and authenticity are aspects of democratisation and colloquialisation that editors might influence, but it's arguably in densification that we have the greatest responsibility towards language change.

Most synonyms of the word 'edit' relate to shortening or deleting, and, working to word or page limits, editing is often densifying text. As editors, we also work to the style manuals and preferences of writers and



publishers, which, since the 1960s, have included guidance such as 'omit needless words'.

The US education system has promoted instruction in grammar and editing since the publication of Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style* in 1959, which sold 2 million copies in its first year. Many style guides published since promote similar language efficiency, including the UK's Plain English Campaign. The trend towards densification in both American and British English has moved in parallel.

As a result of the rule-based learning and greater editing infrastructure in the United States, American publications are more directly influenced by style prescriptions compared to British ones. American editors are more likely to be confident with style 'rules' than their British counterparts, who report making changes based more on feel and intuition than strict rules.

As to the question of whether editors are responsible for language change, Lynne suggests there's no definitive answer. Editors may enforce some changes that are already in progress, especially when these are preferred by publishers and readers. Responsibility is probably too strong a term for the role editors play in overall language change, but they're part of the process as are all speakers, writers, editors and publishers.



**Anne Turner** is an information security specialist writer, copyeditor and proofreader based in the West Midlands. Having worked as a cybersecurity consultant for 14 years, Anne trained with the CIEP before opening her writing and editing business, **Affinity Editorial**, in September 2021. You can find her on **LinkedIn** and **Mastodon**.



## Working with neurodiversity in editing

**Moderator: Alnaaze Nathoo**

*Reviewer: Geoff Poundes*

We gathered under the watchful eye of Alnaaze Nathoo, moderator and author of the *Keeping It Under Wraps* anthology series, to discuss **Working with neurodiversity in editing** – as topical a subject as you can get at a conference themed **Editing in a diverse world!**

Our panel was made up of Laura Burge, fiction editor and writing coach; AJ Harman, coach, mentor and writer; and Lizzie Huxley-Jones, author of *Make You Mine This Christmas* and editor of *Stim: An autistic anthology*.

We began with each panel member describing their personal journey. Laura was diagnosed with ADD as a child (since reclassified as ADHD) but found rational treatment wanting: 'I was offered a pill to "fix" things.' AJ talked about being classed as having depression at age 40, evolving into an ADHD/autism diagnosis years later. Lizzie became aware of their autism eight years ago at the age of 26, and that realisation prompted a career change to write, edit and coach about neurodiversity: 'Once you are able to build a manual of your own self, that really is empowering.'

The panel talked about techniques for dealing with such a diagnosis. AJ found that long-standing clients were, on the whole, understanding and compassionate and that putting a name to their condition brought to an end a lifetime of being misunderstood. Lizzie, too, felt that, after a childhood spent feeling different, their diagnosis brought an understanding of why they felt that way. Laura 'leaned into' her diagnosis, developing strategies and tools, including checklists and goals, to help her adjust to her new reality.

There followed a discussion about whether a formal diagnosis is a help or hindrance. There was agreement across the panel that personal acknowledgement and ownership of one's autism is enough – although AJ was at pains to point out that there are many shades of neurodivergence (eg ADHD, Tourette's, dyslexia, dyspraxia) that may require medical interventions for which a formal diagnosis is required. Lizzie mentioned that obtaining an accurate assessment is fraught with



difficulty given the medical profession's preconceptions about autism; they were told by a child psychologist at age 25 that they could not possibly be autistic as they'd travelled on an aeroplane!

There was a discussion about the importance of terminology – for instance, the aptness of the word 'disorder' in ADHD (it was proposed that autism is better described as a 'different brain type'), and, prompted by a question from the floor in which one publisher had insisted on using the term Asperger's Syndrome, the negative association of the label given Asperger's connections to Nazi eugenics. Lizzie pointed out that terms and terminology do change over time and that the only acceptable term for neurodivergence is that which one adopts for oneself.

Finally, there was a conversation about handling anxiety and, in particular, the type of anxiety brought on by rejection. AJ explained that Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria (RSD) is a recognised condition, and the panellists talked about seeking out positive reinforcement where negative feedback is encountered, although Lizzie suggested a more drastic repost to the naysayers: 'Close the laptop and go scream their name at the crows in a car park!'

**Geoff Poundes** is a professional editor, proofreader and publisher. After a successful 20-year career in business, he obtained a BA (Hons) in literature and turned to writing and editing. For two years he was chief editor for Electronic Sports Media, while also contributing articles to business and sports publications. He published his first novel, *The Religion of Birds*, in 2016.



## The ethics of proofreading student writing

**Presenter: Professor Nigel Harwood**

*Reviewer: Bhaskar Raman*

As editorial professionals, we routinely wrestle with a variety of ethical concerns in the course of our work. When it comes to working with students, however, a whole new range of issues arise. Is proofreading students' essays ethical, and if so, in what ways and to what extent may proofreaders intervene?

These are questions that Nigel Harwood, Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Sheffield, attempts to answer through his research, which he presented at the 2022 CIEP conference.

