

# The {Academic Author}

For Creators of Academic Intellectual Property

2007:3

August 2007

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: John Wakefield Betty

### Textbook price controversy

Each year now, news articles appear about the high cost of attending college, including the cost of college textbooks. Most recently, the Department of Education's Advisory Committee on Student Financial



John Wakefield

Assistance reported on May 25th that "the marketplace for textbooks and learning resources is broken." (See: [www.taaonline.net/news/07\\_05\\_07.html#11](http://www.taaonline.net/news/07_05_07.html#11)).

The argument is that because teachers order the books and student must pay, "the end consumer has little, if any, direct influence over price, format or quality of the product." It is questionable whether or not teachers would want students to have direct influence over the format or quality of textbooks. (If students were learning experts, who would need teachers?) But what about price?

The ACSFA report assumes that students are paying too much for their textbooks and other learning materials. As our Executive Director Richard Hull wrote in his reaction to the report, "textbook prices have been rising at a rate approximately equal to the increase in room and board, transportation and Consumer Price Index, but equal to only a fraction of the increase and tuition and fees" (See: [www.taaonline.net/notes/index.html#6notes](http://www.taaonline.net/notes/index.html#6notes)).

This data comes out of a chart in the ACSFA report. If students are paying too much for their textbooks, it is not evidenced by this chart.

What seems to motivate the conclusion that the market is broken is the assumption that student should pay *less* for their books and instructional materials than they historically have. The proposed means to

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### Evaluation of textbook costs begins with students

by Richard Hull

There are several things to note about the ACSFA report.

First, text prices have been rising at a rate approximately equal to the increase in room and board, transportation and Consumer Price Index, but equal to only a fraction of the increase in tuition and fees. In 1989, tuition and fees, room and board, textbooks, transportation, CPI, and other costs were approximately the same; in 2004 tuition and fees were twice room and board, three times textbooks and more than three times these other costs.

Why, then, single out texts? Because they are perceived to be vulnerable due to the remoteness of their generative sources from the classroom, while the classroom represents bricks and mortar, and the professor the source of credit and grades?

Second, the quality of pre-college preparation of students has generally declined over the decades. Part of the reason is that more students are seeking college degrees than in 1989, so that capital expenses for classroom space and residential space has increased proportionally. But part of the increase in

tuition and fees is due to the lack of adequate pre-college preparation on the part of students seeking college degrees. More is now required at the level of remedial preparation, with the post secondary cost of bringing students up to the level of even freshman level comprehension often taking an additional year or more. Much of this is due to advances in knowledge: more needs to be mastered for the college degree than did 15 years before, and more is presupposed by college courses that has to be mastered prior to entry to college.

It is sad to report as well, but the level of preparation of entry-level students is not as high as it was 15 and thirty years ago. In part this represents the increase in the percentage of the population seeking college degrees; in part it represents the lack of superb teachers in college preparatory courses; in part it represents an increase in the quantity of information and skills required to enter college well-prepared, and in part it represents the decline in reading and other calculational practices that is typical of entry-level college students who are of the television generation. [An only partial offset of these declines comes

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## NOTABLE AUTHOR : Sam Wineburg

## Author strives to give students second voice in textbooks

by Kim Seidel

Sam Wineburg couldn't pass up the opportunity to write a world history textbook that was completely different and innovative.

After three years of researching and writing (with Peter Stearns), his first textbook, *Human Legacy*, was published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston in 2007. Ironically, Wineburg admits that he spent his career suggesting that the oil crisis might be eased by burning textbooks and now he has written one.

In an article he wrote for *Education Week*, "Opening Up the Textbook and Offering Students a 'Second Voice,'" he says: "History textbooks have long merited special scorn. Thicker than a Durafume log (and weighing more), today's books feature pages that rival news Web sites (think CNN) for busyness and clutter. Artwork with multiple call-out boxes, tri-colored pictures with captions with 'How to Read Me,' and pointers to end-of-chapter test questions cued to state standards (with special editions produced for your state) dominate the text like the bun that smothered the patty in that famous burger ad."

Wineburg continues, "Years ago, when I first started teaching future history teachers, I urged them to do what I had done as a young teacher: Ditch the book in favor of primary sources. Now with Google, the job of finding sources is infinitely easier than in my day." Wineburg, a professor of education and history at Stanford University, says he first "touched chalk" as a teacher more than 20 years ago. Since then, he's taught all ages, from 10 to 80, but his interest remains on high school students and most of his research centers around this age group.

In 2002 his book, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* won the Frederic W. Ness Award from the Association of American Colleges and Universities. His work is said to make an important contribution to the "improvement of Liberal Education and understanding the Liberal Arts."

Over time, Wineburg revised his methods of teaching history course to help aspiring teachers enhance their use of textbooks by presenting the use "multiple voices."

Wineburg writes, "History's complexity requires us to encounter multiple voices. A single voice can spellbind us with gripping

narrative. But 'history' has at its root in the Greek *istor*: to inquire. True inquiry admits no easy answers. The textbook achieves its synthetic harmony only by squelching discordant notes. That's Muzak, not history."

And that's what he told two executives from Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. They asked him to write a feature called "Reading Like a Historian" for their new high school world history textbook series.

To write those essays, one each for every chapter of the textbook, Wineburg drew on 20 years' experience as a researcher of historical cognition. He says he has spent countless hours interviewing, probing, taping, transcribing, coding, analyzing, writing about and spending time with historians. This was his attempt to discover something common and generative as to how historians read. Wineburg writes, "Historical narratives are powerful devices for structuring detail, and for that reason, 'story' is a teacher's greatest asset. But what makes story so powerful is what also makes it seem impervious to scrutiny."

