THE CANBERRA editor

From the CSE President and Committee

It may seem well past the season to say this now, but nevertheless we hope all of you enjoyed the Christmas and New Year you had hoped for, and that you all started 2016 with some real gusto.

It has been a momentous few months since our last edition. The activity that kept your committee busy was, of course, preparing for and conducting a special general meeting of the Society to vote again on IPEd's transmogrification from being a federation of seven independent societies working cooperatively to being a national unitary direct-membership company.

In the national 'referendum' held in October last year, a majority of members in the NSW, Victoria, Queensland and SA societies voted in favour of the proposed change, and will form the new IPEd on 1 July 2016. CSE, along with WA and Tasmania, voted against closing down our societies and becoming branches of the new unitary 'head office' IPEd. CSE's decision was resounding.

Thanks to a CSE recommendation that was adopted during the two-year consultation, the member societies that voted against the proposed change would have a chance to reconsider their position if the result of the first national vote was to form the new unified national body. In other words, CSE would have the chance to change its mind and decide to wind up and become a branch of the new centralised IPEd.

Our March members' gathering became a special general meeting devoted to three motions to (i) become a branch of the new IPEd, (ii) transfer CSE's membership records and residual assets, and (iii) wind up the Society. The necessary quorum of 20 voting members was easily surpassed. Thank you.

Your committee circulated the three motions, and prepared background information and for/against material to help members decide. For your reference, this material is still on our website here. At the meeting, we had a good and respectful discussion before the vote was taken. For the first motion to pass, it needed 75% of full members present or by proxy to vote in favour.

The 75% was not achieved. By contrast, less than 50% of the 42 votes favoured the change. The second and third motions were contingent on the first motion being passed, so they were set aside.

The result of this poll means that CSE members have voted to carry on as an independent society outside the new IPEd after 1 July 2016. Each CSE member will still be able to join IPEd directly after 1 July as well as to remain a CSE member.

The similarly resounding outcome of the second vote would seem to reveal a deep concern within CSE not only about justification for the change, but also about the consultation and transformation processes,

Contents

as well as an ongoing dismay that so many of our concerns were brushed aside—and remain there in the final governance, financing and branch administration arrangements. You may find it worthwhile to revisit the link on our website (above), including 'Why we voted No', and IPEd's responses.

Anticipating the new national representative environment that will prevail after 1 July, we must now set off along the path to remaining an autonomous and financially sound society (as we currently are) with an as-yet-unknown number of renewing and new members, while supporting our members to take part in IPEd-run activities.

This doesn't rule out changing our minds at some time in the future—after we see how sustainable CSE can remain and after we have evidence that the new IPEd is likely to work successfully and makes some of the changes CSE believes are essential.

But for now, Society members have chosen the path. Navigating it will be your committee's primary focus for the next couple of months. There is much to be done in a short time, and we need your cooperation. Ensuring the Mentoring Program Agreement between IPEd and CSE remains workable will be one of several issues we must deal with.

Meanwhile, it is important that we do our best as a society to ensure that the turmoil of this recent and continuing period doesn't divide us. Let us work hard—as we have done for more than 23 years—to demonstrate and exemplify how such a diverse group of professionals can work together to continually create a locally focused society that nurtures, supports and informs its members, while continuing—as we have always done—to contribute to better national representation and servicing of our treasured editing profession.

Your President and Committee

Membership

Life member Peter Judge has retired from his long stewardship of the Yahoo discussion group. I have taken over this role.

For technical reasons, a new discussion group has to be established. The form of this new group will be decided after the second vote on IPEd. Members will then be notified and invited to join, in due course. The Committee has noted Peter's long service to the Society and the President has communicated our thanks to him.

Former Membership Secretary, Marg Millard, has compiled the CSE members archive, which the Committee received earlier this month. The President has thanked Marg for her hard work on this project.

Linda Weber AE
Membership Secretary

New CSE members

A warm welcome to these new members!
Lisa Lines
Rae Luckie
Mel Martin

Associate Members
Kate Le Strange
Anna-Maria Sviatko
Sally Butz

Planning for the 2016 training calendar is underway. If you have ideas for workshops that you would like to see organised, please email us and we can add them to the list of workshops.

ACCREDITATION EXAM PREPARATION
tips, strategies & exercises

Presented by Meryl Potter DE

Saturday, 23 April 2016

9:30 am to 4:30 pm

University House, ANU

$220 (members) | $350 (non-members)

Book your place at TryBooking.

This workshop is for you if you're planning to sit for the IPEd's accreditation exam this year, or simply thinking about sitting it in the future. It is an opportunity for an editorial tune-up even if you aren't thinking about the exam yet. The workshop is intensive with many exercises; it's not intended for beginners.

You can email questions before the workshop to the workshop coordinator at tedbriggs@grapevine.com.au.

In 2016, the exam will be offered on screen for the first time.
However, this workshop focuses on strategies and content, with only some reference to working on screen. It is expected that the society will offer a separate session on the on-screen environment.

