The {Academic Author}

For Creators of Academic Intellectual Property

2008:1 February 2008

Associate Executive Director's Message:

Keep talking, we're listening

Kim Pawlak

In print and email surveys that were conducted between September 2007 and January 2008, some TAA members told us they found *The Academic Author* to be one of the most valuable member benefits, while others said it was printed too infrequently.

As a result of that feedback, we have decided to begin publishing *The Academic Author* monthly rather than quarterly, starting with this issue (except in the months of July and August).

This is just one example of the changes we have made in member communication and services in the past year, most of which were a result of member feedback. Here are several more:

• Grants of up to $750 for publication costs associated with publishing a scholarly article or book: *www.taaonline.net/membersonly/index.html*

• Free mentoring via an online mentoring directory that allows members to match themselves with veteran academic and textbook authors: *www.taaonline.net/membersonly/mentors/index.html*

• Authoring advice and insight via a new "How-to" section, more frequent postings of Q&A's to "Authors Asking", and essays on writing in the "Writer's Block" section: *www.taaonline.net/membersonly/index.html*

• An expanded "Busy TAA People" section, which allows members to get to know one another through member profiles, and by sharing their news, as well as links to their personal and professional website addresses: *www.taaonline.net/membersonly/busytaapeople/index.html*

• A more active TAA Listserv, TAA's members-only email discussion list. If you are not receiving postings, please contact me so that we can make sure that you are subscribed. Post messages to *taa@mail-list.com*

I hope that you will continue to provide us with feedback, both by responding to surveys, and by contacting us directly at *TEXT@tampabay.rr.com* or *(727) 563-0020*. We're listening.

Plan to attend the 2008 TAA Conference

The 2008 TAA Conference on Text and Academic Authoring will be held at Harrah's in Las Vegas, June 19-21. Member registration before May 1 is $195 ($245 after May 1) and non-member registration is $245 before May 1 ($295 after). Non-members can join TAA prior to the conference for only $30 and save $20 off registration.

Rooms at Harrah's for conference attendees are only $99 per night (Call 888-458-8471 to book a room. Use the special code "SHTEX8" when making a reservation). Visit the Harrah's Las Vegas website at *www.harrahs.com/casinos/harrahs-las-vegas/hotel-casino/property-home.shtml*

The conference will feature two half-day workshops on Thursday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.. "The Basics of Textbook Writing from Start to Finish" will be presented by Michael Spiegler, author of several leading psychology textbooks. "Writing for Publication" will be presented by Kenneth Henson, author or co-author of more than 300 national publications (*www.taaonline.net/TAAConference/sessions.html)*.

On Friday, June 20, Lawrence J. Mullen, author of *Las Vegas: Media and Myth,* will kick-off the conference by sharing strategies for writing a "cross-over" book: an academic but highly readable book marketable to a much wider audience. Other Friday sessions include: "Google Book Search 201"; "Can You Understand Me *Now*? Assessing the Reading Level of Our Writing"; "Breaking Writer's Block: How to Overcome the Psychological Inhibitions That Keep You From Writing"; "KISS (Keeping It Simple Isn't Stupid): Making the Complex Comprehensible"; "Songs of Praise (and Horror): The Journal Reviewing Process"; "A Play of Words: Acting Out Contract Negotiations, Part II"; "Milking That Dissertation: Insights From an Acquisitions Editor" (*www.taaonline.net/TAAConference/sessions.html)*.

Over a boxed lunch, attendees will have the opportunity to participate in "Roundtable Discussions" on various topics, including "Preparing the Next Edition"; "Deciphering Your Royalty Statement"; "K-12 Authoring and Publishing"; "Working with Co-Authors"; "Creating a Successful Author-Editor Relationship"; "Open Discussion for Non-Tenured Professors & Those New to Higher Education"; and "Share Near-Finished Drafts with 'Little-e experts' and 'Capital-E Experts'"(*www.taaonline.net/TAAConference/roundtables.html)*.