Prof Harwood cited studies showing that students routinely get their work proofread, whether by paid professionals or, informally, by family, friends or classmates. However, there remains disagreement over the propriety of the practice, and particularly over which interventions are okay.

In his project, Prof Harwood focused on the views of three groups – lecturers, English tutors (who help students with weak English skills) and students – and asks how far they feel proofreading is appropriate, whether the views within each group are equivalent and why they feel the way they do. For this, he used a questionnaire and follow-up interviews.

The questionnaire showed participants examples of interventions from across the spectrum – from non-intervention to what is essentially developmental or content editing. Participants gave their opinions of the propriety of each intervention and briefly explained why they felt so.

The research found that all three groups essentially agreed that minor edits and queries were acceptable, and that non-intervention by proofreaders was not. Lecturers and tutors had no significant disagreements on which interventions were acceptable. Students, however, felt a wider range of interventions, including some major copyediting and content editing, were appropriate.

Lecturers expressed concern about the effect of proofreading on grades, as it touches on areas in which students are assessed. However, most also said linguistic accuracy was not an assessment criterion.



While there was much lower tolerance for content interventions across the board, many students felt these were okay so long as they weren't told what to do. For example, queries that make the student think about their work more, such as asking them to specify how they know something, were considered acceptable.

There were some lecturers and tutors who expressed opinions on both extremes of the issue. Some took a much more permissive approach on the grounds that students may seek help from any number of sources, including parents and peers, and it would be unfair to penalise some sorts of interaction but not others. Others said that language and grammar are part of the assessment criteria and so any proofreading is unacceptable as it would greatly impact the grade and not reflect the student's skills accurately.

Prof Harwood concluded that policymakers should play safe and permit light-touch proofreading, preferably by qualified professionals. He also suggested regulating proofreading by taking it in-house and allowing certain departments to ban proofreading, depending on assessment criteria. The lessons for editorial professionals are clear: scrupulously limit interventions, whether direct or as queries, to issues of language, and do not get involved in the content of student essays.

**Bhaskar Raman** is an editor, proofreader and designer with more than 15 years of experience. He works on a variety of academic and non-fiction texts (as well as the occasional work of fiction for fun). You can find out more about Bhaskar in the [CIEP directory](#).

## Using referencing tools

### Presenter: Marieke Krijnen

*Reviewer: Anna Baidon*

#### *In at the deep end*

Marieke gave us a densely packed session about formatting and checking references. It was clearly and enthusiastically presented and was completely focused on practical information.

This webinar felt like a coaching session, sitting alongside a more experienced colleague and being shown the ropes. It made references seem a less daunting, albeit intensive, part of an edit.

#### *Putting Word through its paces*

Marieke gave us simple tips like using alphabetical sorting by paragraphs.

I could immediately see the value of identifying ways to use Word's tools (such as Change Case) to achieve shortcuts and partial fixes which are then easier to complete manually. I liked the lateral thinking here, and it underlined the need to know your tools: 'not perfect but can be useful' was an attribute shared by many of the methods in this session.

Marieke reminded us that the CIEP's course on **Word for Practical Editing** covers more of this ground.

**Editor's Toolkit Plus** (a Word add-in) has a feature that uses CMOS to apply title case. Its NoteStripper tool switches embedded notes and normal text. It can also switch notes and parenthetical citations.

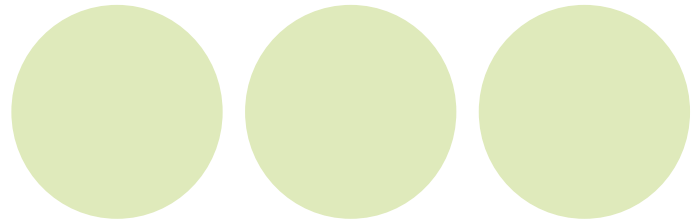
Marieke went on to emphasise the importance of using Word's styles to check that the formatting is clean.

She finished this section with detailed examples of systematic searches in Word to identify items to fix, for example checking for comma and space usage between journal issue numbers and page numbers.

#### *All present and correct?*

Next up, Marieke focused on ways to check references for completeness and correctness.

She showed us **ReciteWorks**, a subscription tool that looks impressive. Marieke demonstrated that this tool is not perfect but is nevertheless very useful for APA and Harvard references, allowing two-way checking of citations against references, in addition to formatting. She emphasised that you still need to do your own logical checks and work through the software's results



list meticulously, including keeping an eye out for 'false drops' that don't require action.

Marieke mentioned other options including **Paul Beverley's CitationAlyse** macro (for which there is no charge) and **SourceForge's Citation and Reference Checker** (also free of charge). She also reminded us of the simplest of all options: print and check manually.

There was a question from the audience about copyright and permission to upload clients' files to third-party sites. Marieke advised us to make sure we tell our clients if we will be using these types of tools.