The workshop will focus on:

■ Preparation for the exam—tips and strategies for organising revision, reducing stress, managing your time and hitting the 80% pass mark, including how to add another 15 minutes to answering the questions

■ Editing a short extract comparable to the extract for part 2 of the exam—dealing with the tricky things that might be included, following the brief, making style decisions, preparing a sound style sheet, and writing sound author queries

■ Part 3 of the exam—some short answer exercises for practice (e.g. lists, tables, language), and making a sound choice of questions that will help you pass

■ Q&A forum—time to ask other questions you might have
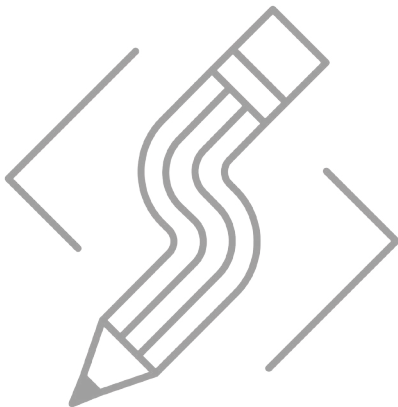
This year's pipeline report is a little different from reports in previous years in that it takes a closer look at fewerer categories — the ones where the biggest things are happening: cancer, heart failure, obesity and diabetes, and hepatitis C, in addition to novel antibiotics, not a goldmine by any stretch, but an absolutely critical need.

A convoluted sentence topped off by the previously unknown word 'fewerer'— we think the magazine's editor needs more betterer training.

Source: http://images2.advanstar.com/PixelMags/pharma-executive/pdf/2013-11.pdf, page 16

IPEd National Mentoring Program

Mentoring in the ACT

Now that Christmas is out of the way, have you thought about being mentored in aspects of editing that you aren't quite comfortable with? Or a special topic? One senior Canberra editor has taken on several new mentees since Christmas— all anxious to do well in the accreditation exam. I would encourage all those who are new or returning to the editing profession or wanting to freelance after years of in-house editing to take advantage of this excellent, ground-breaking program. By doing so, you'll benefit from the knowledge and experience of your peers and learn the tricks of the trade, as it were! I would equally encourage old hands to offer their vast knowledge to beginners and keep our noble profession going from strength to strength. This is a unique opportunity for beginners to have a one-on-one interaction with an experienced editor and for the latter to help make their profession even greater. Having been a mentor myself, I can attest to how rewarding it is to be able to set a beginner on the right path and give them a helping hand.

Contact me for information, and to apply to be either a mentor or a mentee in Canberra.

Ara Nalbandian
ACT Coordinator, IPEd National
Mentoring Program
yerevanarax7@hotmail.com

WELCOME to the newest state coordinator for our program—Shannon Kelly replaces Zoe Hale as NSW coordinator.

Shannon works as a legal editor for Thomson Reuters. Before working full-time as an editor, he worked as a lawyer during the day and a freelance editor in the evenings. He enjoys genre fiction (speculative fiction in particular) and has a love of long novels with deep characterisation and creative magic systems. His interest in mentoring comes from a desire that young editors in the future will find beginning a career in editing to be much easier and more straightforward. NSW members wanting to be mentored, or to find out about becoming a mentor can contact Shannon by email at: shannon.tyler.kelly@gmail.com.
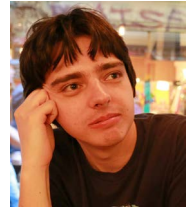
Just what is a mentor, anyway?

Here is a quote from our program's *Guidance Notes*:

> In the context of this program, we are talking about one aspect of professional development, namely mentoring. A *mentor* is in a two-way mutually beneficial relationship with a mentee. A mentor aims to help the mentee to develop personally, provides advice, shares experiences and wisdom, guides the mentee to make his or her own decisions, but never does work for the mentee. A *coach* is engaged to provide strategies and to help the coachee to learn and develop skills for a very specific goal. A *teacher* imparts knowledge and skills to a student and sees that the student does the practice to develop those skills and assesses the results of the teaching at all stages.

> In this program, we have used the words mentor and mentee. There may indeed be some specific goals set by the mentee and there may indeed be a need for the mentor to teach the mentee some new skills. Mentoring is often long-term, but can be arranged for short, very specific needs. There are some aspects of teaching, coaching and counselling in mentoring. However, the relationship is more that of a trusted friend and driven by the personal needs of the mentee—not imposed on the mentee.

> At the end of a mentorship, we ask the mentor to assess the mentee's progress and make any necessary recommendations for further mentoring, training, or anything else that may be of benefit to the mentee. Editing is largely a skills-based activity, so some teaching or guidance in the development of advanced editing skills and subsequent assessment of personal development in these skills is inevitable in this mentoring program.

> If you would like to read more about mentoring in general, please ask us. You could start by reading from Elizabeth Manning Murphy's book, *Working words*, published by the Canberra Society of Editors, 2011, Canberra (see page 8).

