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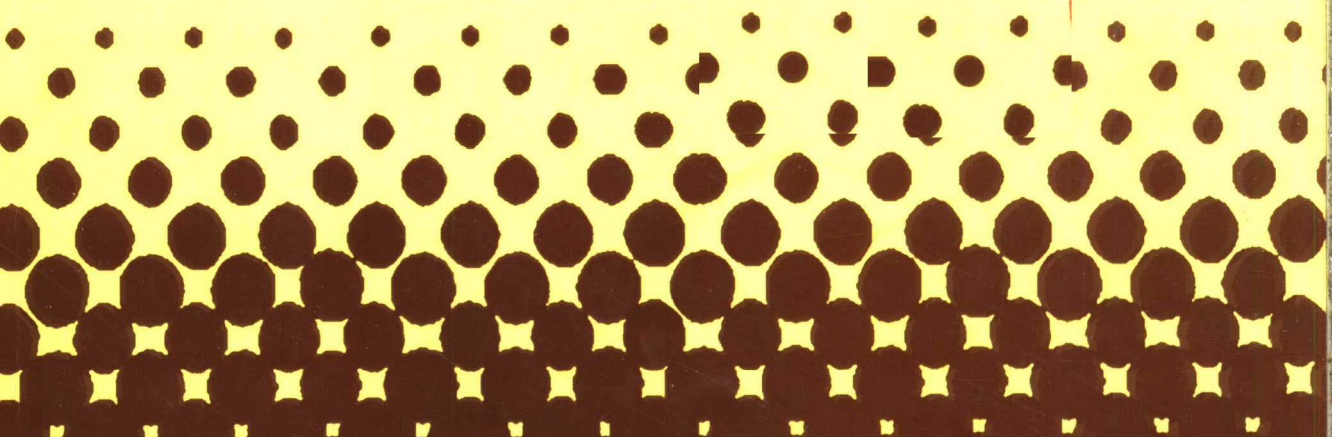
出版贸易英语系列教材



# 西方编辑理论与实践

## Theory and Practice of Western Editing

总主编 / 苏世军 主 编 / 周宇 肖琼



河南人民出版社

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# 西方编辑理论与实践

## Theory and Practice of Western Editing

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《西方编辑理论与实践》(Theory and Practice of Western Editing)从西方编辑的概念出发,介绍了编辑的范畴与职能、编辑队伍的结构与建设、不同级别编辑之间的关系、编辑与作者之间的关系、编辑与管理和市场的关系、选题策划、编辑流程、编辑加工技巧、采访作者的报道与书评写作的实例、跨文化交流应注意的编辑问题、禁书典型等方面,系统地论述了当代西方编辑的理论与实践。

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# 前 言

这套出版贸易英语系列教材从策划、选材、编写到交稿付梓已历时五个春秋,在此期间有相当一部分内容已成为我院英语专业的必修课教材,也作为国家新闻出版总署教育培训中心英语学习班讲义试用,而且还将继续使用。这种教学实践是检验我们编写工作的试金石,开阔了我们的思路,丰富了我们的素材,增添了我们的信心。

本系列教材所冠名的出版贸易包括出版物贸易和版权贸易,前者属于有形贸易,后者属于无形贸易,从国家之间的经济关系来讲是世界贸易的一个组成部分。做任何商品贸易都需要掌握其属性和功能,其历史渊源和未来走向,其商业价值和潜在的市场,其贸易规则和法律条文。

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基于这种理念,这套出版贸易英语系列教材包括《西方出版概况》(Highlights in Western Publishing)、《西方编辑理论与实践》(Theory and Practice of Western Editing)、《西方版权法》(Western Copyright Law)、《西方版权沿革与贸易》(The Evolution and Trade of Western Copyright)、《西方出版物市场营销》(Western Marketing for Publications)等五种,其内容分别简述如下:

《西方出版概况》重点介绍了当今西方主要发达国家出版产业的现状和发展趋势,包括政策与管理、组织机构与改革、教育模式与科研方法、人才市场的挑战与机遇、国际化与区域化的关系、出版物品位与国家历史和现实的渊源等方面;此外还简要概述了重大事件如造纸、印刷术、网络技术、战争与动乱对出版业的影响以及出版对国家和社会生活的重大作用。