David Schwartz, director of the Center for Gaming Research at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, will kick off Saturday's sessions with his further orientation to Las Vegas, "Seven Things You Should Know About Casinos." Other Saturday sessions include: "Making Your Work More Visual"; "Don't Get 'MAD': The Joys and Heartaches of Co-Authorship"; "Issues Faced by African-American, Asian, and Latino Authors"; and "Making Your Work More Visual II: Obtaining Rights to Photos, Navigating the Public Domain" (*www.taaonline.net/TAAConference/sessions.html)*.

On Saturday, TAA will also award its 2008 Textbook Excellence Award ("Texty") and McGuffey Longevity Award ("McGuffey") winners, as well as staff and volunteers who have shown outstanding commitment to the association. After the awards are presented, winners will participate in a Q&A session about how authors can make their books stand out from the competition.

Other special features of this year's conference include the ability to sign up for free one-on-one sessions with an authoring attorney or literary agent, and mentoring sessions with senior textbook and/or academic authors.

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Busy TAA People:

First textbook fulfills author's lifelong dream to work as a writer

by Kim Seidel

While teaching a class called the "Sociology of Murder" at Augusta State University, where she serves as chair and associate professor in the Department of Sociology, Criminal Justice and Social Work, Kimberly Ann Davies saw that there were no books available for students that focused on the breadth of the homicide studies done by academics. "All the books focused mostly on serial and spree murders, and some were less than academic in my mind," she said.

With some encouragement by an editor at Prentice Hall, where her work habits as a reviewer — being extremely thorough in her editing, meeting deadlines, and carefully balancing issues of race and gender — got her noticed, combined with her lifelong dream of working as a writer, Davies decided to write her first textbook.

Because she enjoyed her work with Prentice Hall, she chose to pitch her textbook idea to them. "I started by contacting an editor there, who sent me the publisher's outline on how to do a book proposal," said Davies. "I read it carefully and followed their directions, which included writing an outline of the book. I also was required to compare other books in the field, determining and arguing for the need for my book."

Before she signed the contract with Prentice Hall, she sought assistance from a colleague who had signed textbook contracts before. "I asked him about those contracts and the university's policies on intellectual property [She used her time, not the university's, in writing her book]," she said. "I was nervous and so very excited [about signing the contract]. As far as I know, the contract wasn't overly author-friendly, or unfriendly."

From start to finish, it took Davies three years to complete *The Murder Book: Examining Homicide*, which was published in the fall of 2007 by Prentice Hall. Her experience as a reviewer, and the guide provided by the publisher, helped her through the process, she said, but most importantly, her long-time teaching experiences helped her write an ideal textbook that students would want to read: "I wanted the book to be like my teaching style, which is to present information in a clear, straightforward way to students."

Davies' textbook is different from other textbooks on the topic of homicide today. Her goal was to cover all different types of homicide, as well to cover how it's counted and defined. "I wanted to aim the textbook a little more at criminal justice professors by including chapters on murder in court and solving murder," she said. "Most importantly, I wanted to cover the academic studies on homicide and to encourage critical thinking by my readers."

As a member of the Homicide Research Working Group, Davies realized how much research is available on homicide and violence and wanted to include that in her book. "I want students to become aware of the fact that they can't draw conclusions solely from their own experiences," she said. "My textbook offers different perspectives on homicide. I enjoyed including boxes throughout my chapters, filled with interesting, brief fun facts about homicide-related information."

Along with including academic studies and encouraging critical thinking, the book is unique in that it is written in the first person. This feature has set her textbook apart from others, said Davies: "I explain in the first chapter that I write in first person to emphasize that people write textbooks, and though we work not to be biased, being unbiased is impossible. Throughout the textbook, I share my thoughts and views. I ponder questions. I want the students to ponder questions right along with me."

She enjoyed working with Prentice Hall she said: "They were reasonable. For example, when I was named chair of my department, they allowed me to renegotiate a deadline." Part way through the project, the publisher reorganized the company. Davies then worked with a subcontractor, who she said, "was nice and thoughtful." The subcontractor also pushed people to review quickly for her when she was coming down to the wire. "I told editors I was new and to explain everything," she said. "I asked questions if I had them. My father always told me, 'Don't be afraid to be stupid,' and that advice has served me well over the years."