Write to us if you would like to receive a copy of the *Guidance Notes*. Or visit the IPEd website www.iped-editors.org, National Mentoring Program for more details.

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Elizabeth Manning Murphy DE
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Winner of the IPEd's essay prize

John Linnegar has been a friend of the Canberra Society of Editors for some years. In 2015, he gave a workshop and a couple of papers at the Write | Edit | Index conference in Canberra. He is a former chair of the Professional Editors' Guild in South Africa, the author of a number of books on English, Afrikaans, and editing—the latest being *Text editing*, for which I was invited, along with Janet Mackenzie, to write an appendix on the editing of Australian English.

John is heavily involved in the mentoring of editors, and is currently writing his PhD thesis on aspects of mentoring. He qualified as a mentor under our National Mentoring Program, and has so far mentored two Australian editors from his new base in Antwerp. I have had the pleasure of running my grammar workshop and giving Skype lectures for students at the University of Antwerp during the last couple of years.

Just before John left Canberra after last year's conference, I suggested that he should join the Canberra Society of Editors as a Student member, given his PhD candidature in Antwerp. So blame me for helping to cement John's relationship with Canberra. He recently entered an essay in the IPEd Essay Prize competition, and with his entry *Fifteen shades at play: the new 'supermodel'*, won the IPEd prize. I look forward to reading the essay, about which I understand the judges made very complimentary remarks.

I would like, on behalf of the CSE, to offer congratulations to our fellow member John Linnegar.

Elizabeth Manning Murphy DE

From the Accreditation Board

Accreditation exam

Preparations are in full swing for the next accreditation exam, which will be held on Saturday 25 June 2016.

Registrations opened in early March.

As we mentioned in the 2015 August/September newsletter issue, the structure of the exam, the allocation of marks, and the required pass mark have not changed; but instead of being on paper, the exam will be presented as a set of Microsoft Word documents. To complete the exam, candidates will be required to edit passages of text on screen, type in short passages of text, and select from multiple-choice options or drop-down lists. But the exam will NOT be a test of candidates' expertise in Word, and knowledge of advanced Word features is not required.

The exam preparation workshop has been advertised on page 3 of this newsletter. The workshop will cover the aims of the exam, how it is structured, how marks are allocated, how to prepare, what to study, how to manage your time during the exam (extremely important), and possibly a chance to review some basic editing practices. We strongly encourage anyone thinking of doing the exam to attend the workshop. We are preparing an online tutorial to demonstrate the on-screen format and provide some tips for navigating through the documents. And at least one of the sample exams will be converted to the on-screen format around the same time as registrations open.

The Guide for candidates on the IPEd website have been updated; so if you are thinking of doing the exam, we suggest you have a look at it.

And for those of you who are primarily Mac users, we are planning to make a number of Macs available. However, we may not be in a position to offer the same level of technical support as for PC users. (But then, I hear you say, Macs don't fall over!)

Fees have been set at:

- Society member sitting the exam for the first time ($610; early bird $580)

- Society member resitting the exam ($300; early bird $285)
- Non-society member sitting the exam for the first time ($765; early bird $730)
- Non-society member resitting the exam ($380; early bird $360)

The accreditation scheme is run on a cost-recovery basis. The Accreditation Board endeavours to keep the fees as low as possible, and has managed to avoid increases since 2012. However, the on-screen exam has incurred extra costs, particularly in the hire of venues. Although offsetting savings exist in many areas, it has been impossible to avoid a very small increase in the 2016 fees.

2011 accreditations due for renewal this year

If you gained accreditation in 2011, you will be required to renew it later this year; we'll contact you in the next couple of months about it. In the meantime, we suggest you acquaint yourself with the Guidelines for renewal on the IPEd website.

If you have any queries about the exam or accreditation renewal, email your Accreditation Board delegate Ted Briggs: tedbriggs@grapevine.com.au.

February general meeting

Romance, fiction and editing

Donna Maree Hanson, a local writer, gave a lively talk to members at the Feruary general meeting. Having published in the genres of fantasy and romance, as well as preparing professional reports in her day job as an auditor, Donna has been writing for the past 16 years. Her talk covered the long road from that first spark of an idea to completed works to finally attaining recognition and publication. Donna held members spellbound while she spoke of her efforts to learn the craft of writing both fiction and non-fiction (for work), and then learning how to self-edit, and then the mechanics of editing and assessing the work of others. An active member of the Canberra Speculative Fiction Guild (CSFG), Donna participated in critiquing groups, participated in local and national conventions, wrote for the CSFG anthologies, and volunteered to co-edit the anthology *Encounters* with fellow CSE member Maxine McArthur. She also researched, wrote and published a non-fiction book titled *Australian Speculative Fiction: a genre overview*.

As a published author, Donna has worked with a number of editors, and she outlined to members how the process was usually collaborative, constructive and informative.