《西方编辑理论与实践》从西方编辑的概念出发,介绍了编辑的范畴与职能、编辑队伍的结构与建设、不同级别编辑之间的关系、编辑与作者之间的关系、编辑与管理与市场的关系、选题策划、编辑流程、编辑加工技巧、采访作者的报道与书评写作的实例、跨文化

交流应注意的编辑问题、禁书典型等方面,系统地论述了当代西方编辑的理论与实践。

《西方版权沿革与贸易》介绍西方主要国家的版权法的历史起源与演变,其中有版权法的性质和特点、制法依据、法律框架、国际版权协议与欧盟国家间的版权贸易协定产生的原委;此外还包括国际版权贸易的理论与实务,如版权贸易的基本内容与形式,版权的国际保护范畴,起诉侵权行为的法律手段和程序,侵犯版权的诉讼案例,避免侵犯版权的原则、利用版权开展业务的纲要、版权贸易合同的格式和内容。

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《西方出版物市场营销》以西方出版经济学的基本概念为起点,介绍了出版物市场的结构和范畴、销售队伍的素养和职责、领导与被领导之间的关系、决定市场走向的诸多因素、各种营销战略和手段、不同种类出版物的市场预测、重大事件给市场带来的机遇和挑战、网络营销与传统营销的关系、英美出版物消息报道实例等方面,从理论和实践两方面构筑出从事出版物市场营销工作应掌握的基本要素。

除了《西方编辑理论与实践》、《西方出版概况》各由12个单元所组成外,其余三本都是10个单元,每个单元内容包括课文、课文注释、生词表、多项选择阅读理解题、难点重点意群汉译、讨论题目或作文题目。课文注释内容包括语言难点或背景知识;生词表所选入的单词大多为英语专业四级以上的词汇;阅读理解题涉及到语言点、知识点、段落大意、中心思想或逻辑推理;汉译主要包括结构复杂的、语义非常的句子;讨论题或作文题涉及对课文具体内容和观点,特别是要求学生利用所学的知识来分析和解决实际问题,通过课堂讨论和课后作文以期提高学生出版贸易英语的口头和笔头的交际能力。

早在我国入世之前的上个世纪90年代末期,我国出版界和教育界的有识之士就提出了出版贸易方向的外语专业本科教育培养方案,获得了国家新闻出版总署的肯定和支持,培养方案启动五年来的实践表明我国出版贸易人才市场的缺口所面临的形势依然十分严峻,只有大力加强出版贸易人才培养才能从根本上扭转我国国际与国内出版贸易比例严重失调和我国的国际出版贸易逆差高达十多倍的不利局面,早日赶上和超过西方发达国家国际出版贸易的水平。如果这套教材能为我国出版贸易人才的培养起到积极的作用,那就是我们最大的心愿。

本套教材立项后曾荣获2002年北京市教委精品教材项目的资助,这对我们的编写工作给予了极大的鼓舞和鞭策。在编写过程中还得到了英国曼彻斯特都市大学印刷媒体学院高级讲师克里斯托弗·格林博士、美国俄亥俄大学新闻学院教授安娜·古博·陈

博士、俄亥俄大学历史系教授理查德·哈维博士、澳大利亚墨尔本工学院讲师鲍利斯·鲍尔勃格硕士的大力支持和帮助,我们在此表示由衷的感谢。

由于我们手头所掌握的资料有限,加之出版特别是网络出版的发展日新月异,网络对出版市场的影响与日俱增,这套教材肯定存在许多不足之处,我们殷切地希望读者不吝指教,以便日后进一步完善。

编 者

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# Chapter 1

## Editors

The title editor is given to a confusing variety of people who work in book publishing. Editors generally are responsible for publishing functions from planning lists and acquiring manuscripts up to production; but in some houses, the title is given to production personnel, as well. People in business, finance, and marketing departments are usually not called editors, yet editors participate in decisions relating to these functions.<sup>[1]</sup> To further complicate matters, nomenclature is inconsistent from one branch of the industry to the next, and from house to house. Indeed, some people, referred to as editors of books, are not employed by publishers; but, they are really authors. The editors of this encyclopedia provide an example. The only safe generalization about book editors is that they work directly with authors and their manuscripts. To understand more precisely what they do and how they go about it, we must look at the various functions editors perform for book publishers.