#### *Formatting references to suit citation style*

Marieke demonstrated how **Edifix** works. Recommended only for scholarly material, this tool will both style references and check for correctness (and will add missing information). It tracks changes but not in Word, so Marieke suggested that users export their Edifix results and then use Word's Compare tool to incorporate the changes. She mentioned that the subscription is a significant expense so you need to consider the efficiencies it will give you for your probable types of work.

Next, we looked at **Crossref**, where you search metadata, select the correct result and choose 'cite'. Marieke helpfully mentioned the ways in which it isn't fully accurate – once again, you still need to scrutinise the results.

#### *Compare and contrast*

To wrap up, Marieke explained some key differences between Chicago, APA and Harvard styles. Should you be giving first names in full or using initials? Is it okay to use an ampersand when listing multiple authors? Is sentence case the correct option? And which type of Harvard are you using? Marieke showed us some fantastically detailed tables in which she gave complete examples of the approaches of seven referencing styles to reference five types of document.

Finally, for the differences between MLA, APA and CMOS, Marieke referred us to the **Purdue OWL Citation Chart**.

### *What did I learn?*

I learned that there is no magic bullet for working with references, but lateral thinking and a good knowledge of the available tools will definitely help editors to achieve the goal stated by Marieke: 'save time and improve accuracy'.

I'm grateful to Marieke for generously sharing her knowledge. I feel more confident about exploring some new tools to enhance what I can offer my clients.

I thought readers might like to see a few other relevant links that I found on the CIEP website, in addition to the resources that I've already mentioned:

- **References training course**
- **References factsheet** (for members only)
- *Cite Them Right*, a recommended reference book listed on **General editing, publishing and style page**
- Dedicated section and more general advice within the ***Proofreading Theses and Dissertations guide***.

**Anna Baidon** is an Entry-Level Member and is relishing CIEP training to strengthen her expertise. Her business, Minerva Proofreading, focuses on non-fiction projects for publishers and other clients. She has worked in niche librarian roles in higher education and has significant experience in wrangling non-fiction copy into a publishable state. Anna has degrees in English literature and librarianship and a lifelong affinity with words.



## What to expect when working with educational materials

**Presenter: Denise Cowle**

*Reviewer: Claire Cronshaw*

Countless educational materials passed through my hands during my 18 years of working in schools. But I did not know what went into them. Denise provided an invaluable insight.

Starting as she did with materials and components, Denise orientated me into familiar territory. She described students' books and workbooks, teachers' books and lesson plans. How these are interlinked in series accompanying particular syllabuses or curricula. How resources often have integrated multimedia content.

This idea of integration was a thread running through the talk. There are many moving parts. There's the writing and illustrating. And the planning stages beforehand. All the rejigging afterwards. A lot has happened before a textbook lands in the inbox of a freelance copyeditor or proofreader.

And there is a lot of integration within the materials themselves. In student books, there are definitions of key terms in margin callouts. These need to be the same as glossary definitions, which need to be the same as the terms used in the teacher's book.

All of this takes a keen eye and organisation. Denise described the assets that arrive as part of the context for a copyedit or proofread – the briefs, files and working files; the page plans and design samples; exam overviews and syllabuses – highlighting the importance of a methodical approach. Denise mentioned she uses three screens to keep track of everything that needs to be cross-referenced. I'll be in the market for a third if my queries to educational publishers bear fruit.

So do you have to be a former teacher to get into educational publishing? No. You can be brilliant at it whether or not your background is in teaching. Denise wasn't. I was. I won't be a decent educational proofreader by virtue of my teaching experience. It'll



help. There'll definitely be that familiarity – but more key is my training. If I get into educational publishers' proofreading pools, I'll be employing the skills I learned in CIEP Proofreading 1–3. That was obvious through the sneak peek Denise offered in this session. There are tables to check, and lists, and contents pages, and images, and layout, and sense, and accuracy, and consistency and appropriateness. You have to deploy your full arsenal of editorial quality assurance.

I did not realise how much went into it. Denise blew my mind. Over the years, I've been lucky to use a lot of quality resources. But editors and proofreaders haven't had my thanks, because I didn't see them. You came, you edited, you left no trace. Now I know that's the best kind of praise.



**Claire Cronshaw** of Cherry Edits is an Intermediate Member of the CIEP from the north of England. She is a proofreader, copyeditor and line editor specialising in indie fiction. Before retraining as an editor, Claire was an English teacher. Claire reflects on her editing adventures at [cherryedits.com/blog](https://cherryedits.com/blog) and can also be found wherever you hang out online [linktr.ee/cherryedits](https://linktr.ee/cherryedits).

## An insight into indexing

### Presenter: Rachel Gee

#### Reviewer: Eleanor Bolton

Rachel Gee is an Advanced Member (and current training director) of the Society of Indexers. I am in my second year of working as a freelance editor and occasionally (without training) have to check indexes. I was looking forward to improving my knowledge, and Rachel did not disappoint. This was a fast-paced overview of indexing with plenty of detail.