Over the past few years Donna undertook a Masters in Creative Writing at the University of Canberra, which included units in editing and proofreading. After initially misunderstanding the length of work that was to be edited as the major assignment, Donna ended up editing an entire novel as part of the unit on editing. While berating herself for biting off more than was comfortably chewable, she received a Distinction for her work. For 2016, Donna has started a Doctorate on the topic of Feminism in Australian Speculative Fiction. She will continue to write fantasy and romance novels: her latest novel (under the pen name Dani Kristoff) was shortlisted in the Australian Romance Writers Association annual awards.

The speaker for the April meeting on 27 April will be Louise Thurtell, a highly experienced editor and one of the early Beatrice Davis fellows, who has worked for a number of well-known publishing houses and is currently a publisher and editor with Allen & Unwin. Take the opportunity to learn from Louise's wealth of expertise: she will talk about how publishing houses manage the editing process and how this is changing as books and publishing evolve.

Kaaren Sutcliffe AE

I dropped out of the Communism class because of lousy Marx.

'Only the lonely'

Who remembers this song by the late, great Roy Orbison? My commiserations if you do, because it probably means that you're as long in the tooth as I am. It was a hit in 1960, probably the year that I walked up University Avenue for only the first time. A little later that year, this (then pre-iconic*) boulevard was inundated by Sullivans Creek, if I recall correctly. Nothing to do with me. I mention all this only because what I want to briefly muse on here is the word 'only', in an adverbial sense, perhaps a lonely task.

Here's the first of what the acerbic Kingsley Amis has to say about 'only' in his often erudite and invariably entertaining compendium *The King's English: a Guide to Modern Usage*.

> This little word has the property of *straying from its logical position* [my italics] in a sentence or phrase, an eccentricity firmly entrenched in idiom and reinforced millions of times a day by English-speakers all over the world. No such person would say, for instance, 'Nelson seemed to lose his touch only when he fought on land,' instead of 'Nelson only seemed to lose his touch ' etc. (In writing, you might have to think again so as not to be taken as saying N. only *seemed* to, he didn't really.)

As an editor, this seems to me to be a curious line to take—that it is fine to let words stray from their logical position. As we'll see later on, it might be worse. Anyhow, moving right along from battles to the bakery, one of my favourite lonely onlys is in a recent *Guardian* header; 'Tesco bows to demand and will soon *only* sell straight croissants'. Did they give them away before, I wonder, and will the bent ones still be free. Closer to home, I note: 'The Constitution can *only* be changed by vote of IPEd members on a special motion'. What other things might one want to do with the IPEd Constitution? Mmm.

One of the many marvellous things† about the digital age and electronic text is that documents are searchable; thus one is able, if so inclined and has time on one's hands, to check on the syntactical credentials of all and sundry including, in ebooks, our favoured authors.

So, being temporally unchallenged during our recent heat wave, I delved into a sample of my eclectic collection of ebooks to track down orphaned 'onlys'. My suite comprised *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate* (Naomi Klein), *This House of Grief* (Helen Garner), *Galileo's Finger: the Ten Great Ideas of Science* (Peter Atkins), *Far from the Madding Crowd* (Thomas Hardy), *The Last of the Vostyachs* (Diego Marani), *Joe Wilson and His Mates* (Henry Lawson), *The Mandarin Code* (Steve Ellis and Chris Uhlmann), *Sweet Caress: the Many Lives of Amory Clay* (William Boyd), *The Noise of Time* (Julian Barnes) and *The Rosie Project* (Don Tillman).

As was only to be expected, each of these works contained umpteen onlys, but I have to report that my leisure time was of insufficient duration to allow me to count them. I mention in passing that I read the Hardy only so as to know the plot before seeing the marvellous 2015 movie (I warmed to that Bathsheba Everdene). Dunno why I read *The Rosie Project*.

Of the eleven authors, only Naomi Klein, Helen Garner, Peter Atkins and Thomas Hardy knew about the rightful place of 'only' in the scheme of things syntactic. Diego Marani slipped only once, denying himself a perfect score with '… you only married me because you needed someone to link arms with at the faculty cocktail parties …' This might have been a translator's slip.

Henry Lawson was a serial offender, as were the rest of them. I was especially dismayed to find Julian Barnes, whose writing is otherwise immaculate, in this tent: 'Lady Macbeth of Mtesnsk had only succeeded outside the Soviet Union because it was "non-political"..', and 'She only

*The notion that just about anything one cares to think of could, with the passage of time and/or a little promotion, become 'iconic' had not yet been insinuated into the public consciousness.

†Particularly so for our profession—how much easier now are the technicalities of editing than when it was a paper, pencil and post-it note effort? (I gather that some still practise those dark acts … hard to believe.)

takes things willingly surrendered while holding a knife at your throat', being just two of more than a few instances. Sigh. Does Jonathan Cape no longer employ readers or copyeditors?

Returning to Kingsley, we read that in his English this is all just pedantry … or is he just stirring the pot?

> The 'misplacing' of only, like the split infinitive and other fancied lapses from verbal rectitude, inevitably draws the fire of parlour grammarians, 'those friends from whom the language may well pray to be saved,' as Fowler calls them in this connection. His dislike of such people is so strong that it actually betrays him into a mixed metaphor when he says of them, 'they were … slapping a strait waistcoat upon their mother tongue,' a lapse, but not a very sad one.