### Editorial Functions within Publishing Houses

Editors at the managerial level (who may be called editors-in-chief, senior editors, editorial editors, executive editors, or editorial vice presidents) play the leading role in *planning* a house's publishing lists. Working with financial managers and others, they decide what direction the publishing program will take: what sort of books will be published, in what numbers, for what markets. In small houses, planning may be informal and short-term, with next season's list dependent on having a handful of manuscripts come in on time. But in larger houses, and in companies where manuscripts are frequently commissioned or developed with considerable editorial guidance, planning is an important and time-consuming editorial function.

Editors-in-chief also participate in *policy-making*, along with financial planners. Decisions



about the size of advances offered to authors, about the sale or retention of paperback rights, and about expanding or cutting back rights, and about expanding or cutting back activity overall or in specific fields are mainly financial. They affect editorial activity, however, and are usually made with the participation of those with editorial expertise. For example, although a financial advisor can evaluate the impact on the budget of giving very large advances to two or three bestselling authors, an editor is better equipped to assess the impact of such a decision on the ability to attract both established and new authors.

The editor-in-chief is usually responsible, in addition, for overall *management* of the editorial department: budgeting staffing, and so forth. The most recent salary survey, conducted in September 1991, shows a salary range of \$17 000 to \$175 000 for editors-in-chief, with an average salary of \$49 411. Those with the title executive or managing editor earned between \$12 000 and \$100 300, with an average of \$37 764.

Editors are at the highest managerial level and have almost invariably worked as acquiring editors. In textbook publishing, however, a parallel career track exists for people in sales and marketing, who may also become high-level editors.

Whether lists are carefully planned or seem just to happen, manuscripts must be found to fill them. The editors who perform this *acquisition* function may be called acquiring editors, acquisitions editors, or sponsoring editors, or they may have a title designating the subject areas for which they are responsible, such as humanities editor or economics editor. Acquiring editors may begin with an idea for a book and then seek an author or a team of authors to write it; this is frequently the case of textbook or reference book publishing. <sup>[2]</sup> In most cases, especially outside the world of textbooks, acquiring editors look for authors in the fields in which the house is active and, if an author is planning or working on a title that is of interest, try to convince the author to publish with them. Acquiring editors are also responsible for negotiating contracts with authors or their agents.

Acquiring editors need a variety of skills. They must be able to keep up with trends in the fields for which they are responsible, which may mean anything from analyzing tastes in romance fiction to staying abreast of research in astrophysics. They must read a great deal. And they must be able to persuade authors to write the kinds of books they want and to publish in their house on acceptable terms. The style of courtship varies with the type of book and the prosperity of the firm—anything from legendary New York lunches to a cup of coffee at an academic meeting. But all acquiring editors need the ability to convince authors that their interests will be well served by publishing with a particular house.

Acquiring editors are usually responsible, too, for the evaluation of manuscripts. Evaluation

may occur at several points in the development of a publishing project. If an author submits a proposal for a book, it will be evaluated by editors and marketers within the publishing house. It may also be sent to outside readers or consultants. Evaluation may be continued as chapters or sections of a manuscript come in (this is likely in college textbook publishing, where different specialist readers may tackle chapters on various topics, for example, mammalogy, herpetology, and ichthyology in a zoology text), or it may be done when the complete manuscript is submitted. The editor will generally review the manuscript, select experts to read it, evaluate their reporters, and make a recommendation for acceptance, revision, or rejection.

Evaluation of fiction and poetry is less straightforward. Fiction editors are more likely to rely on their own tastes and on the advice of other authors and fellow editors. The office cleaner, who can infallibly predict public reaction to a new novel is, alas, a legend.

