PROFESSIONAL EDITING

Week 3 Seminar: Higher Order Editorial Concerns

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THE GOALS AND PRACTICES OF EDITING

According to *Australian standards for editing practice:*

The goal of editors, regardless of their role or the type of publication, is to ensure that the material is consistent and correct, and that its content, language, style and layout suit its purpose and meet the needs of its audience (p. ix)

What here is meant by:

- consistency and correctness?
- content?
- language?
- style?
- layout?
- suitability of purpose?
- the needs of an audience?

Discuss each item, ensuring that you look up definitions if you are not sure.

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HIGHER ORDER CONCERNS

- As a rule of thumb, we are using 'higher order concerns' to mean approaching the document as a whole
- This can mean issues of invention and content, as well as arrangement i.e. its substance and structure.
- It can also mean making text-wide decisions about language, style, formatting etc.
- This means that 'lower order concerns' is about approaching the minutiae of particular sentences and paragraphs
- It can also mean making sentence and paragraph-scale decisions reflecting higher order issues

- consistency and correctness
- content
- language
- style
- layout
- suitability of purpose
- the needs of an audience

Pair/group discussion questions:

Can this list be separated into 'higher' and 'lower' order concerns.

Why/why not?

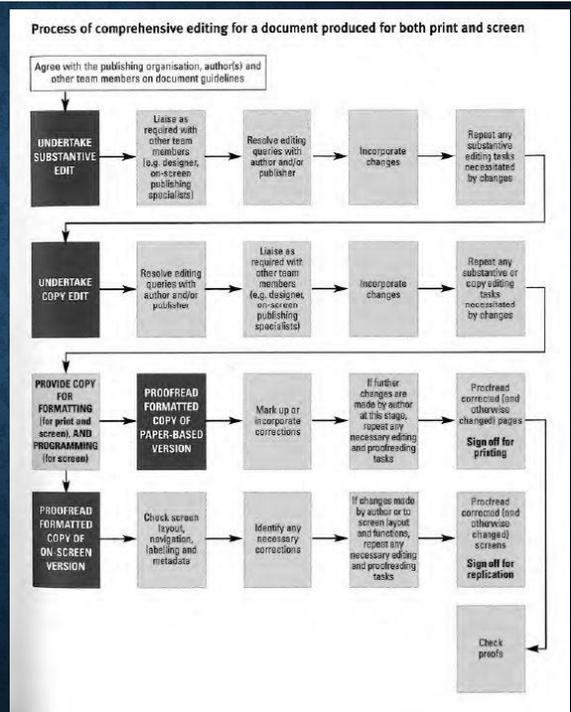Do some items involve both approaches?

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This diagram is from p. 255 of the *Style manual for authors, editors and printers* (2002) (see eReserve)

Which part of the process deals with 'higher order concerns'?

Which parts with 'lower order concerns'?

Is the process always linear? Why/why not?

Process of comprehensive editing for a document produced for both print and screen

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C1 Appraisal

Editors exercise their judgement in determining whether basic structures are in place, the sequence of ideas is logical and material with potential to be used for multiple formats has been identified. In particular, editors are required to evaluate the following:

C1.1 Suitability and quality of the original material.

May include printed and onscreen text, media assets such as video and audio files, and interactive activities such as quizzes.

C1.2 Length, structure and focus appropriate for the purpose of the publication, intended audience and medium.

C1.3 Textual devices for people to find their way around a publication.

May include a table of contents, cross-references and index.

C1.4 Content from the publication with potential to be used for other purposes, such as promotion and marketing.

For example, an editor may be required to draft a blurb or select text for use in promotional material.

C1.5 Additional material to enhance a publication in multiple formats.

For example, the e-book version of a publication may benefit from additional content such as author interview, animated diagrams, interactive quizzes, video tutorials or games.

APPRAISING A DOCUMENT

This list is excerpted from the *Australian standards for editing practice*

The notion of an editorial appraisal can be quite formalized in some settings (e.g. publishing houses) and quite informal in others (e.g. some media venues, in workplaces)

This can also be understood as 'coming to terms' with a manuscript

Where does appraisal fit in the editorial process?

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APPRAISING A DOCUMENT

According to McKenzie in *The Editor's Companion,* an editor making an appraisal seeks "to form an impression of its scope, coverage, balance, coherence, consistency and accuracy."

Individually, review McKenzie's discussion of appraisal, especially pp. 81-83, "The text: overview" and "The text: language"

In pairs or small groups, discuss McKenzie's account, and how she understands the appraisal process.

Then, choose any article, book or document, and write a few sentences on each of the following:

- **scope**
- **coverage**
- **balance**
- **coherence**
- **consistency**
- **accuracy**

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APPRAISING A DOCUMENT

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Through this process, you will begin to gain insight into editorial decisions that have been made with the text…

Examples:

Inner West Council Annual Report and Financial Statements

https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/about/the-council/corporate-planning-performance-budget/performance-reporting

"I don't need cancel culture to tell me where I stand on Woody Allen" by Mark Mordue

https://www.smh.com.au/culture/books/i-don-t-need-cancel-culture-to-tell-me-where-i-stand-on-woody-allen-20200308-p547z4.html

"Next time we've got to handle emergency donations better" by Debbie Wills

https://theconversation.com/next-time-weve-got-to-handle-emergency-donations-better-132273

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RHETORIC AND EDITING

- **scope**
- **coverage**
- **balance**
- **coherence**
- **consistency**
- **accuracy**

Can we find links between rhetorical concepts and each of these editorial concerns?

e.g.

appeals: ethos, pathos, logos

branches: deliberative, forensic, epideictic

canons: invention, arrangement, style, memory, delivery

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