Davies was amazed at how much she loved the process of writing her first textbook. "I loved writing this book more than I thought I would I would love it," she said. "It is so much fun for me to learn and to teach, and that is what I'm doing. Also, on some level, I always wanted to write a book. The idea of being a writer is so appealing."

Kimberly Davies

She was surprised by two things during the process of writing the book: that reviewers weren't as thorough in editing her textbook as she has been in her reviews; and that the publisher outsources work to other countries. "In the end, I was working with an editor who lives in India," said Davies. "It was interesting. But it was all quick and smooth at the end with the help of e-mail."

When she wasn't teaching or taking care of chair duties, Davies said she was writing all of the time and everywhere. "I tried to schedule one morning a week to write in addition to nights, but it did not always go as planned," she said. Since completing her textbook, she has realized how much time she spent writing: "I've taken up golf lessons to fill in my days now."

She wrote mainly out of her home office, but whenever she experienced writer's block, she would move to a different location. "I would go to a local coffeehouse or bookstore with my laptop," she said. "Or I would move on to writing a different chapter, and return to the challenging parts later."

Davies said she wishes she had included more photos in the textbook: "I enjoy photography and that may have enhanced the experience even further."

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

The Academic Author is a digest of coverage on the Text and Academic Authors Association's web site (*www.TAAonline.net*). Published by the Text and Academic Authors Association. Phone: (727) 563-0020. Email: TEXT@tampabay.rr.com John Wakefield, President. Richard T. Hull, Executive Director. Kim Pawlak, Associate Executive Director. Paula Heimbecker, Production Editor. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Text and Academic Authors Association, P.O. Box 76477, St. Petersburg, FL 33734-6477.

Create more interesting text: Write outside your discipline

by Nick Sciullo

My own work has taken me far afield from my study of law. I've delved into feminist theory, critical race theory, rhetorical theory, literary studies, urban planning, and more.

I've always found that the most interesting texts — textbooks, journals, book reviews — are those that are written in an interdisciplinary fashion. Maybe that's my liberal arts education coming through, but there's something about reading a law text with history examples, or an article on communication theory that pulls in political science, or even a sociology selection that combines medicine and health sciences literature that is simply more interesting.

Students, professionals, and other scholars likely appreciate the interconnectedness of our interests as well. In order to keep people questioning and pondering, encourage broader discussion of relevant issues, and develop an increasingly interested and literate public, we must be able to do more than write inside our comfort zone.

Here are five suggestions to make the process of writing outside your discipline easier:

1. Remember your major or majors in college! Many of us studied vastly different things than we find ourselves pursuing today. Those early classes and degrees can be a source of enrichment for writing in your current discipline. I think of all those colleagues, professors, and scholars that I've come across and many of them are writing or teaching in areas they never imagined they'd be in when they first started school. Who says that a communication studies professor cannot rely on his B.S. in international relations? Why would a biology professor ignore her double major in anthropology and Spanish? Is it wrong for an engineering instructor to pursue her true passion, English? What about an English professor who relies on her M.F.A for inspiration more than her Ph.D. in postmodern studies?

2. Consult your friends and colleagues. I went to law school and I know many folks who write, teach, and practice law. But, I know people who are interested in religion, international relations, food science, forensics, and many other disciplines. These friends and colleagues can help me explore new areas that interest me, they can challenge a set of assumptions with which I work, and they can also open the doors for later collaboration. Most of us have colleagues in our office, department, or Outlook address book that share a passion for the scholarly. Start thinking about how those contacts might help you.

3. Read anything different. Sometimes we get trapped reading the same materials over and over. Maybe you're a *Wall Street Journal* junkie or is it *Political Science Quarterly*? Perhaps the Harvard *BlackLetter Law Review* is your favorite bedtime reading or maybe it's the *Journal of the American Chemical Society*? I hate to say it, but even the *Washington Post* can get boring. Expand what you read and you'll expand the connections you make amongst the many ideas floating around you. Sometimes I find it's a novel or an article in Smithsonian that inspires me to pursue a new topic of socio-legal scholarship and not what I read in the latest blast email from the American Bar Association. You'll be surprised at how much you pick up looking at material outside of

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Copyright Clearance Center
A Resource on the Business of Writing and Publishing

Copyright Clearance Center and TAA are pleased to be working together to podcast programs from the 2007 TAA Conference at 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!