Few acquiring editors have the latitude to make publication decisions independently. Rather, they must present projects to an editorial committee, usually drawn from senior staff in all departments, though with editing and marketing most heavily represented. The editor's skill in persuasion is again useful, for manuscripts must compete for a place on the list as well as for enthusiasm and marketing effort. At university presses, the editorial committee is composed of faculty members rather than the publisher's staff.

Once a manuscript is accepted, the acquiring editor's role diminishes, but she or he often remains the in-house advocate for the author and manuscript. Indeed, because the acquiring editors are evaluated according to how many manuscripts they acquire and how successful these books are, it is only sensible for the editor to keep tabs on a manuscript's progress and to lobby for attractive design and adequate marketing. And because the ability to acquire an author's next manuscript will depend on keeping the author happy, the editor has an additional motivation to see that the book is well published.

Acquiring editors earn between \$13 000 and \$110 000, with salaries averaging \$34 582. These jobs require a good deal of travel; Acquiring editors will spend anywhere from 10 to 30 percent of their time on the road. In trade and scholarly publishing, people with subject expertise may be hired as acquiring editors without previous publishing experience, or they may have worked for two or three years as manuscript editors. In college text publishing, acquiring editors have often spent some time as college representatives, learning about the market by selling to it. In elementary and high school publishing, teaching experience is a must.

In textbook and reference publishing, the acquiring editor's job may be subdivided, with the postcontract responsibilities assigned to a *development* editor, sometimes called a project editor.

This job is vital in areas where the publisher's contribution to the content of a book is substantial. In a college text, for example, the publisher may determine the subject coverage and level of student for whom the coverage and level of student for whom the book is to be written. The development editor will be responsible for guiding the author, enforcing page limits, providing outside evaluation and advice (on both content and pedagogy), determining the extent and nature of illustration, and so forth. Reference book projects require similar guidance and supervision.

Salaries for development editors are roughly the same as those for acquiring editors, and the skills required are similar. However, development editors must also be diligent about keeping track of their projects, including budgets and schedules. Some development editors work as free-lancers, taking on projects that publishers do not wish to manage in-house.<sup>[3]</sup>

Another part of the developmental edition may be assumed by project or series editors. These people develop not single volumes, but series of books or multivolume efforts. Project editors may work in textbook houses, where they may develop, for example, a set of social studies materials (texts, films, workbooks, supplementary texts, teacher's manuals) for kindergarten through sixth grade. In reference publishing, they may be in charge of developing a series of biographical directories. The skills required for this job always include the acquiring editor's ability to persuade and an ability to control details; other abilities depend on the field. For example, the textbook series editor needs to understand curriculum development and pedagogy, whereas the editor of biographical directories needs to know how to formulate and process questionnaires and get people to return them. The planning and budgeting that go on for such projects is necessarily longer-term than for single-volume projects.

The manuscript editor or copyeditor is responsible for preparing manuscripts for publication. At a minimum, the copyeditor corrects details of spelling, grammar, and punctuation. She or he also imposes consistency in matters of capitalization, italicizing, hyphenation, and the like. These matters are referred to as "house style," and are set out in manuals such as those published by the University of Chicago Press, the Council of Biology Editors, and Modern Language Association.

In most publishing houses, copyediting extends beyond grammar and consistency. The editor is expected to make sure that the author's meaning is clear, and that thoughts are expressed gracefully and economically. The editor reviews the logic of arguments and the quality of evidence, as well as the quality of organization. The editor must also check for consistency among the various elements of the manuscript such as text, notes, bibliography, illustration, and glossary. In very few cases, the copyeditor will be responsible for checking notes and even

facts.

Thorough copyediting is especially valued in textbook publishing, where accuracy and clarity are vital. In this field, editors must also concern themselves with the tone of the book and with the appropriateness for the audience of the author's style and level of vocabulary and syntax. The editor may also have the responsibility of creating a unified, consistent voice from the contribution of several contributing authors.<sup>[4]</sup>

In addition to a sound grasp of grammar, punctuation, and other essentials of good writing, copyeditors must be able to work persuasively and tactfully with authors. The occasional tirades against the tyranny of copyeditors arise more frequently out of an editor's failure to suggest changes tactfully than out of any technical incompetence. Copyediting is increasingly being performed on computers, and editors must be comfortable with this technology and be able to work with a variety of word-processing programs. They must also be able to meet deadlines.