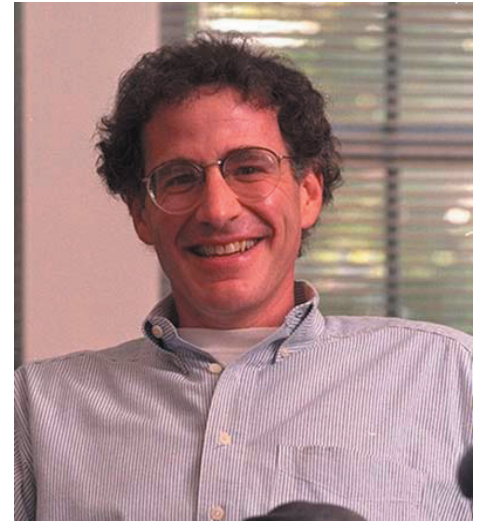
In all, Wineburg's 70 essays featured in *Human Legacy* span 5,000 years of human history. "Some directly challenge the main text's interpretation of key events and offer alternative accounts of, say, the 1929 stock market crash or al-Qaida's attack on the Twin Towers," he writes.

In other essays, he challenges the conclusions made by the textbook or he takes up issues of historical argument. Through his essays, he attempts to help students see the textbook itself as a historical source. "In order to do this," Wineburg writes, "students have to yank those iPods from their ears long enough to hear how language works, how it massages our understanding even before we've reached the first 'fact.'"

The goal of Wineburg's "Reading Like a Historian" is not vocational but liberal – "as in the trivium of the liberal arts – grammar, rhetoric and logic," he writes. "I am most interested in those qualities of mind that history is able to cultivate long after the details of the Tang dynasty or the Treaty of Ghent have faded."

Wineburg says he accepted the assignment of textbook writing because he believed in the basic idea of including at least one other voice in the same book.

"A printed court jester who pokes at



Samuel Wineburg

readers, reminding them to slow down, listen to words, to notice how the text spins them, pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey-like, in a given direction – is more than another frill in today's frilly world of textbook publishing. When students hear a second voice, questioning the first, they learn that maybe their job is not to memorize at all. Maybe their job is find their own voice."

Wineburg takes his writing life as serious as his quest to help high school students appreciate history and learning. He spent most of the past three summers working on "Human Legacy," 10 hours at a time, writing, reading, researching and editing.

Wineburg realized he needed to escape the relaxed atmosphere of his home in the summer, so he spent his writing days at a nearby coffee shop. He is married to Susan Monas, and is the father of Shoshana, 20, Michael, 18, and Raffi, 17.

Wineburg considers writing hard work and would naturally schedule other activities to avoid it.

"It's a job – writing," Wineburg says. "The notion of waiting for the muse is a fallacy. Most people don't write what they think,

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## Texty, McGuffey winners participate in Q&A at Awards Luncheon

Six of this year's Texty and McGuffey winners attended the TAA Awards Luncheon in Buffalo, New York June 21 during the 2007 TAA Conference on Text and Academic Authoring.

After being presented with their awards from TAA President John Wakefield, Texty winners Frank Wilson, author of *Finite Mathematics and Applied Calculus*; Gregory Lewbart, author of *Invertebrate Medicine*, Judy Sklar Rasminsky, co-author of *Challenging Behavior in Young Children: Understanding, Preventing, and Responding Effectively*; Joseph Healey, author of *Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Class: The Sociology of Group Conflict & Change*; and Fred Kleiner, author of *A History of Roman Art*; and McGuffey winner Michael Sullivan, author of *College Algebra*; participated in a Q&A session with attendees.



2007 Texty winners Frank Wilson (far left), Judy Sklar Rasminsky and Gregory Lewbart during the Q&A portion of the 2007 TAA Awards Luncheon, held at the 2007 TAA Conference on Text and Academic Authoring in Buffalo, New York.

### Q: What did you try to do different with your book?

**Joseph Healey:** "I wanted to keep it simple and try not to tell everything about the subject. I focused on 4-5 key points and structured the book like a story, with a beginning, middle and end. I presented an analytical framework, applied it to case studies, and wrapped it up with a conclusion. I attempted to tell stories as well using several micro and macro stories. I approached the textbook with few assumptions about what knowledge students would bring."

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because they don't put in the time. Writing is a derring activity, and you write when you feel like it and when you don't feel like it."

Maintaining a writing routine was essential to completing the essays for the textbook. "I

**Frank Wilson:** "I brought in interesting, real-life applications that make math interesting and then pulled the applications out of the stories. For example, my book includes 'Make it real' projects in which students gather data from areas of interest to their life and then use math to find the results."

### Q: "Does your book include ancillaries and did you do them yourself?"

**Michael Sullivan:** "It isn't so much that you do your own ancillaries, but that you have control over it. My son did my first ancillaries."

**Frank Wilson:** "I did my first ancillaries. It helped me work my own homework problems."

### Q: "How did you get started in textbook authoring?"

**Fred Kleiner:** "I was seduced by the ability to teach on a larger scale. Money was secondary. I knew the moment I was hooked: when I was at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and saw a student reading my book right in front of me."

**Joseph Healey:** "Writing textbooks is hard, painful and difficult, but I really like it."

**Frank Wilson:** "I wrote my book to address the student question, 'When am I ever going to use this?'. I started out writing supplements. After doing that for a while I thought 'I can write a book.' I put in a proposal to the publisher for whom I had written supplements. My reputation with them led to a contract. I now have three books out and four in the works."

**Judy Sklar Rasminsky:** "I'm a freelance writer. I've worked for trade book publishers



2007 McGuffey winner Michael Sullivan (far left) and 2007 Texty winners Fred Kleiner and Joseph Healey during the Q&A portion of the 2007 TAA Awards Luncheon.

put myself on a schedule...that's something I've learned over and over. Writing is difficult extremely for me. I will find ways to trip myself out. I literally have to block out chunks of time."

Unlike in his youth, he doesn't get frustrated when he faces a writer's block. "To know



Top row, L to R: Gregory A. Lewbart, Frank Wilson, Second row: Joseph Healey, Fred S. Kleiner. Bottom row: Judy Sklar Rasminsky, Michael Sullivan.

and magazines.

The writing of this textbook was a big departure for me. My coauthor came from the day care frontlines. One of the children turned her center upside down because none of the teachers knew how to deal with his behavior. When she talked to her colleagues in the field, she discovered this was a common problem—they also needed help with difficult behavior. That was the origin of our book. It was originally conceived as a booklet for teachers. It was 40 pages long because it had to be short, easy to read, and practical. It was first published by the Canadian Child Care Federation and distributed to every day care

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tomorrow is a new day...the difference between a good writing day and a bad writing day is often a good night's sleep," Wineburg says.