Copyright Clearance Center

TAA
Text and Academic Authors Association

Highlights:

Members-only. TAA members now need a member-specific password and username to access members-only sections of TAA web site. If you have not received an email from TAA containing your member-specific password or username, please contact TAA headquarters at *TEXT@tampabay.rr.com* or (727) 563-0020. We either do not have your email address, or current email address, in our database or your membership has lapsed.

TAA Listserv. Have an authoring question? Need advice? Post a message on the TAA Listserv at *taa@mail-list.com*

Proposal samples. Not sure what information to provide in your textbook proposal? View these sample textbook proposals submitted by TAA members: *www.TAAonline.net/membersonly/howto/textbook_proposal.html*

Conference registration. 2008 TAA Conference registration is $195 for members before May 1, 2008 and $245 after. Non-member registration is $245 before May 1, 2008, and $295 after. Register using TAA's secure online registration form or download and print a PDF of the form: *www.TAAonline.net/TAAConference/register.html* The conference will be held at Harrah's in Las Vegas, June 19-21. Rooms are $99 per night if booked before May 19, 2008. For more information about the 2008 TAA Conference on Text and Academic Authoring, visit *www.TAAonline.net/TAAConference*

TAA history. Are you a new member who wants to learn more about TAA and its history of assisting textbook and academic authors? TAA is celebrating its 20th year! Read about TAA's history, and the people who have made it what it is today: *www.TAAonline.net/anniversary/index.html* Visit the PDF archives of TAA's print member newsletter, *The Academic Author*: *www.TAAonline.net/membersonly/aa/index.html*

Contributing members. John M. Ivancevich.

Sustaining members. Kevin T. Patton, Wayne L. Weiten

Open access. Academic publisher SAGE and the Hindawi Publishing Corporation entered into an agreement to jointly launch and publish a suite of fully Open Access (OA) journals. SAGE will have sole responsibility for the editorial development, marketing, and promotion of the new journals while Hindawi will provide the technology and expertise needed to run the publication process from the point of submission, through the peer-review process, to the point of final publication. Under the model, all SAGE-Hindawi journal articles will be made freely available online via the Hindawi platform, funded by author charges. SAGE is the world's fifth largest journal publisher, with over 485 journals in the humanities, social sciences, science, technology, and medicine. Hindawi currently publishes more than 100 Open Access journals covering a wide range of subjects in science, technology, and medicine. The SAGE-Hindawi platform was launched at Information Online 2007, December 4-6 in London.

Mentors needed. TAA's online Mentor-a-Member program allows members to match themselves with veteran academic and textbook authors using an online directory. Mentors share their contact information (you can choose to be contacted by e-mail, phone or mail only, or all three), bio and the topics they're willing to mentor on. Become a TAA mentor by filling out a short form on the Mentor-a-Member page at *www.TAAonline.net/membersonly/mentors/index.html* or contact Associate Executive Director Kim Pawlak at *kmpawlak@centurytel.net* or (608) 687-3106.

Authors: Pearson manipulates royalties

Courtland L. Bovee and John V. Thill, authors of *Excellence in Business Communication and Business Communication Today*, filed suit on January 7, 2008 against Pearson Education, Inc. and its subsidiary Prentice Hall in the United States District Court, Southern District of New York alleging that the company has systematically breached its contracts with the authors and acted in bad faith in order to minimize the royalties it pays them.

"Ever since Pearson Education became the corporate parent of Prentice Hall, we have noticed changes in the way in which our royalties are paid," said John Thill. The suit alleges that there is a pattern of misstating and miscategorizing sales so that Pearson can maximize its own profits at the expense of its authors.

The lawsuit alleges, among other things, that despite specific contract provisions related to sales by Pearson Education subsidiaries, the defendants purport to license Bovee and Thill's works to its foreign subsidiary companies for sale in foreign markets in order to pay royalties based upon on a much lower license fee rather than upon the volume of sales.

The suit also alleges that Pearson engages in the systematic discounting of Bovee & Thill LLC works. Rather than calculating royalties on the "single copy price" of plaintiff's textbooks, Pearson Education arbitrarily sets an unreasonably high "list price" for plaintiff's books in order to take advantage of contractual royalty provisions related to "high discount sales."