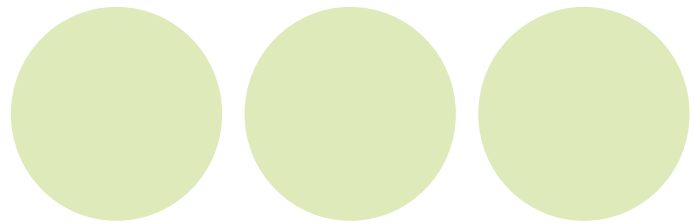
#### Creating an index

Indexes are designed for the reader (who may or may not be an expert on the topic) to help them find specific information or to return to a part of the book they have already seen. The indexer has to cover all important terms in the book and does so by going through the manuscript line by line identifying those terms likely to be important from the perspective of the reader. Two questions must be considered when deciding whether or not a concept should be included in the index: would a reader look for the entry, and would they find anything useful if they did? Specialist software is available to help automate some of the mechanical tasks, but it is likely to take two to three weeks to complete an index for an average-length book.

The indexer will edit their work to ensure consistency throughout the entire index and that the format of the entries adheres to the publisher's style guide, although often decisions do need to be made:

- Do some entries need to be sorted manually (non-Roman alphabets, special characters, entries starting with a number, lists where date order would be more appropriate)?
- What do you do if a person is known by two different names in different contexts?
- Is an introductory statement required to explain specialist entries?
- Are all locators based on page numbers, or do figures or tables need to be included?

Rachel explained that indexing is not an exact science. Judgement is required to determine the extent of an index based on the length of the book and



the expected readership. Two indexers can create different but equally valid indexes.

#### Editing indexes

Indexing should not be done until after typesetting, when the text, layout and page numbers are fixed. However, sometimes authors create their own indexes, and sometimes page layouts do change. As an editor, what do you need to look out for? A straightforward check will ensure that:

- there are no typos
- entries are in alphabetical order (whether word-by-word or letter-by-letter)
- page numbers are in the correct order and are consistently elided
- there are no layout/formatting issues.

Occasionally, the editor might also spot missing or inconsistent entries. If that happens, then a note to the author or publisher would be appropriate.

#### Want to know more?

Indexing is a specialist skill. If you want to find out how to train as an indexer, the Society of Indexers runs an online course that leads to accreditation and professional membership. If indexing is not for you but, like me, you need to know a little bit about the process, be able to recognise a good (or bad!) index and know how to edit an index, the society also offers an online, self-paced workshop specifically for editors.



**Eleanor Bolton** is an academic editor and an Intermediate Member of the CIEP. She primarily edits manuscripts in the mathematical and physical sciences and classical music. She also plays violin, viola and piano, and enjoys introducing her family to new board games. You can connect with her on [LinkedIn](#).

## Editing sex scenes in fiction: Helping authors create engaging and inclusive intimacy

**Presenter: Maya Berger**

*Reviewer: Eugenia Sestini*

Maya Berger kicked off the session on a positive note: we already know more than we think we do about editing sex scenes because our editing skills transfer to these kinds of scenes. What, then, makes them different? Or, at least, what makes them special enough for there to be a session on editing them specifically? Maya mentioned a few things to consider beyond spelling, punctuation and grammar:

- What does the scene contribute to the story in terms of character development, plot or atmosphere?
- Is the scene physically realistic, anatomically possible? If it feels far-fetched or inaccurate, fact-check, especially if it involves practices you're unfamiliar with. Maya suggests hands-on learning when possible.
- Some scenes might sound sexy in the author's head, but on paper they can distract and might be uncomfortable to imagine, or might bring the reader out of the story. This can also happen with clichés, which may seem like useful shortcuts but can take readers out of the moment, especially if they feel out of place or repetitious. Are they helping the story flow?
- Ensure continuity, regarding not just clothes or physical position but characters' emotional needs and state of mind before and after the sex scene.
- Beware of which stereotypes get reinforced. Which characters are typically represented and considered sexy or sexual? Is it because of their age, ethnicity, sexual orientation? This resonated with me, as Latin American characters tend to be over-sexualised in fiction. Many people are under-represented, and, when they do appear, they may be stereotyped.

Maya also covered exploitation and non-consensual sex, and raised some important points that I had not thought of. Traumatic sex scenes can take a toll on our mental health, and we may need to take breaks. If we feel the text clashes with our values, we may need to end our involvement altogether. She reminded us to consider the target readers' values and expectations, as well as our own attitudes towards sex. And perhaps consider adding a content warning.



Finally, she talked about querying with sensitivity and professionalism – authors may be especially vulnerable regarding sex scenes. The ensuing ten-minute discussion in breakout rooms allowed us to analyse a scene; since each group had four people from different backgrounds and with unique life experiences, within a few minutes we were able to uncover the many issues that needed to be addressed.

This session gave me the confidence to dive into sex scenes, keeping in mind that there is a lot about editing that I can already bring to the table. I became more mindful of the role of sex scenes within the overall narrative. For the first time, I heard about people in the aromantic or asexual spectrum. And while I'm not in charge of who the characters are, I can sensitively point out harmful stereotypes or glamorised violence. It makes my job feel even more meaningful: making sure readers feel comfortable with a sensitive and inclusive text; that they don't feel misrepresented or marginalised, and that they can connect with the characters.