*Kim Seidel, a freelance writer in Onalaska, Wis., contributed to this article.*

## Information key to win-win contract: Play 20 questions with your editor

When negotiating a contract with an acquisitions editor, gather as much information as you can about that person during the negotiation, said Steve Gillen, a publishing attorney with Greenebaum Doll & McDonald PLLC.

“The more information you can gather about their interests, objectives, constraints, etc., the better armed you will be for the negotiation,” he said. “Ask the editor questions about herself to find out how close she is to reaching her new contract signings goal (and possibly earning a bonus). The higher the advance, the more attention the acquisition editor will pay to your book.”

The traditional approach to negotiation, said Gillen, is to view it as a zero sum game where any advantage to you comes at the expense of the other side. “Accordingly, most negotiators employing this approach play their cards close to the vest and only reluctantly disclose any information about their own interests and objectives,” he said. “However, in negotiations over intellectual property rights the pie is potentially limitless — the object should be not to keep your opponent’s piece small, but instead should

be to make sure that the rights end up in the hands of the party best positioned to exploit them. You can effectively accomplish this objective without sharing some information with your opponent.”

The less you know about each other during the contract negotiations, Gillen said, the more likely it is that you will leave money on the table: “It’s more advantageous for both parties to learn something about each other when negotiating a publishing contract. You want to leave the negotiation with both parties feeling good about the deal, feeling like it was a win-win situation. The negotiation is just the first step in the process of producing a book. You will need to work with this editor throughout the process, and a good relationship will go a long way in making it a smooth one.”

Gillen shares 21 questions to ask your editor during the contract negotiations: **(To get him/her talking freely about himself/herself)**

*How long have you been with publisher X?* “Editors move from house to house and it will be helpful to know how long your editor has been in his/her current position.”

*Where were you before?* “The experience he/she gained at other houses will tell you something about his/her knowledge of the market and the business.”

*Did you come through the sales side or through editorial?* “The editor with a sales background will have a significantly different negotiating focus from the editor with an editorial background.”

*Tell me about your current list: How many titles are there? What disciplines? What curricular level? What is (are) your lead title(s)? What sort of market share do they have? Are any of them market leaders?* “The answers to these questions will tell you something about your editor’s place in the pecking order and about how much attention your project is likely to get.”

**(To find out how important your project is to the editor’s bonus — no editor will knowingly answer such a questions, said Gillen, but the answers to these questions may provide a few clues)**

*How many new books do you sign in a typical year?* “The answer to this question will tell you something about the editor’s annual signing goals.”

*How many have you signed so far this year?* “The answer to this question will give you some idea of where the editor is in relation to

his/her goals. If the editor is close to his/her annual average, it could well be that signing you will make the difference between earning and not earning a bonus. You will probably never know for certain how important your project is, but you may at least get a clue.”

**(To find out how your book fits in)**

*How would you envision positioning my book vis a vis the competition?* “This will tell you what your editor sees as your work’s competitive advantages — information that will prove useful should you decide to approach other publishers with your project.”

*Who are your principal competitors in this market?* “If you have not already submitted to these competitors, you should seriously consider doing so immediately. The best leverage you can have in negotiating a book contract is to know that there is another interested publisher in the wings.”

*Do you have any titles (published or signed) similar to mine?* “For obvious reasons, you want to know if the editor will have divided loyalties. Moreover, when it comes time to talk about the scope of your non-compete clause, it is very helpful to be able to point out specifically that the publisher is not similarly constrained.”

*If the proposal or partial manuscript has been reviewed, check the reviews to see who is identified as a competitor.* “Again, you want



Steve Gillen

to know about the other publishers who might be interested in your work.”

**(To help you back into a reasonable advance against royalties)**

*How big a market are we talking about?* “This will give you a sense of how the publisher views your book and whether you both see it the same way.”

*What sort of market penetration does Publisher X generally expect with a new book?* “In combination with the answer to question #11, this will give you a way of corroborating the editor’s sales projections.”

*How many units would an average book do in the market for which my book is targeted? First year? Lifetime? How many do you think the market leader does?*

“The answers to these questions, once you know the cover price, will let you estimate revenues and royalties so that you can make a credible, objectively supportable request for advances.”

*How many units does a book like mine have to do to break even?* “The answer to this question will tell you at what volume the publisher covers its costs.”

*How many would it have to do before you would consider it a roaring success?*

“The answer to this question will tell you at what point the publisher has made its customary margin. The break-even volume and the volume necessary to a target margin are natural break points for a sliding royalty scale. Consider accepting the rate first offered up to break even, but ask for a higher rate up to the target margin, and ask for the moon beyond that.”

*How would you see it priced?* “As noted, this information helps you project revenues and royalties, but it also will tell you something about the titles your editor views as competitive — because they will necessarily fall in the same price range.”

*Do you think it would travel well?* “If the editor says no, then it will be very hard

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**“The less you know about each other during the contract negotiations, the more likely it is that you will leave money on the table”.**

## HIGHLIGHTS: etty

**2008 Conference.** TAA's 2008 TAA Conference on Text and Academic Authoring will be held June 20-21 at Harrah's in Las Vegas. The room rate will be \$99 per night. Harrah's is located on the Las Vegas strip between the Imperial Palace and Casino Royale, across from the Mirage. Both the sleeping and meeting rooms will be located in the hotel's Mardi Gras Tower. Visit the Harrah's Las Vegas website at [www.harrahs.com/casinos/harrahs-las-vegas/hotel-casino/property-home.shtml](http://www.harrahs.com/casinos/harrahs-las-vegas/hotel-casino/property-home.shtml)

**'How-To' section.** Check out TAA's new 'How-To' section, which contains tips, advice on contracts, co-authoring, scholarly journal authoring and publishing, peer review, royalties, and more: [www.taaonline.net/membersonly/howto/index.html](http://www.taaonline.net/membersonly/howto/index.html)

**Write How-To.** Share your expertise with other TAA members by writing an article for TAA's 'How-To' section. Contact Associate Executive Director Kim Pawlak for details: [kmpawlak@centurytel.net](mailto:kmpawlak@centurytel.net)