The salary range for copyeditors is \$9 200 to \$49 000, with an average salary of \$23 903. However, copyeditors may be classified under higher-paid titles, such as editor, as well.

It is increasingly common for copyediting to be performed by free-lancers. Publishers use free-lancers for a variety of reasons: to acquire special expertise for a variety of projects, to balance uneven workloads over the year, to reduce payroll expenses, and even to save office space. For example, a house that publishes only two or three mathematics books a year cannot employ a full-time math editor efficiently, but it can hire a highly skilled free-lancer specializing in mathematics for those projects. In textbook publishing, editorial activity is seasonal, with no manuscripts in need of work at certain times of the year, but with many in urgent need of attention at others. Such cyclical loads are most efficiently handled by employing free-lancers.

Many editors prefer to free-lance rather than work in-house. It allows them to specialize by subject, if they like, or to increase the variety of projects they handle. Working at home permits greater freedom of location and flexibility of hours. Skilled free-lance editors are much in demand and can work as many hours as they wish.<sup>[5]</sup> Although rates vary throughout the country and may depend on experience and specialization, free-lance copyeditors with some experience charge around \$15 per hour, the equivalent of \$31 200 per year working full-time. However, free-lancers must provide their own insurance and supplies, cover vacation time, and pay their own Social Security taxes, so their earnings are not as high as this calculation suggests.

Free-lance editors are hired and supervised either by a managing editor or a production editor. The latter title is used mainly in textbook publishing, where it designates the person

who *coordinates* the work of the manuscript editor, designer, proofreader, indexer, and manufacturers. For example, the production editor will select a free-lancer, negotiate payment and scheduling, forward the editor's suggestions and queries to the author, make final decisions on editor and authorial changes, send the manuscript to a typesetter, arrange for proofreading and indexing, forward camera-ready copy to a printer, check later proofs, and so forth—enforcing the schedule along the way. This job is relatively simple for a single-author scholarly book without illustrations, but it is extremely complex in the case of a large, heavily illustrated textbook.

Production editors need a good understanding of the production process, editorial and proofreading skills, and have a keen eye for detail. They must be able to evaluate free-lance editors' work and supplement it when necessary. They must be able to keep track of complex schedules and to enforce those schedules. They also need to understand the impact on costs of editorial, design, and production decisions.

Textbook houses and some other publishing houses may also employ permissions editors whose job is to oversee compliance with copyright law in their use of text, photos, cartoons, tables, and similar material created by others. Textbook publishers are especially dependent on illustrative material that they do not own.<sup>[6]</sup> The use of any such artwork or text that is protected by copyright requires the written permission of the owner and, often, the payment of a fee. The permissions editor checks each manuscript to determine where permission is required, writes (or directs the author to write) to the copyright holder, negotiates and pays fees, provides credit lines that meet the copyright holder's specifications, and meets any other requirements that the owner sets.

Editorial jobs performed by employees of a publishing house or by free-lance do not place them in a vacuum. In addition to working with authors, agents, and manufacturers, editors must work with people in other departments of the publishing house. Editorial decisions, if they are made wisely, are made in conjunction with resident experts in design, production, and marketing. Editors need their advice, and editors need also to participate in design, production, and marketing decisions. The need for consultation on major decisions, such as whether to publish, is obvious. But even decisions on details require cooperation. For example, in deciding whether to include color illustrations in a college textbook, the developmental editor will need to consult marketers (Do competing books use color? Does the market demand it?), designers (When will the use of color affect the choice of paper and other design decisions?), and production people (Can our usual printers do four-color work?). Using color will increase the cost of producing the book. Can the price be increased to cover

this cost ( a marketing question)? If not, can the money be saved elsewhere ( a design, production, and editorial question)? At the most practical level, the copyeditor must know whether an illustration is in the color in order to edit the accompanying text: The author cannot refer to a light blue mass if the photo is black and white.