What do you think? Are you with me and Roy on this or are we only the lonely?

Ed Highley

So you want to edit theses?

Be careful what you wish for!

I enjoy editing PhD theses for people who are not native speakers of English. It's a challenge, certainly, but can be rewarding and I learn a lot about the subject matter of their theses. Up until quite recently, I haven't had many problems with this aspect of editing. I am a trained linguist, with more than a nodding acquaintance with the structure of the grammars of a variety of languages, so I know where the candidate is 'coming from'. I also have a solid grounding in English grammar myself, having been taught by experts in the days when the subject was taught thoroughly at school.

Most PhD candidates know the vocabulary of the topic they are writing about. Most accept that they are still thinking in their native language grammar but have the notion that an editor can fix that.

Faults vary, depending on several factors:

- the first language of the candidate: I am quite accustomed to dealing with, for example, articles (a/an and the), prepositions, subject–verb agreement, formation of verb tenses
- how much the candidate knows about English and how much they have written in English: often they arrive in Australia from their native country with the express purpose of doing a PhD by research, after relatively little acquaintance with English, either spoken or written
- whether they have attended classes in English grammar and effective writing in Australia
- whether they intend to continue with academic pursuits, including writing articles for research journals after they graduate.

Let's look at examples of each of these factors:

First language interference

Candidates from a number of linguistic backgrounds do not have equivalents of the articles 'a/an' and 'the' in their language, so they have no idea how to use them in English. Prepositions are in a similar position, and the difficulty is that changing a preposition can totally alter the meaning of a sentence. The relationship of subjects and following verbs, and verbs and following objects, is expressed differently, and it's common to see something like 'Researcher interview six person with this problem', where number, agreement and verb tense have to be thrashed out to arrive at what the author means. And who knows who has the 'problem', and whether 'problem' means 'question' or 'difficulty'? When an entire thesis is written in this sort of language, it's a major detective job to work out the meaning, even if the author is handy and not back in their own country.

Spell checker

Eye halve a spelling checker;
It came with my pea sea.
It plainly marks four my revue,
Miss steaks eye kin knot sea.

Eye strike a key and type a word,
And weight four it two say,
Weather eye am wrong oar write;
It shows me strait a weigh.

As soon as a mist ache is maid,
It nose bee fore two long.
And eye can put the error rite;
Its rare lea ever wrong.

Eye have run this poem threw it;
I am shore your pleased two no,
Its letter perfect awl the weigh.
My spell checker tolled me sew!

Julia Turner Creation

English language background

It is good when students from other countries come to study in Australia, spend their entire academic lives in Australia and write essays and dissertations for several years, improving their English all the time. By the time they reach the PhD thesis writing stage, they have a good grasp of English grammar, and their theses can be edited, knowing that only occasional queries about meaning and structure are necessary. Remember, under the *Institute of professional editors* (IPEd) guidelines, we copy-edit only. We do not change meaning and we do not rewrite content—we point out problems in both those areas and pass the problem back to the student and their supervisor.

However, there seem to be many more students coming to Australia solely for the purpose of acquiring a PhD by research. It seems to me that they have very little useful background in writing in English in their earlier academic life. Somehow, nobody has told them that their thesis has to be in reasonable English, so that meaning is not ambiguous and so that content is relevant and has been checked by their supervisory panel before they seek permission to employ outside professional editorial help.

Don't get me wrong: home-grown PhD candidates can have some of the same problems because there was a very long period in Australian educational history when English grammar was barely taught at all. But at least home-grown students have grown up speaking English and making themselves understood.

English grammar classes

All universities have 'study skills centres' or some such advisory service that students can attend to brush up their English grammar and academic writing style before they embark on a major work like a thesis. I wonder how many students avail themselves of this service.

There are classes available in the community to help people come to grips with English. It should be mandatory for students to have to prove their proficiency in basic English writing skills before being accepted as PhD candidates.

Continuing to write in English?

Students who want to continue to write in English after they graduate—for instance, to write journal articles or to work in a job where English writing skills are useful to them—are a joy to help. Many, however, seem to have no reason to continue with English for any longer than necessary to get the doctorate. The latter are hard to help as they seem to expect the editor to 'fix' everything. That won't work.

What would I do about it?

I would amend the IPEd guidelines to include an injunction to supervisors of research students that they read their students' draft theses to make certain that these documents are editable at all before giving their permission for the student to seek professional editing help. I would also suggest that editors make it clear in a disclaimer in their quotes to PhD candidates, in particular, that they cannot do anything that will alter the meaning of text or change content or do any 'structural' editing—that they are permitted to 'copy-edit' only, following what is set out in Parts D and E of the *Australian standards for editing practice* (ASEP) guidelines, referred to in the IPEd website page *Editing research theses*.