**Textbook accessibility.** A March 2007 decision by the United States Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs to open access to the entire content of the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center (NIMAC) to certain groups that create specialized formats for the blind and print disabled, increases the potential for copyright abuse, according to The Association of Educational Publishers. In an alert posted on the AEP website, the AEP states: "The new policy of allowing all NIMAC files to be downloaded by the 'authorized entities' [a nonprofit organization or governmental agency that has a primary mission to provide specialized services relating to training, education, or adaptive reading or information access needs of blind or other persons with disabilities] creates an opportunity never before encountered. The value added NIMAS file set can be used to create versions of and manipulate the content of instructional materials as never before, the portability of digital files makes tracking the file nearly impossible after the initial download, and the absence of enforcement increases the potential for copyright abuse." Read the entire AED Alert at [www.aepweb.org/govrelations/quickhits.htm](http://www.aepweb.org/govrelations/quickhits.htm)

**H.S textbooks.** The Museum of Science, Boston has partnered with Key Curriculum Press to publish a new high school science and engineering curriculum, "Engineering the Future: Science, Technology, and the Design Process." The curriculum, developed by the Museum of Science's National Center for Technological Literacy, and tested in more than 100 schools nationally, immerses students in hands-on design and building challenges reflecting real

## TAA Council approves Grants-in-Aid program

The TAA Council approved a new member benefit at its June 21, 2007 meeting that will provide up to \$750 in grants to TAA members to subsidize their cost of publishing scholarly journal articles, such as the preparation of artwork, having the final article formatted to the journal's style, and the preparation of photographic images, in addition to straightforward publication costs. The total fund for these grants is limited to \$7,500. Grants will be awarded on a first come, first served basis.

To qualify for a TAA grant, applicants must be a TAA member in good standing of two or more years. An application for a TAA grant must be accompanied by the following:

- An acceptance letter from the journal editor that states the publishing costs.
- A copy of the manuscript.
- An affidavit from the applicant's dean or chair stating that neither funds nor services for preparing the publication are available from the applicant's employing institution, including from any grants or contracts for which the member serves as principal investigator.

Preference will be given to individuals who have sought unsuccessfully to obtain funds from other sources. Send grant submissions to Richard Hull, TAA's executive director, at [rthull62@hotmail.com](mailto:rthull62@hotmail.com)

engineering problems — from designing a testing a boat model to constructing a building prototype. The "Engineering the Future" textbook, "Engineer's Notebook" and "Teacher's Guide" will be available August 2007. For more information, visit [www.keypress.com/etf](http://www.keypress.com/etf)

**Peer review.** National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Elias A. Zerhouni, M.D., announced today the formation of two working groups — one external, the other internal — to examine the NIH peer review process, with the goal of maximizing its effectiveness. "Peer review is such a fundamental and critical part of the research process, that it requires our constant vigilance," said Director Zerhouni. "With the increasing breadth and complexity of science, along with the increased number of research grant applications, we need to take a comprehensive look at our review process, and make the necessary changes to strengthen it for applicants and reviewers alike. Although our peer review system is outstanding — and emulated throughout the world — we want to make it even better." Read the full article at [www.taaonline.net/news/index.html#8](http://www.taaonline.net/news/index.html#8)

**Digital scholarship.** Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia is launching a new model for digital scholarship through a partnership with Kirtas Technologies, Inc., a maker of cutting-edge digital scanning technology. Once digitized, the books will be made available on Amazon.com as well as other book distribution channels. The partnership will enable Emory to apply automated scanning

technology to thousands of rare, out-of-print books in its research collections, making it possible for scholars to browse the pages of these books on the Internet or order bound, printed copies via a fast, affordable print-on-demand service. The project is limited to materials in the public domain (published before 1923). Read the entire article at: [www.taaonline.net/news/index.html#10](http://www.taaonline.net/news/index.html#10)

**Post-conference.** Visit the TAA Post-conference website for news and photos from the 2007 TAA Conference. [www.taaonline.net/TAAConference/index.html](http://www.taaonline.net/TAAConference/index.html)

**Membership Award.** TAA Council Member Tara Gray received the first annual Paul Anderson Memorial Membership Award for her efforts to attract new TAA members. Gray is the presenter of the TAA sponsored workshop "Publish & Flourish: Become A Prolific Scholar." The award was presented at a dinner sponsored by the TAA Foundation at the Hyatt Regency Buffalo in Buffalo, New York June 21.

**Keedy Award.** Outgoing TAA Vice President Christopher Harris was awarded TAA's 2007 Mike Keedy Award, which recognizes dedicated work on behalf of authors. The Mike Keedy Award is named after TAA Founder Mike Keedy. The award was presented at the 2007 TAA Awards Luncheon, held during the 2007 TAA Conference on Text and Academic Authoring in Buffalo, NY June 22.

**Hood Award.** TAA Associate Executive Director Kim Pawlak was awarded TAA's

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accomplish this end, in the long run, is government sponsorship of a national digital marketplace. In other words, the government should step in and fix things. Hmm. Let's try some of our own solutions first, and see what we can do to lower the costs of textbooks.

First, letters to the editor of the local newspaper can be used to promote our "Stomp the Comp" campaign. Stomping out the resale of complimentary copies would have the effect of relieving some of the pressure for publishers to increase wholesale prices. Should it help, here is a letter that I wrote to my local Alabama newspaper editor when the "broken market" headline appeared late this past summer.  
August 3, 2007

Dear Editor:

*This letter is in regard to your July 23rd article about the "broken" college textbook market. As the article indicated, many who work in and around colleges are trying to keep textbook costs down. For their part, textbook authors are conducting a campaign among college faculty to discourage the sale of*

*complimentary textbooks (also known as "comp" copies) that are provided free of charge to them.*

*These freebies aren't really free—sales to students must pay for them. That is a legitimate cost of doing business, but every year a large number of comp copies find their way into the used textbook market, decreasing new book sales. Many of these copies are purchased from faculty by resellers. Under the 1995 Ethics Law, it is highly unlikely that the Alabama Ethics Commission would be of the opinion that a complimentary textbook, whether solicited or unsolicited, could be sold by a faculty member for personal gain.*