**Eugenia Sestini** is a multilingual writer, language teacher and proofreader, interested in cultural identity, gender studies and family stories. In her spare time, she plays piano and tennis, reads and makes the most of London's theatre scene. When she is not doing any of the above, Eugenia helps people organise their homes and workspaces. You can also find her in the sunniest spot on **Instagram**.



## Plenary session

Guest speaker: Ian McMillan

Reviewer: Bridget Coulter

The 2022 CIEP conference was brought to a joyful and celebratory conclusion by Ian McMillan (the Bard of Barnsley) and musician Luke Carver Goss, who provided a thoroughly enjoyable plenary session, filled with jokes, stories, audience participation and songs.

First, Ian shared tales of his travels around the UK, including gigs gone wrong. Two of these stories involved schools booking the wrong Ian to speak (and, in one case, the wrong Ian McMillan). Most of us, in this situation, would want the ground to swallow us up, but Ian seems to have taken it all in his stride, turning these unfortunate stories into hilarious anecdotes that left the audience in fits of laughter.

This was followed by a selection of humorous and idiosyncratic notices collected surreptitiously from church halls, youth centres, libraries and other places. A sign pinned on a tree in Devon asked, 'Where can we go to watch people play badminton and eat our sandwiches?' Another sign, this time found in a library, insisted, 'We do not supply washing-up liquid'. Such signs – quirky, comical and maybe a bit absurd – tell a story and capture the imagination through their unconventional, and sometimes rather abrupt, use of language.

The session was full of fascinating linguistic observations, including one about the Sheffield–Chesterfield isogloss – the line between the two cities where people stop saying 'house' and start saying something which sounds a lot more like 'arse'. (Ian made a BBC Radio 4 documentary on this subject in 2012, which had the amusing title *The 'arse that Jack Built*.) Despite being a resident of Sheffield, I've never noticed this difference, but I'll keep my ears open next time I venture into the Chesterfield area.

The session was also a musical treat. Luke performed a very impressive rendition of a Serbian song on the accordion, then he surprised us all by accompanying a number on the didgeridoo. Next, audience members

were invited to join in with a catchy song called 'The Lanyard People', which was all about the power of lanyards and the strange way they can make you feel like a better version of yourself. Then we sang along with a fantastic earworm about Apostrophe Amnesty Day, which Ian described as the one day in the year when you can put an apostrophe 'anywhere you like'. This one involved 'punctuation semaphore' and, I must admit, I've struggled to get it out of my head ever since. Finally, the audience chipped in with suggestions to put together a new song all about biscuits, which was given a blues-inspired accompaniment by Luke on the accordion.

The session culminated in a performance by The Linnets, the CIEP's choir, performing 'This Long Song', which was written by Ian and Luke. 'This Long Song' tells of a song that's too long and too loose, and therefore would benefit from being chopped down with a pair of scissors (note the editing theme). This was my first CIEP conference, and I was excited to join The Linnets, singing alto. It's been a while since I sang in a choir, so it was brilliant to get involved. I'd recommend this to new members who are thinking of coming along to the conference next year, as it's a great way to get to know people.

All in all, it was a fantastic way to bring everyone together at the end of a very busy and very productive few days. I'm so glad I decided to attend my first CIEP conference, and I can't wait to see what CIEP 2023 has to offer!



**Bridget Coulter** is an editor specialising in fiction, non-fiction and academic texts. She runs **BC Editorial**, providing editorial services to publishers, authors, academics and organisations. She has a PhD in music and is an Intermediate Member of the CIEP.





## Closing remarks

CIEP chair Hugh Jackson

On Monday afternoon, the conference closed as it began, with a speech by CIEP chair Hugh Jackson.

I'm sorry to have to say this, but we've come to the end of the programme. It seems to be over just as soon as it started. Such is ever the nature of conference.

This is a special time in the Institute's calendar, and this conference was always going to be a particularly special one. I'm never ready for it to end, and yet I'm always exhausted. May I send envious congratulations to anyone who remembered to book a few days off afterwards to recover.

I have many thanks to offer.

First, as is now traditional, I have to thank the Zoom gods for blessing us and looking after us. The Environmental Policy Working Group has banned me from sacrificing a goat in their name this year, but I think we got away with it.

Thank you again to Kents Hill Park. You've looked after us magnificently and we have felt well looked after. I'm not breaking any confidences in saying that a few years ago we went to a conference centre that on the very first day ran out of teabags. Nothing of that sort here.

Thank you to our wonderful office staff, Shannon and Reema, for working so very hard and keeping the whole shebang running smoothly. I hope that lots of members have had a chance to meet and talk to the two of them.

Thank you to my colleagues on the Council. The Council truly is the best team to work with, and I feel so very fortunate to be a part of that team. In little over a week, three of our longest-serving directors will be standing down, and saying goodbye to them will be the hardest part of my job. So I'm not going to do it here. That's for another day.