I would offer to help the candidate with some of the most glaring grammatical issues, at a different fee from the editing fee, before editing the actual thesis. I don't recommend this to all editors because I know that not all editors are good teachers as well as good editors. It's something I have done very successfully with PhD candidates from overseas who have been keen to improve their English and willing to put the effort into it. If you can teach, do use that skill. I have used the

sample section of the thesis as the 'workbook' and concentrated on one aspect of grammar at a time. The student then re-works their entire thesis, applying what they learn from me, chapter by chapter, so that by the end of the task, the writing is vastly improved and I have much less editing to do. This requires time, and the student needs to be advised that time and effort are going to be required for it to work. It's not magic.

Finally, I would try to encourage those students who seem to have no incentive to improve their English writing skills to see the advantages of having that extra 'string to their bow'—a big job, but one that the universities could help with through their alumni associations.

Still want to edit theses? Go for it! But do be aware of the hazards along the way.

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Ten rare but charming words for nasty people

A while ago, Meriam Webster online presented some 10 rare but amusing insult words under the title *Don't call me loblolly, you blatherskite*. Because we love etymology, we thought we would share these words and their definitions here for some entertainment.

LOBLOLLY

Lout; a stupid, rude or awkward person

Loblolly was originally a British word for 'a thick gruel', especially a rustic or nautical dish or a simple medicinal remedy. Riffing on 'thick gruel', apparently, Americans later used the word to refer to an ugly, boggy mess though it also refers to a mudhole as a US colloquialism. Loblolly also refers to a pine, *Pinus taeda*, and its wood.

It's unclear how the word developed its insulting sense, but perhaps the evolution was similar to the current use of words like *thick* and *dense* to mean 'stupid'.

BLATHERSKITE

A person who talks foolishly at length

It's an alteration of the Scottish compound *blather skate* (*skate* means 'a contemptible person').

The word appears in a mid-seventeenth century Scottish ballad called *Maggie Lauder* in which the fair maiden bids her would-be suitor, 'Begone ye hallanshaker/Jog on your gait, ye blatherskate …' [Get lost, you vagabond/Be on your way, you blatherskate ...].

POLTROON

A spiritless coward

PG Wodehouse was fond enough of this sixteenth-century term to use it in several of his books. For example: 'Archie ... was no poltroon, and had proved the fact on many occasions during the days when the entire German army seemed to be picking on him personally ...' (*Indiscretions of Archie*, 1921).

Poltroon comes from the Latin *pullus*, meaning 'young of an animal'.

SUCCUBUS

A demon assuming female form in order to have sexual intercourse with men in their sleep

A *succubus* is the female version of an *incubus*—a demon in male form who has sexual intercourse with sleeping females.

Originating in medieval European folklore, with similar beings in many cultures, *succubi* appear in modern fiction, video games, and South Park.

As a more practical insult, the word is also used figuratively, as in this Jezebel.com headline: 'This Week In Tabloids: Courtney the Evil Succubus Maneater Will Devour Bachelor Ben'.

CACAFUEGO

A swaggering braggart or boaster

The *Cacafuego* was a Spanish ship captured in 1579 by the English admiral Sir Francis Drake.

The word may have developed its insulting sense because some sailors—either the ones who lost the ship or the ones who won it—did some serious bragging.

Cacafuego, by the way, comes from the Spanish word *fuego*, meaning 'fire', and, ultimately, the Latin cacare, meaning (ahem) 'to void as excrement'. The word probably referred to the ship's cannon fire.

CREPEHANGER

Killjoy; someone who takes a pessimistic view of things

Black crêpe fabric was once an important part of mourning ritual. It was sewn into dresses and veils, wrapped in bands around hats and arms, and draped over doors.

We can speculate that to those who started using this insult, a *crepehanger* was a "killjoy" almost in a literal sense—the sort of person who took pleasure in a funeral.

PILGARLIC

A man looked upon with humorous contempt or mock pity

Originally *pilled garlic* (pilled means 'peeled'), *pilgarlic* refers to 'a bald head' or 'a bald-headed man', which it resembles. The mocking or humorous aspect followed.

HARRIDAN

Shrew; an ill-tempered, scolding woman

Unlike most words on this list, *harridan* is still used with some frequency.

For example, a review of the movie *Black Swan* describes the main character's mother as, 'a real piece of work, an unhappy stage harridan out of Tennessee Williams whose dreams for her daughter are etched into the bitter, melting beauty of her aging face.' (Owen Gleiberman, *Entertainment Weekly*, December 30, 2010)

Harridan may be a modification of the French *haridelle*, meaning 'old horse' or 'gaunt woman'.

CHAWBACON

Bumpkin; hick

The dialectal *chaw* means chew'.

The current culinary prestige of bacon doesn't make 'bacon-chewer' seem like much of an insult, but *chawbacon* came into use back when bacon had a far humbler status.

SLUBBERDEGULLION

A dirty rascal; scoundrel; wretch

This seventeenth-century coinage even sounds nasty; the word's probable history backs it up. Slubber, an English dialectal word, means 'stain' or 'sully', and most likely comes from an obsolete Dutch word meaning 'to walk through mud or mire'.