*My observation is that the textbook market is not broken. Many instructors care deeply about how much students pay for their books, but not all are aware that one way to keep textbook costs down is to "stomp the comp" by using these copies for reference, returning them to the publisher, giving them to a colleague, or donating them to a library.*


*John Wakefield  
President, Text and Academic Authors Association*

The current "Stomp the Comp" campaign

builds on our history of advocating for ethical practices by faculty and enforcement of campus policies to keep textbook resellers off college campuses. (See Stomp the Comp at [www.taaonline.net/StomptheComp/index.html](http://www.taaonline.net/StomptheComp/index.html))

Second, we should remain vigilant in response to attempts to dictate how faculty choose textbooks and course materials. On June 25th, Oregon State Senate Bill 365 was signed into law. The bill requires publishers to make textbook prices accessible to faculty, to list textbooks separately from their ancillaries, and to inform potential adopters of previous editions. Although the burden of any changes in current marketing practices will fall on publishers, TAA supported the Association of American Publishers in their efforts to educate legislators about some of the more burdensome aspects of the original bill. (See AAP's [www.textbookfacts.org/](http://www.textbookfacts.org/))

Authors too want to help keep the costs of textbooks and educational materials low. At the same time, we want to keep the quality of textbooks and instructional materials high. These are not incompatible goals, but achieving them both requires that we all do our part.



## Michael Lennie

### Authors' Attorney, Literary Agency

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center in Canada. Then it was distributed to the 30,000 members of the National Association for the Education of Young Children in the United States. Both the Canadian and American editions of this booklet are still in print and bestsellers. But we [Rasminsky and coauthor Barbara Kaiser] thought there was much more to say, and we wanted to reach out to students. This book is an expansion of the original booklet. It contains information and research-based strategies from several disciplines and combines my coauthor's practical frontline experience with my writing skills."

**Gregory Lewbart:** "I had been writing some chapters and a publisher approached me to write some short case studies for a book. I had had an idea for the Invertebrate Medicine book in 1993, but the publisher thought the market wasn't ready for such a specialized book. In 2001 an acquisitions editor (from a different publisher) met with me and subsequently sent me a contract."

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2007 Norma Hood Award, which recognizes devotion and commitment to the association. The Norma Hood Award is named after TAA's second executive director Norma Hood. The award was presented at the 2007 TAA Awards Luncheon, held during the 2007 TAA Conference on Text and Academic Authoring in Buffalo, NY June 22. Pawlak also received a Norma Hood Award in 2003, and a Mike Keedy Award, which recognizes dedicated work on behalf of authors, in 2000.

**President's Award.** TAA Council Member Michael Lennie was awarded the 2007 TAA President's Award by TAA President John Wakefield. The President's Award is given annually to someone who in the current President's view has great potential for service in TAA. The award was presented at the 2007 TAA Awards Luncheon, held during the 2007 TAA Conference on Text and Academic Authoring in Buffalo, NY June 22.

**Lifetime Achievement.** TAA Interim Treasurer and TAA Past President Michael Sullivan was awarded the 2007 TAA Lifetime Achievement Award, which recognizes a lifetime of excellence in authoring and a

career of support and service to authors. Winners are also recognized for having fulfilled the highest ideal of the association. The award was presented at the 2007 TAA Awards Luncheon, held during the 2007 TAA Conference on Text and Academic Authoring in Buffalo, NY June 22.

**TAA Council.** At its meeting in Buffalo, NY June 21, the TAA Council approved new documents that spell out the duties and responsibilities of being an officer or member of the Council. Read more at: [www.taaonline.net/notes/index.html#8notes](http://www.taaonline.net/notes/index.html#8notes)

**New Members.** Karl Horvath, Matt Stevens, Barry Bergman, Heather Buchanan, Ilene Linden, Seth Maislin, Lynn Marecek, Marion Mason, David McIntyre, Scot Ober, Alberto M. Ochoa, Patricia Olson, Rich Underwood and Shelley Shaffer.

**Sustaining members.** Allen R. Angel, William Boyce, Mary Ellen Guffey, Michael J. Timmons, Allyn J. Washington

**Contributing member.** Jay Devore

*Continued on page 9*

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## Use this checklist when submitting dissertation, journal article

by Dave Harris

It may be intimidating to have to turn in a paper according to a specific set of style guidelines, but if you just follow a step-by-step process it's not all that difficult. Here's a basic checklist of the fundamental issues. It's just a starting point, but check it against your style guidelines and you should be set. Style manuals are hundreds of pages; universities and journals often have additional specific requirements. But don't be intimidated. There's a lot of detail that you probably won't face. This list is primarily aimed at dissertation writers, but the principles are the same for journals.

1. **Font:** I suggest Times New Roman 12pt. Many other fonts are acceptable, but if there is a restriction, Times New Roman 12pt is almost always accepted. In general, the more common the font, the more likely it will be accepted.

2. **Set up your margins.** The size of margin varies depending on the project. Typically it will be one inch on all four sides, but theses and dissertations often require a larger left

margin (typically 1.5 inches). If you set your margins early in the writing process, it may save you some hassles later (especially if you're using tables that might be affected by the width).

3. **Double space.** Most papers in the humanities (MLA and Turabian style manuals) and social sciences (APA style manual) require this. This includes lengthy quotations that are set off from the rest of the text by indentation (double spacing is required by APA, MLA; and Chicago styles; the Turabian manual says quotations "may be single spaced"). Tables of contents, footnotes, and reference lists often have different line-spacing requirements.

4. **Number your pages.** Pagination rules vary from institution to institution.

5. **Page headers** are often necessary.

6. **Title Page.** But this is usually highly specific. Universities have their own guidelines; journals usually do, too.

7. **Front matter:** this may include a signature page, a copyright notice, a dedication, and acknowledgments.

8. **Table of contents.**

9. **Abstract.** Keep it short and as simple as

possible. Check your style manual for details. UMI Dissertation Publishing ([www.il.proquest.com/products\\_umi/dissertations/](http://www.il.proquest.com/products_umi/dissertations/)) requires a 350-word limit on doctoral dissertation abstracts and a 150-word limit on master's theses. A good abstract is worth the effort. It's what people read first.

10. **The body of the text.** You're not too likely to forget about this.