A special thank you to Beth Hamer and the conference team: Ben, Marieke and Noemi. Thank you so much for all you've done. I'm astounded every year by what the conference team pull off. This year has probably been

a far greater technological challenge than any that has come before, and you've managed it without a single hitch. Each year we try something new, and when members say good things about it, it just gives us that little bit extra confidence to try even more new things.

I've suspect I've angered the Zoom gods sufficiently now that I ought to move on.

\*\*\*

A couple of people have come up to me and said that I was too maudlin when I spoke to you yesterday morning – was it only yesterday morning?

Anyway. Maudlin.

I've been called worse.

But that wasn't my intention at all. This conference, wherever it is, is one of my favourite places in the world, with some of my very favourite people. I wanted to express how, when things have looked difficult, I've always found comfort in this community. I know that a lot of people feel the same.

And I'm not maudlin at all. Quite the opposite. If it's true that crises have brought out the best of humanity in our community, they have also shown our community as among the best of humanity. We are, brick by brick, day by day, building a new and exciting future. It's a long journey, but it's one I'm nothing but optimistic about. We as an institute can't be all things to everybody. But we can and will do better every day to support you.

We will be rest when you're weary.

Sanctuary when you're worried.

Escape when you're overwhelmed.

A place of hope and a source of inspiration when things get too much.



And always a companion on the journey.

We will all push ourselves, and we as a council will push you too, and ask you to be brave, because that's what friends do when we know each other can achieve great things.

We might challenge you, and I know we might disappoint you sometimes, but we will always support you and help you as best we can. And I promise we will always, always be on your side, *contra mundum*.

But our organisation is a story that's still being written, one that may never be complete, and one in which we are all characters and must play our part.

The lessons from this conference show that diversity in the world, including a rich diversity of opinions, isn't a threat. It might by now be a cliché to call it an opportunity, but more importantly than that it's a privilege, an honour, a pleasure. And, just as in the world at large, diversity within our organisation isn't something we can take for granted. It has to be desired, nourished, cherished, protected and celebrated in order for it to prosper.

I'm particularly proud that so many people on their second, or subsequent, career have found a home in the CIEP, and I've spoken to lots of people about that this year. We are a space for second chances and the dream of a new and better life. We are all the beneficiaries of the confluence of our members'

experiences from their former lives ... as well as sometimes their geeky interests and eccentricities, as anyone who's been to the Lightning talks will testify.

When we don't just tolerate difference, and don't just welcome it, but celebrate it, that's what makes a professional space a community. And a very good one at that.

I talked yesterday about how we are better when we are one. That's true. But, while we might be *better* when we are one, we are *best* when we are many: when the various strands of human experience weave together to create a bold and bright and strong tapestry.

So, as I look to the future, no, I'm not maudlin. I'm looking forward to the journey onwards with you, by your side. Tomorrow there will be sunshine and we'll leave the dark behind.

We will all now break apart for another year, but I'm not despondent, because, no matter how far apart we might seem, we will never be on our own.

\*\*\*

I'd like to finish with an anecdote, if you'll bear with me, if the trains will stop – though I understand that's an unfortunate joke today – I really will let you all go. We're going to say goodbye to our members online in a moment, because until technology develops to allow cups of tea to be passed through Zoom you won't be

much interested in what comes after this. Don't worry, Beth's going to get right on that tea thing. Then we'll draw the raffle and have a cup of tea. Nothing says editorial community more than that.

Anyway, yes. In spring 2020, when nobody knew what on earth was going on, and everyone was clutching at clichés, trying to hold fast to anything that would give them a moment's comfort. There, amid all the people chanting 'we're all in this together' and 'this too shall pass' and things like that, a quiet voice said some words I hadn't heard for many years before that. It's the tag end of a prayer called the Fisherman's Prayer, and it goes something like this:

**Look after me, for the sea is so wide and my boat is so very small.**

**The sea is so wide and my boat is so very small.**

Amid all the mantras of strength and bravery and fortitude, there was a small voice saying it's OK to be vulnerable and to ask for help.

And I remember a time when I talked about that to a priest years beforehand, and he said, 'Yes, Hugh, but if

you put enough boats together, side by side, everyone holding hands and relying on each other, like Xerxes crossing the Hellespont, eventually you find that it's not a sea at all, just a river like any other, and you can all get to the other side safe and sound.'

And I, being young and foolish, though I might well say the same thing now I'm old and cynical, said, 'But you might *all* get swept away by the current.'

He looked at me, and said something utterly profound that I've never forgotten, and it's probably the single most important lesson that as editors we all need to remember and relearn, time after time. He looked at me and said,

'Hugh.

'Shut up. It's my story, and I'll tell it the way I want.'

Thank you, all of you, very much for coming to conference and making it so wonderful. I wish you, your loved ones and your businesses all the very best for the year ahead, and I look forward to seeing you next year in Glasgow.