When you get a bladder infection you know urine trouble.

Taking in the shortcuts

Wildcards and the Find and Replace function of Microsoft Word

In the 2015 August/September issue of *The Canberra editor*, I promised to illustrate use of the wildcards with **Find** and **Replace** feature of Word. Now, I attempt to do this with some help from the F1 key in Microsoft Word (F1 opens the Help dialogue in Word or most other PC programs). Wildcards or their combinations can be used to generate simple or complex search queries. Two easily memorisable examples of wildcards are the asterisk (*) and the question mark (?); these specify a string of characters or a single character, respectively: 'bo*t' will search for 'boat', 'bought', or 'boats' but not 'bat'; 'm?ne' will search for 'mane', 'mine' or 'miner' but not 'manner'. Here, I've used Microsoft Word 2016, but the shortcuts and wildcards should be working with some recent PC Word versions.

To start, use the shortcut Alt + H + FD + A (press keys in sequence) to open the **Advanced Find and Replace** dialogue box, and press Alt + M to activate **More** features (Figure) and press Alt + P to activate the **Replace with** text box. Press Alt + U to check **Use wildcards** and then search for the strings you want. Examples of the wildcards are given in the table below.

To find	Type	Example
Any single character	?	s?t finds sat, sit and set.
Any string of characters	*	s*d finds sad and started.
One of the listed characters	[xyz]	b[aioe]g matches bag and bog, but not bug.
Any single, case-sensitive character in the range	[A-Z]	b[A-W]g matches bAg and bUg, but not bug or bArge.
The beginning of a word	<	<(inter) finds interesting and intercept, but not splintered.
The end of a word	>	(in)> finds in and within, but not interesting.
One of the specified characters	[ ]	w[io]n finds win and won.
Any single character in this range	[-]	[r-t]ight finds right, tight and sight. Ranges must be in ascending order.
Any single character except the ones listed	[!xyz]	b[!au]g will match big and bog, but not bag, bug or bring.
Any single character except the characters in the range inside the brackets	[!x-z]	t[!a-m]ck finds tock and tuck, but not tack or tick.
Exactly n occurrences of the previous character or expression	{n}	fe{2}d finds feed but not fed.
At least n occurrences of the previous character or expression	{n,}	fe{1,}d finds fed, feed and feeeed, etc.
From n to m occurrences of the previous character or expression	{n,m}	10{1,3} finds 10, 100, and 1000. blec{3,7}h matches blecccch and blecccccch, but not blecch.
One or more occurrences of the previous character or expression	@	lo@t finds lot and loot. This is the same as {1,}.
Following character, even if it's a wildcard	\	Wh[ae]\? searches for 'what?' and 'whet?' but not whether or whatever.

As a drill, if one wants to replace 'surname, name' to 'name surname' in a list, one can insert the combination <([A-Z]*), ([A-Z]*)> in the **Find what** text box and \2 \1 in the **Replace with** text box. (Make sure the **Use wildcards** box is checked.) Here, the content of the first pair of parentheses in the **Find what** box becomes \1 in the **Replace with** box; the second becomes \2, and so on.

A similar search string can be used to change all occurrences of American style dates (perhaps 10-20-2016) to the Australin equivalent (20-10-2016). Make sure the **Use wildcards** box is checked; then, in the **Find what** box type in <([0-9]*)-([0-9]*)-([0-9]*)>. This forces Word to recognise the American Style dates: the day in the first set of parentheses becomes \1, the month in the second set becomes \2, and the year becomes \3. In the **Replace with** box, type in \2-\1-\3, and run the **Replace** or **Replace All** command. You'll change the date style in your document, and if you use **Replace All**, Word will count and report the number of changes you've made.