11. **Figures and images.** Often it is most simple to include figures and images at the end of the text. If you are using images that are copyrighted, you will probably need to get permission for their use in your dissertation or thesis.

12. **List of references.** Don't leave this for last! Your references in the text have to be consistent with the references on the reference list. Although most references will be done easily, don't get caught at the last minute scrambling to figure out how best to cite one of your references. Most style manuals have

*Continued on page 9*



# Beyond the Book<sup>®</sup>



**Copyright Clearance Center and TAA are pleased to be working together to podcast programs from the 2007 TAA Conference at [www.beyondthebook.com](http://www.beyondthebook.com).**

You do not need an iPod or MP3 player to listen. Programs may be played directly at your PC, or downloaded and burned to a standard audio compact disc. Transcripts are also available.

**Beyond the Book** programs cover a variety of topics about the business of writing and publishing to help creative professionals realize the full potential of their works, while encouraging respect for intellectual property and the principles of copyright. We encourage you to subscribe to the free ongoing Beyond the Book series!

*Continued from page 7*

**BTAA: Johnson.** Andrew Johnson (Mankato, Minnesota) recently publishing the third edition of “A Short Guide to Action Research.” He also published a journal article, “Becoming fully intelligent,” in “Encounter: has created transcripts of three 2007 TAA Conference sessions: “A Play of Words: Acting Out Contract Negotiations”; “Google Book Search: Opportunities for Academic Publishers and Authors in the Online Channel”; and “It’s 2007. Do You Know Where Your Editor Is?” CCC will also be offering these sessions as podcasts on its Beyond the Book website: [www.beyondthebookcast.com/](http://www.beyondthebookcast.com/) Read the transcripts at: [http://taaonline.net/membersonly/2007conference\\_members.html#2](http://taaonline.net/membersonly/2007conference_members.html#2)

**Conference kudos.** “Many thanks for the wonderful opportunity to participate in the TAA conference. The weather was perfect, the topics and presenters were excellent, and all events were superbly organized. I joined the TAA after attending Tara Gray’s informative workshop ‘Publish and Flourish’ last June. Since then, I have published three articles in peer-reviewed journals. I just wanted to acknowledge that I wouldn’t have accomplished that without her help. This is also the first time I attended the TAA conference. I enjoyed friendly atmosphere during all the sessions. I gained new insights and inspiration from the leading experts in the field of publishing educational texts. I also enjoyed forays into the history and culture of Buffalo, the jewel of Western New York.” Victoria A. Malko, Ed.D., California State University, Fresno Read more conference testimonials at [www.taaonline.net/TAAConference/postcomments.html](http://www.taaonline.net/TAAConference/postcomments.html)

**Publisher purchase.** Houghton Mifflin Company signed a definitive agreement to acquire the Harcourt Education, Harcourt Trade and Greenwood-Heinemann divisions of Reed Elsevier. Houghton Mifflin will acquire the Harcourt businesses in a transaction valued at \$4 billion, consisting of \$3.7 billion in cash and \$300 million in common stock of Houghton Mifflin Riverdeep Group PLC (Houghton Mifflin’s parent company). The combined business will be led by Tony Lucki, Chairman, President and CEO of Houghton Mifflin, and former CEO of Harcourt Education and Harcourt, Inc. Completion of the transaction, which is expected in late 2007 or early 2008, is subject to regulatory review.

*Continued from page 1*

from the increase in computer literacy of entry-level students.]

This, and not the greed of publishers, is the major factor in bundled materials for course texts. Students require more visual assistance, more practice tests and study guides, than did those of earlier generations. One may rail against textbook adjunct materials, but the fact of the matter is they would not be produced if there were no market for them. We have reached a tipping point where the production and availability ancillary materials is expected, and students who have the need must bear the cost.

Paradoxically, as the percentage of high school students who seek to enter college increases, the pressures at the college level on grade distribution have also increased, so that students expect to perform at levels “above average.” I’m reminded of Garrison Keillor’s characterization of the mythic Lake Wobegone, where everyone is above average. The normal curve ought to describe society as a whole; but as college student populations more closely approximate society as a whole, the drift has been, not toward the normal distribution curve, but toward the upper end of that curve. This in turn places pressures on college professors to maintain their students in the high end of a normal distribution, and the temptation to order bundled adjuvant materials to assist in that effort is increased.

One additional factor, related to perfectly understandable student behavior but nonetheless highly significant, is the emergence of the secondary, used textbook market. Given the parallel rate of growth of other factors in college expense (housing,

food, transportation, CPT), the advent of used book buyers and resellers had no comparison in these other areas of expense. A given printed copy of a textbook, which 20 years ago might never be resold but be retained by the student, now is routinely resold. While reselling behavior does indeed greatly reduce the net cost, the reduction is ephemeral. If a given copy will service, semester after semester, six or more students with only the sale of the new copy to the first user earning the publisher and the author any income, the incentive to shorten the time until a new edition is issued becomes a matter of economic survival. Bookstores and other resellers typically buy at 25 to 30 cents on the dollar and sell at 75 cents on the dollar, which is a far great profit margin than with the original new copy. Every resale results in a substantial profit for the bookstore or used book reseller, with no profit to the original publisher. Textbooks thus become like any other transferable commodity, the automobiles of learning, to be driven for specific purposes and then resold for whatever their residual value.

*Editor’s Note: This column represents TAA Executive Director Richard Hull’s reaction to the Department of Education’s Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance’s College Textbook Cost Report (TAA Industry News section: [www.taaonline.net/news/06\\_13\\_07.html#11](http://www.taaonline.net/news/06_13_07.html#11)) (Full text of the study: [www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/acfsa/edlite-txtbkstudy.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/acfsa/edlite-txtbkstudy.html))*

*Continued from page 8*

extensive lists of examples to help put references in the proper form.

13. Paper. Typically, schools require dissertations and theses to be printed on special paper (usually low-acid or acid-free). Check with your school for acceptable papers.

This is a basic and generic checklist. When it comes time to finalize your work, be sure to find the official guidelines published by your department or university. This checklist cannot replace the official university guidelines.

Getting it all right requires attention to detail and some effort, but it doesn’t require brilliance. Don’t be intimidated.