## Acknowledgements

Conference director: Beth Hamer

Conference team: Ben Dare, Noemi Vallone and Marieke Krijnen

Copyeditor: Anne Gillion

## 2022 Conference overview

*Reviewer: Jennie Seitz*

### Diversity and change

This year's conference came on the heels of a week of significant change to the heads of the UK. Two days after swearing Liz Truss in as the new prime minister, the Queen died, leaving the throne vacant for our new monarch, King Charles III. This concept of change permeated the conference in many ways as an underlying accompaniment to its official theme of **Editing in a diverse world**.

### Fun and games

The lack of the usual AGM on the first afternoon meant there was plenty of time for informal social activities. Early arrivals were able to choose between a trip to the **National Museum of Computing** at Bletchley Park and a speed-networking event. Despite being brought up in the area, I had never visited the museum before, so I jumped at the chance to see where the Enigma code had been cracked during the Second World War. The enthusiastic volunteers were delighted to recount all they knew about Bombe, Tunney and Colossus and explain how human error enabled the Lorenz code, used by Hitler to convey messages to his top generals in the field, to be cracked in just ten days. There wasn't enough time to see everything, but it was fantastic, albeit somewhat ageing, to see the BBC Micro and a playable game of Manic Miner that I had spent so much time on in my youth in a museum. This fascinating experience was a clear reminder of how much technology has changed in such a relatively short space of time.

On our return to the conference centre at Kents Hill, we were able to register for the event, choose a sticker to show others our pronouns and participate in more social activities, which ranged from crafts, games and a gentle walk around the park to a 5k run for the fittest among us. I chose the gentle walk led by Margaret Hunter and had a lovely time chatting with new people, getting caught in a brief refreshing shower and seeing a double rainbow.



## Dinner and drinks

We newbies were invited to meet the CIEP Council for pre-dinner drinks, and dinner was followed by the renowned quiz, which proved to be a lot of fun, even if I was in one of the lowest-scoring teams! Though we did get the biggest cheer, so that in my book is a win of sorts.

## Day one

Day one kicked off with a thoughtful and poignant opening speech from CIEP chair Hugh Jackson about how the world has changed since the last in-person conference in 2019, referring not only to the Queen who had awarded the Royal Charter to the CIEP almost three years prior, to the day, but also to Brexit and the war in Ukraine. As a new member, it quickly became clear how much the CIEP meant to him and how pleased he was to be back with the community of fellow editors after the Covid-enforced break.

His words, 'We are better when we are one,' indicated to me that no matter what happens, we can navigate these changes and events when we work together as a community. As a relative newcomer to the CIEP at my first conference, Hugh's moving (though some, he later advised us, described it as 'maudlin') speech offered a warm, reassuring welcome to the community that provides a sense of support and togetherness, no matter what changes occur and no matter how we come together, in person or via camera – a fitting sentiment given that this was the first time the conference had been presented in hybrid form with people attending both in person and online.

## Whitcombe Lecture

The Whitcombe Lecture, so named after the CIEP founder Norma Whitcombe, was given by Katherine May, the best-selling author of *Wintering: The power of rest and retreat in difficult times*. As an author with autism, Katherine 'falls into the diversity bucket', and she used that perspective to talk about how to embed a true representation of diversity into organisations and the challenges of writing as an autistic person.

Katherine spoke about her book *The Electricity of Every Living Thing: A woman's walk in the wild to find her way home*, in which she talks about how the uncomfortable, frustrating and soul-destroying walk across the beautiful and dramatic south coast road from Somerset to Dorset led to a profound change in her life. The 'artificial crisis' that she imposed upon herself broke her down sufficiently so that she became open to accepting change and learning who she really was. This is something perhaps we all do in different ways, whether by completing a marathon, triathlon or



later-life learning, possibly because of an inability in our culture to cope with change. Such self-imposed crises thus find a way to force the inevitable change that might otherwise occur in a negative way.

This opening up led her to the realisation that the 'othering' she had always felt was because she was autistic. However, on joining the autistic community and learning more about it, she realised how frequently it is attacked and misunderstood, even hated. Where previously she had felt safe, she now felt personally despised. Her rapid re-education also led to her feeling ashamed for her previous lack of awareness and for making many of the same mistakes that she sees other people now making.

Katherine shed light on how our nation and the international community have a genuine fear of causing offence and making unwitting mistakes that may offend others; she stressed how important it is that we, as editors, adapt and apply the new language that has entered the vocabulary within recent years to encourage the inclusion of all people. Because, as editors, we can foster change by choosing our words carefully, she ended by asking us to use the term ASC meaning Autism Spectrum Condition, as opposed to the previously used ASD indicating that people with autism have a *disorder*. It was a powerful and thought-provoking talk that highlighted the impact editors have on the world through the words we choose to use.