Farid Rahimi PhD ELS
Newsletter editor
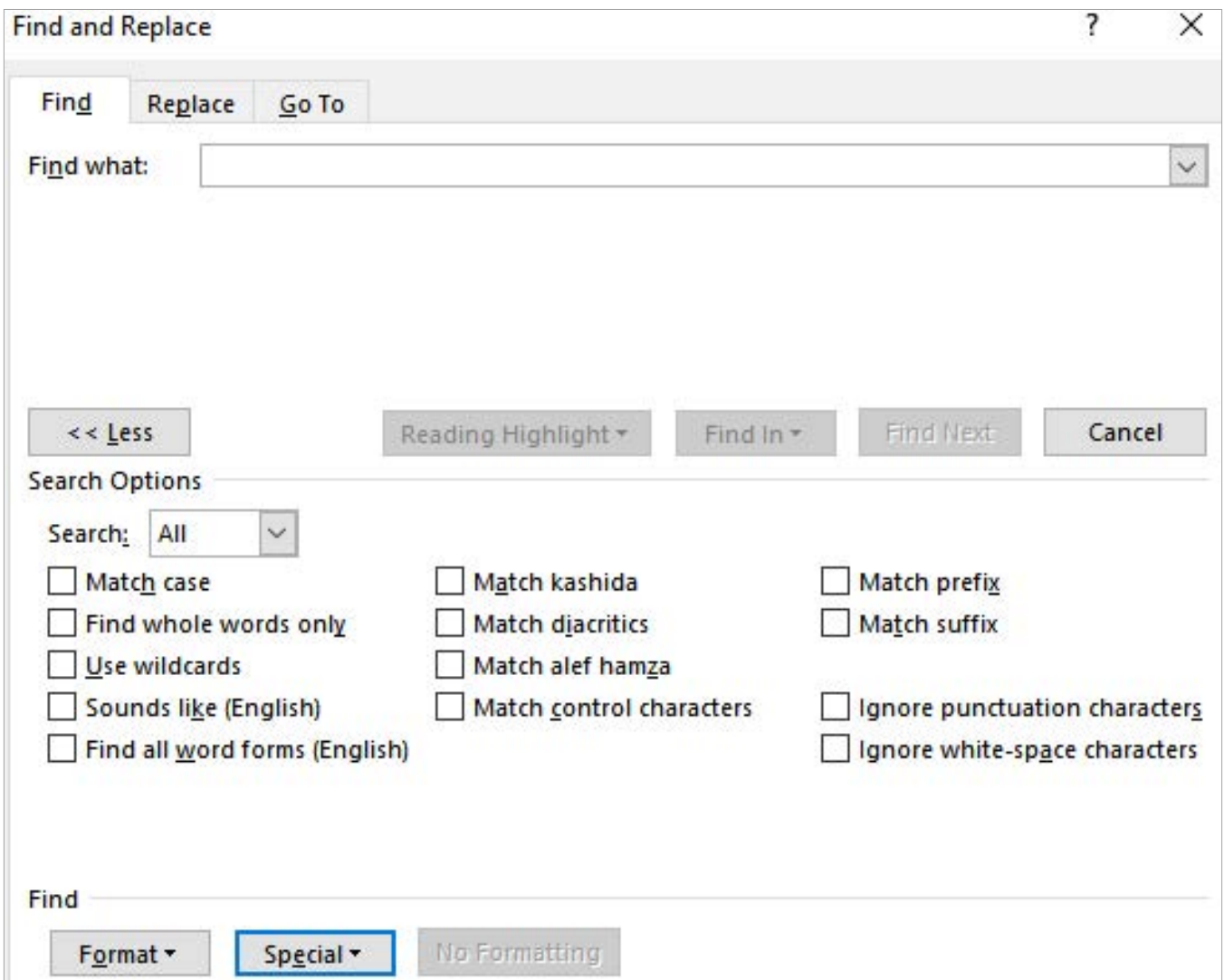
COMICAL COLLECTIONS

CSE 'tribal elder' Ara Nalbandian started this light-hearted column back in early 2014, and one of his first collections was of wordplays for lexophiles—let's call these 'lexophillies', just for fun—such as 'Police were called to a day care centre where a three-year-old was resisting a rest'.

How about we look at another relative of such wordplays … **paraprosdokians**.

Para ... what!?

Although the word doesn't appear in most dictionaries, Wikipedia offers this definition: *A figure of speech where the latter part of the sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected in a way that causes the reader or listener to reframe or re-interpret the first part.* According to Wiki, it's derived from the Greek *para* (against) and *prosdokia* (expectation). It is frequently used for humorous or dramatic effect, popular with comedians like Groucho Marx and Woody Allen and with some witty politicians, such as Winston Churchill. I can't think of a modern politician who shows any sign of such ability.

Here are a few paraprosdokians that have achieved wide public circulation. (I'm certainly not clever enough to have created any of my own.)

- Where there's a will, I want to be in it.

- The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But it is still on my list.

- Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.

- If I agree with you, we'd both be wrong.

- We never really grow up—we only learn how to act in public.

- War does not determine who is right—only who is left.

- Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.

- To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.

- I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.

- In filling out an application, where it says, 'In case of emergency, notify ... ', I put 'DOCTOR'.

- Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut and still think they're sexy.

- You don't need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.

- I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not so sure.

- You're never too old to learn something stupid.

- I'm supposed to respect my elders, but it's getting harder and harder for me to find one.

- You can always count on the Americans to do the right thing— after they have tried everything else. (Churchill)

- I want to die peacefully in my sleep, like my grandfather, not screaming and yelling like the passengers in his car.

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

- Hospitality: making your guests feel like they're at home, even when you wish they were.

- Some people cause happiness wherever they go—others whenever they go.

- Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.

- I'm not afraid of death. I just don't want to be there when it happens.

- Some people hear voices. Some see invisible people. Others have no imagination whatsoever.

- When tempted to fight fire with fire, remember that the fire brigade usually uses water.

And one I really like:

Dolphins are very smart. In just a few weeks of captivity, they can train people to stand on the edge of the pool and throw them fish.

Feel free to send us your own.

Alan Cummine
One-time President of this fine society.

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All articles must be in .doc format.