*Dave Harris, Ph.D. ([dave@thoughtclearing.com](mailto:dave@thoughtclearing.com)), academic writing coach and editor, enjoys untangling the delicate threads of arguments and helping writers capture their ideas in an effective written form. More information can be found at [www.thoughtclearing.com](http://www.thoughtclearing.com). Copyright 2007, Dave Harris. All rights reserved.*

## Eight ways to dispose of comp copies

Here are some suggestions for what to do with unwanted examination copies, from TAA's Executive Director, Richard Hull:

1. Don't open boxes of books that you are not expecting (e.g. from orders you have placed). Mark them "Return to Sender" and give them back to the postal service.
  2. Write publishers to ask for a stack of postpaid mailers for return of unwanted comp copies.
  3. Put unwanted comp copies in a departmental library for other faculty to examine; circulate a list of the books you receive and ask if any one wants them.
  4. Write a review for your particular field's journal (mine has one called *Teaching Philosophy*) of the book.
  5. Have an arrangement with a colleague at a local other school who would like to look over your unwanted desk copies.
  6. Ask your faculty senate to hold comp copy drives for distribution of books to third world countries' educational institutions' libraries that cannot afford to buy them.
  7. Tear off the covers and recycle the paper in your campus paper recycling system.
  8. Send a standard letter to publishers of unwanted texts that you would never adopt asking that they remove your name from their distribution lists.
- The point of all of these measures is to keep comp copies from being sold by used book dealers to students, thereby depriving authors and publishers of the potential of at least one and probably half a dozen or more new book sales. For once a desk copy gets into the system of used book sales, it will be resold and resold until either it falls apart or a new edition is widely adopted.

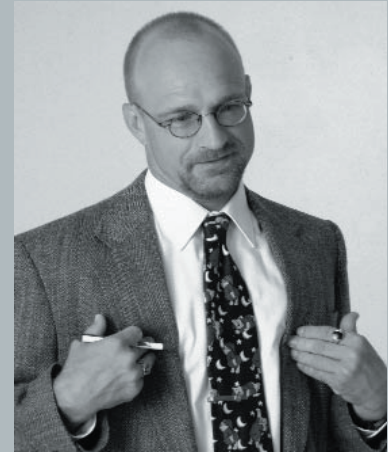
## How to write readable academic prose

The purpose of writing is to transmit ideas, says Andrew Johnson, professor of Holistic Education at Minnesota State University, Mankato, not to show the reader how much you know about a particular subject. "I approach articles and books as if the reader knows nothing," he said.

"I enter a teaching mode, trying to make things as simple as possible. I have to bring my ideas to the reader. I'm not famous enough for the reader to come to me."

Johnson shares some tips for making your writing more readable:

- Write everything down first, and then edit. "You have to explode onto the page and get those ideas out," he said. "Write garbage first — only then can you begin pulling things away and shaping your ideas. Go back sentence by sentence, and then paragraph by paragraph, asking yourself, 'Does this need to be there?' Knowing what does not need to be there is just as important as knowing what does need to be there."
  - Remember the purpose of writing is to transmit ideas from Point A (your head) to Points B and beyond (your readers' heads). It is not to show how much you know. Use concise sentences and simple terms whenever possible."
  - Provide structure for the reader (e.g. headings and subheadings; boxes; etc.).
  - Research your subject thoroughly.
- "Reading is the gasoline that helps power the writing engine," he said. "If I know too little about a subject, I let the



Andrew Johnson

literature guide me. I do an extensive literature review first, and let my structure arise from the notes. If I know a great deal about a subject, I'm in charge. I write first and do a literature review later to shape my writing."

- Read your writing out loud into a tape recorder and then listen to it to develop a writer's ear.
- Learn your craft by writing journal articles and listening to reviewers' comments. "I often have to put a review away for a few days and step back from it emotionally," he said. "I've learned to listen to reviews. It has made me a better writer."

## TAA website members-only features

As a TAA member, you have access to several members-only features on the TAA website. To access the members-only portion of the TAA website, visit [www.taaonline.net/membersonly/index.html](http://www.taaonline.net/membersonly/index.html) and enter the username "member" and the password "author" to gain entry into the TAA Member Center.

In the TAA Member Center you will find the following:

- A copy of the current TAA News
- Alert and archives
- A current issue PDF of *The Academic Author* and archives
- Members-only news
- The current TAA President's Message and archives
- How-to Articles archives
- Author Q&A interviews
- Profiles of authors ("Notable Authors")
- Writer's Block essays
- A archive of questions asked by members and answered by veteran
- TAA author-members
- Columns on text and academic authoring issues
- Book reviews
- Information about TAA's Academic Authoring Workshops
- A list of editors offering discounts to TAA members
- A referral list of literary agents and publishing law attorneys
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## What indexers wish you knew

By Seth Maislin

Misinformation about indexing isn't uncommon, but it continues to surprise indexers how so many basic beliefs about indexes are so utterly wrong. Our professional lives would be so much more pleasant if the rest of the world knew just three basic things about the indexing process.

### 1. Indexing is an editorial function.

You own a spellchecker, so why do you continue to work with editors? That's easy. You need an editor to correct all the stupid mistakes your spellchecker makes, along with the 20 other good things that spellcheckers never do. Indexing, like writing and editing, requires a human being. Search, automatic indexers, and even simple alphabetizing tools are inferior, able to build things that look okay but function terribly.

### 2. Authors can write their own indexes, but there's no good reason for it.

Just because you're capable doesn't mean you do it. Most of us do not grow vegetables, fill potholes, produce movies, or whittle wood into pencils. We know to rely on people who are efficient and qualified, because we have more appropriate things to do instead. Indexers are highly educated people who have the right combination of experience, training, and subject knowledge to prepare the best product for your readers. Unless you're a professional indexer yourself, and there are a multitude of opportunities for you to become one, leave the hard work to the experts. Even gardeners buy most of their groceries.

### 3. Many publishers don't care about the index.

If it arrives on time, looks good, and fits within the space allowed, the rest, you know, that whole quality thing, might be irrelevant. Even if you're working with a company's vice president, index production might be assigned to a recent college graduate who knows little or nothing about indexes. Authors need to advocate for the indexes that end up in their books. Authors should be involved in an early search for a qualified indexer, insist on enough money and time to get the job done well, be a resource for the indexer, ask the publisher to reserve enough book pages for the index, and review the final product. If you don't want errors in your book, why would you accept errors in your index?