### *Sessions of diversity*

The breakout sessions throughout the rest of the day, interspersed with breaks for networking and refreshments, supported our learning of how to incorporate diversity into our editing work. Such sessions included Jason Pegler's 'Editing and mental health writers', Rosie Tate and Peter Clayburn's 'Working with international organisations', Margaret Hunter's 'Creating accessible PDFs' and a session with Daniel Heuman and Sofia Matias on 'Building a conscious language style in PerfectIt'. Other sessions included a live proofreading workshop, development editing for both non-fiction and romantic fiction, marketing for people who hate marketing and a session on how people can become more involved with the CIEP.

All this was nicely topped off with the unmissable 'Lightning talks' coordinated by Robin Black and Lucy Ridout. With subjects ranging from dangling modifiers to Sinology, from editing sacred music to networking for introverts, the Lightning talks once again showcased the many and diverse talents we share as a community.



### *Dressed for dinner*

At the gala dinner that evening, I was rather pleased to have been seated at a very diverse table among people with differing international roots. Our conversations included not only light chats and laughter but also heavier topics that perhaps opened our minds to the experiences of others and how they differed from our own.

Following a toast to the past and the future – the Queen and the King – Richard Coles continued the theme of the conference by delivering an enjoyable after-dinner speech about his ‘voyages into the mysteries of diversity’. Having grown up as a middle-class boy from Kettering, he made the unexpected move to London, which led to him joining a gay pop band, studying theology at King’s College, presenting on BBC Radio, and becoming an ordained vicar of several parishes before stepping down and moving into his current role as a best-selling author.

Throughout the ‘weird mixture’ of his life, there was a continuity of being authentic and engaging people, and, on balance, he realised that everything he had learned about community and applied in his work as a vicar in both poorer and richer parts of the UK was based on what he learned in the 1980s gay community in London. However, realising that he could no longer put an official face on an organisation that fails to admit LGBTQ+ people on equal terms, he recently stepped down from his position as reverend, which highlighted that more work still needs to be done to improve the acceptance of diversity within the general community.

### **Day two**

Day two continued with something for everyone, with breakout sessions on topics ranging from ‘Working with neurodiversity in editing’, ‘The ethics of proofreading student writing’, ‘Working with self-publishers’ and ‘Starting out’ to ‘Editing sex scenes in fiction’ and ‘Using referencing tools’.

The conference fair, which ran throughout, gave us opportunities to obtain information on indexing and PerfectIt and to purchase Jason Pegler’s mental health books as well as author-signed copies of Kia Thomas’s and Prof Lynne Murphy’s books. I wonder how many of you also bought Kia’s very swearsy dictionary – and laughed as much as I did! We also had lots of CIEP goodies to choose from. Such are the perks of being there in person. Apologies to those who were watching online.



### Closing

The closing plenary session with Ian McMillan and Luke Carver Goss (no, not that one) had everyone laughing at the questionable notices that Ian had found and stolen. How would people know what to do without them? The presentation ended with the joint creation of a ridiculous song based on a conversation he had overheard during the break about the 'secret stash of biscuits upstairs'. This was actually a conversation I had participated in, although I'm afraid to say I was the one who had only just found out about this secret stash, so I cannot confirm its existence.

Before the longest raffle with the most prizes ever and almost everyone winning a prize, CIEP chair Hugh Jackson gave a rather more uplifting closing speech. He expressed what so many of us could likely relate to: that we were not ready for it to end, yet we were exhausted. He shared how he finds comfort in this community and considers it the very best of humanity, where we can build a new and exciting future by supporting each other. He also summed up what we had learned at this conference, that 'diversity is not a threat but rather it's a privilege, an honour and a pleasure, and within our organisation, it needs to be nourished, cherished, desired and celebrated in order to prosper'. Following on from his opening speech, he concluded that while 'we are better when we are one, we are best when we are many and ... We will never be on our own.' It was a very reassuring sentiment to close on.

### So, was it what I had expected?

Yes, and better! It was busy, fun, informative, helpful and, yes, exhausting. It was definitely the people who made it, and it was an absolute joy to meet so many other editors. I felt like I was able to return to work with renewed motivation, far more knowledge and a community of support that I hadn't felt part of or even really known existed until now. I wish I had been able to speak to more people, but, given that I'm used to working alone, it was a lot of conversations to have and information to absorb with little time to recharge. It was good to know that there was a quiet room available if we needed it, although I never quite made it there as there was so much that I didn't want to miss.

The hybrid version of the conference proved to be a huge success, with 200 people joining online and 160 in person. This was no mean feat, thanks to Beth Hamer, Ben Dare and the conference team.



The hardest part for me was selecting which sessions to attend, as there were so many brilliant and useful topics to choose from. I'm grateful that we can view the ones we missed online, and I can't wait to see everyone I met this time and to meet more of the people in this wonderful community at the 2023 conference in Glasgow.



Originally from the UK, **Jennie Seitz** currently lives in Florida and works as a copyeditor and proofreader, predominantly helping writers prepare their academic research papers for journals. She has over ten years' experience and is the owner of GT Pro-Edit LLC. Her other editing work includes non-fiction books, dissertations and theses, and web content. She is also house manager at her local community theatre. You can find Jennie on [LinkedIn](#).





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