All of this means that successful editors must develop a variety of communication skills. Their oral skills must include the ability to draw out authors' ideas and persuade them to publish with the house, as well as to participate productively in copyediting. They must be able to describe projects clearly to other members of the publishing team and to promote their projects in-house and to the sales force. They must be able to cajole authors, manufacturers, and others into meeting (sometimes bending) deadlines. Their written skills must also be well developed. Manuscript editors must, of course, exhibit mastery of grammar and style, but all editors must be able to evaluate writing, effective letter writers, and produce clear reports.

At the managerial level, editors must have a clear understanding of financial data and projections, marketing information and production costs and schedules. But even at lower levels, some grasp of these matters is essential. Manuscript editors, for example, should understand the impact on costs of including or deleting complex tables, or of substituting graphs. And in nonfiction publishing, editors need to keep up with progress in the relevant academic fields.<sup>[7]</sup>

## **Editorial Functions Outside Publishing Houses**

Many editorial activities occur outside publishing houses, although the work is almost always done at the behest of a publisher. Some of the "editors" involved are truly editors, even within a publishing house scheme. Others are, in fact, authors.<sup>[8]</sup>

The *author's editor* is a manuscript editor who works for the author rather than for the publisher. Author's editors may be free-lancers or they may be employed by institutions (such as hospitals or corporations) to provide editorial assistance to the staff. In addition to editorial services, they may take on the role of the agent, assisting authors in finding publishers and negotiating contracts. They may have additional duties, such as editing periodicals or writing grant proposals.

The *series editor* is an academic, professional, or other specialist who acts an acquiring editor for a publishing house. Series editors assist in planning lists, solicit manuscripts, act as referees in the evaluation process, and offer advice on marketing and promotion. They are paid a finder's fee, often in the form of a royalty of 2 to 3 percent on each book they bring to the

series.

An outside editor may also be hired to create a reference book, such as this encyclopedia. The *encyclopedia editor* works with the in-house editor to determine what the book will include, how long it will be, the likely audience, and the general approach. The outside editor is then responsible for selecting entries, finding contributors, enforcing deadlines, evaluating manuscripts, and generally compiling the volume. Editors are usually paid expenses plus a royalty. Contributors may also be paid, or they may receive a copy of the encyclopedia.

Anthology editors also do their jobs outside the publishing house. They may contract with trade publishers, scholarly publishers, or textbook companies to compile collections of previously published or original material. For example, a trade publisher might ask an editor to put together a volume of mystery stories featuring dogs; these might be existing stories ( *The Hound of the Baskervilles* comes to mind ) or newly commissioned ones. <sup>[9]</sup> A university press might be interested in a compilation of Latin American poetry in translation, or in a bilingual edition. A college textbook publisher may ask a history professor to compile a documents or readings to be used in courses on southern history, possibly to supplement a textbook. In addition to selecting material for an anthology, the editor may write an introduction, abridge the selections, provide annotation, and contribute other supporting materials ( such as suggestions for further reading, discussion questions, or brief biographies of contributors ). The ideas for such projects may originate with either the compiler or the publisher. The editor is generally paid a royalty, although sometimes publishers offer a single payment. Fees for permission to reprint copyrighted material may be paid either by the editor or the publisher.

Textual editors are generally scholars who establish an authoritative text of a literary work. To do so, the editor selects a "copy-text," or base text, from the versions available, and then emends that text in the hope of providing an edition that best represents the author's intention. In addition to the text, the editor provides supporting apparatus and annotations ( for example, a publishing history of the text variations in other editions, and so forth ). <sup>[10]</sup> The most extensive ( and extensively documented ) work in textual editing has been done in connection with the Bible. The best-known textual editions in the United States are those published by the Library of America.

The work of *documentary editors* is similar to that of textual editors, and they are less concerned with establishing an authoritative text from many versions than with finding and reproducing texts that exist in only one version. For example, while a textual editor may seek to produce an authoritative edition of *The Scarlet Letter*, a documentary editor might be trying to locate the correspondence of and other papers relating to the colonial governors of

Massachusetts. ( The two fields might overlap in an edition of the letters of Nathaniel Hawthorne. ) Documentary editors search for documents, select those to be published, transcribe them, and annotate them. Editions such as *The Papers of George Washington* and *The Emma Goldman Papers* are representative multivolume documentary editions. Single-volume editions such as diaries or selected correspondence are also typical documentary projects.