For many, writing an index sounds like torture, and to some it really is. On the other hand, *talking* about indexing is fascinating because it's all about language and communication and people. If you have questions about indexing, I promise the answers won't bore you. Ask away.

*Seth Maislin, is a freelance indexer and consultant with Focus Information Services. seth@maislin.com*

## How to improve your role in the peer review process

by Gayle A. Brazeau

Manuscript peer review is the essential element in promoting quality and excellence in papers published in scientific and professional journals because it provides authors with the opportunity to improve the quality of their submitted manuscript. Individuals who participate in the peer review process provide a valuable service to their colleagues and enhance the literature in their discipline. The strength and vitality of publications in academics' individual professions and disciplines is centered on the premise of the peer review process.

Serving as manuscript peer reviewer is an important, critical professional activity, yet most peer reviewers do not receive any mentoring in the process from their colleagues. Peer review is only as good as the individuals who participate. Individuals who provide constructive reviews can enhance their own writing skills and extend their professional reputation through editors who will often look to good reviewers as future journal editorial advisory board members.

When reviewing a journal, read and evaluate the manuscript from three different perspectives, and employing three critical assumptions:

**First Perspective:** Read the manuscript and gain an understanding of the content and focus of the work.

**First Critical assumption:** The reviewer has agreed to review in an area of their professional expertise.

**Second Perspective:** Read the manuscript from the perspective of a competitor with a critical, but objective eye.

**Second Critical Assumption:** The reviewer does not have a conflict of interest with the author(s) involved in the work.

**Third Perspective:** Read from the perspective of a colleague/friend who wants to improve the manuscript quality,

providing suggestions and recommendations, as well as identifying additional work or clarifications to enhance the quality of the the current or revised manuscript.

**Third Critical Assumption:** The reviewer provides comments which focus on improving the quality of the study/work or the results/conclusions rather than simply dismissing the efforts by the author(s).

Here are some additional suggestions for how peer reviewers can improve the quality of their role in the peer review process:

- Read any documentation provided by the journal on the style, content or process for the submitted review. Many journals also provide a series of questions reviewers should address in the review. If this is unclear, a reviewer should discuss any concerns with the journal editor. The review process is increasingly being conducted using websites that enable the reviewer to answer specific questions requested by the journal, to enter their comments directly, or to upload their reviews.

- Write the review after reading the manuscript for the second or third time. Use constructive and courteous language in a format that enables the authors to understand the article's strengths and to address its limitations.

- Complete reviews in a timely manner by the date requested by the editor. If there will be delay in submitting the review, let the editor know. Reviewers shouldn't hinder the manuscript process or increase the article author's anxiety by making them wait even longer to hear about their submission.

*Dr. Gayle A. Brazeau is an Associate Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the University of Buffalo. She serves on several editorial advisory boards for scientific and educational journals.*

## TAA offers TAAF a three-phase matching \$30,000 grant

At its meeting in Buffalo, NY June 21, the TAA Council offered the TAA Foundation a three-phase matching grant totaling \$30,000. The grant will be made in three separate increments of \$10,000, payable as the Foundation raises the matching funds. The funds must be raised by June 30, 2008 to qualify for the full match. The challenge begins July 1.

To make a donation to the TAA Foundation, contact Richard Hull, TAAF's executive director, at [rthull62@hotmail.com](mailto:rthull62@hotmail.com) or (850) 893-6539. You can also mail your donation to TAAF, P.O. Box 76477, St. Petersburg, FL 33734-6477. Make checks payable to Text and Academic Authors Foundation.

To learn more about the TAA Foundation and its projects, visit [www.taaonline.net/TAAFoundation/index.html](http://www.taaonline.net/TAAFoundation/index.html)

Continued from page 4

for him/her to push for exclusive, perpetual foreign and translation rights.”

*Tell me about Publisher X's foreign sales ability. Sub rights licensing (translations and adaptations)? New media capability? “Again, rights that the editor is not positioned to aggressively exploit should not be part of the package.”*

**(Get the promotion plan)**

*What would you envision doing to promote a book like mine? Promotional brochure (how many pages? Full color? How big a mailing?) How many review copies/comps? Presentation at sales conference? Author appearances? Newspaper/Journal ads? Anything else?*

“Most publishing contracts say very little indeed about what the publisher will do to market and promote your work. If you get a sales pitch from the editor, make an effort to reduce it to writing and reference it in the publishing contract.”

**(Check the back door)**

*Roughly what percent of the titles you sign actually make it into print? “The answer to this question will tell you how important it is to introduce an objective acceptability standard into the manuscript delivery clause.”*

*Is there anything else I should know about you or about how you see my book fitting in your list?*

“If your editor is still talking, you should still be taking notes.”

“You will not get answers to all of these questions,” said Gillen. “And you will not get answers to any of them without a fair amount of prodding. But the time and effort you spend will tell you volumes about the editor and will pay many dividends when the time comes to negotiate that contract.”

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**MEMBER SURVEY**

How long have you been a member? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about TAA (e.g. gift from colleague; workshop; website; other)? \_\_\_\_\_

Which member benefits do you find most useful (circle one or all):

TAA website    Newsletter    TAA News Alerts    Networking    Expert advice    Contract assistance    TAA Listserv

How often do you visit the TAA website? \_\_\_\_\_

Which sections of the TAA website do you visit most often (circle one or all):

Home Page    Industry News    TAA Notes    How-To    Members-Only pages    Writer's Block essays

TAA Conference Pages    Authors Asking    Columns    Search    Other \_\_\_\_\_

Which sections of *The Academic Author* do you enjoy most (circle one or all):

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Columns    How-Tos    Authors Asking Q&A's    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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Monthly newsletters    Teleconferences    Mentoring Program    More networking    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

TAA's \$75 dues are too expensive for me (check one) \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If my dues remained \$30, I would renew my membership (check one) \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Comments/Suggestions:

\_\_\_\_\_  
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*Fold in thirds with address on outside. Seal with tape.*

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