Both textual and documentary editors are generally employed by universities, historical societies, libraries, or other institutions. Their editorial activities constitute the research component of their work. These editions are rarely profitable; in fact, they are frequently underwritten in part by federal agencies as the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. Textual and documentary editors are normally compensated through a royalty arrangement, but the royalty is frequently paid to the editorial project rather than to the editor personally. <sup>[11]</sup>

## **The Editorial Contribution**

Despite the variety of editors' activities, their contributions to the publishing process can be classified under two main headings: gatekeeping and making texts accessible. Both of these contributions are risky and controversial: The gatekeeper may be viewed as a benevolent spirit easing the writer's access to an eager public, or as an ill-tempered troll barring the way to all except those who can discern his capricious wishes. The manuscript editor, similarly, may be viewed as a midwife easing a manuscript's passage into life, or a meddler interfering with the author's self-expression.

Gatekeeping combines the editor's planning, acquisition, and evaluation functions. In a planning list, for example, editors may decide to develop offerings in a field new to the house (perhaps women's studies) or to stop soliciting manuscripts in a field in which they have not done well (perhaps physical sciences). Obviously, such decisions about the importance of the field, or even as death sentences. For example, if university presses were to decide to discontinue their poetry lists, this would be a major practical blow to poets and their readers, as well as an unwelcome assessment of the state of poetry.

Scholars in new fields, experimental novelists, and popularizers of nontraditional research all at some time view editorial gatekeepers with suspicion. Innovators who make it through the gates achieve respectability, whether they are proponents of new areas of study; promoters of trendy cures for ills such as obesity, or even creators of new ills such as codependence. <sup>[12]</sup>



Editors who acquire manuscripts control somewhat narrower gates. Their decisions reflect their judgments about the quality and salability of specific manuscripts rather than opinions about the importance of a field. For example, once a publisher decides to generate a list in Third World fiction, the acquiring editor must decide where to look for manuscripts and, having found some, must choose those that meet the standards of the house (whether those standards are critical, economic, or ideological).

Again, there is no mystery about why such decisions are controversial: Those whose books are chosen applaud; those who receive rejections object. Published authors benefit greatly from publication. Aside from whatever royalties they may earn, they acquire reputation and respectability. Educational administrators, news broadcasters, and talk show hosts frequently regard publication by a reputable publisher as a seal of approval.<sup>[13]</sup> Publication by a university press leads to tenure, a trade book on *glasnost* qualifies the author to comment on current events in Eastern Europe, and publication of a self-help book makes the author a daytime television expert on diet, drug abuse, or multiple orgasm. The editor holds the keys to this kingdom.

If manuscripts could be evaluated with genuine objectivity, editorial gatekeeping would be far less controversial. Unfortunately, editorial evaluation is an art rather than a science. In fiction and poetry, editors must rely on their own taste and on the opinions of other writers. In scholarly publishing, which relies on peer review (evaluation by experts in the field), there may be less reliance on personal preference, but objectivity is still an illusion: Much depends on which experts are chosen and how evaluative questions are framed.

Although gatekeeping may be a controversial activity from the author's (or would-be-author's) point of view, it is at the very heart of the publisher's activity. Publishers must channel their resources to those publications that will serve their purposes, whether they be to disseminate worthy scholarship, encourage new writers, increase profits, or promote an ideology. Editors make those decisions.

The controversies about manuscript editing revolve around the question of how much should be done. Both authors and readers are divided on this issue. Some authors want their manuscripts to be published without even the slightest editorial "tampering"; others expect or even demand extensive editorial advice. Readers expect (at a minimum) error-free books, but they also expect to hear an author's voice rather than an editor's.

To some extent, the resolution of this debate depends on the area of publishing in which it takes place. For example, textbook publishers exert a great deal more editorial control over the manuscripts they publish than do poetry editors. The issue is raised most frequently in trade