Finally, Bovee & Thill take issue with Pearson Education's treatment of "custom published" editions of their work. Resembling allegations that have been made by other authors against Pearson and other publishers, Bovee & Thill's lawsuit alleges that Pearson Education reduced its royalty payments by categorizing custom published works as "abridgements," in order to apply a lower royalty rate to their sale.

Said Thill: "Everyone knows that custom published works are not 'abridgments.'" The suit alleges that Pearson Education ignores such accepted industry definitions so that they can retain more profits for themselves. "In our case, this practice results in the reduction of our royalties by about one third," he said.

Bijan Amini of Storch Amini & Munves, the firm representing Bovee and Thill, said: "Adding insult to injury, Pearson Education has consistently refused our clients adequate access to their books and records".

Call for Council nominations

Two officer positions and two Council positions will be opening up on the TAA Council July 1, 2008. Any member of TAA is eligible to serve on the TAA Council. Self-nominations are encouraged. The officer positions include Vice President/President-elect, and Treasurer. Officers serve two-year terms. Council members serve three year terms.

TAA Council members are required to attend two meetings per year, one in January in St. Petersburg, Florida, and one the day prior to the association's annual conference (held traditionally in late June or early July). Travel and lodging expenses related to attending these meetings is reimbursed. Officers also attend monthly teleconferences.

To nominate yourself or a colleague for the TAA Council, email your nominations to *TEXT@tampabay.rr.com* or mail to TAA, P.O. Box 76477, St. Petersburg, FL 33734-6477. Contact TAA if you have any questions: 727-563-0020 or *TEXT@tampabay.rr.com*
The deadline for the receipt of ballots from members is April 15, 2008. Terms begin July 1, 2007.

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your normal scholarly pursuits.

4. Talk to your students and kids. Throughout much of my experience in higher education, I've worked as a competitive debate coach (at both the high school and college level). I owe an invaluable amount of inspiration to the debaters I've coached. They've tested me, encouraged me to think differently, and taught me about everything from new music styles to new books. Life can get stale. Routines start to ruin the day and we're left with little more than a desire to write and no desire to get started. Sometimes it takes the youthful excitement of a scholar-to-be to really invigorate our creative energies.

5. Start writing. William Faulkner made stream of consciousness writing chic. More than that, he turned it into a literary style many have imitated, but few have successfully replicated. He changed literature. Wu-Tang Clan, the enigmatic ever-changing rap mega-group, pioneered stream of consciousness rap, bringing it to the attention of many music aficionados who had not really given hip-hop a chance as more than bass and vulgar lyrics. But, Wu-Tang changed things by bringing in a new lyrical style, unique production, and often complex subject matter. If you just start writing about anything and everything, saving the editing for later in the day or week, you're likely to come across much material that you choose to expound upon, much that you do not even understand, and at least some that takes you on wonderful asides that liven up your writing and bring boat loads of new examples, interesting counterpoints, and colorful footnoting to your audience — all of which make writing fun and interesting to read.

Go ahead and take the leap, you've got nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Nick J. Sciullo writes on race/class/gender issues. He's currently developing an article discussing the story of Atlantis and its impact on democratic theory. When he's not working in government affairs or writing cultural and legal theory, he's a political consultant. Visit his website at www.NickJSciulloConsulting.com

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WRITERS BLOCK:

Writer's block solution: Enacting the scholar role

by Sonja K. Foss and William Waters

As you sit down to write, do you find yourself staring for hours at an empty computer screen or doing anything but writing? There is a solution: Enacting the role of the scholar. Obviously, this is simple enough to say, but what does a scholar do? Being a scholar involves two kinds of work—coming up with ideas and sharing them with others. You may have excellent ideas, but until you document those ideas so they can be scrutinized by others, those ideas don't become part of the conversation of a discipline. If you want to adopt the scholar role, then, you must not only come up with ideas but make them permanent by writing them down.

Incomplete-Scholar Roles

If you are like many faculty members or graduate students who are trying to write, the most common way in which you are likely to respond to the stress of the unfinished dissertation, article, or book is by enacting an incomplete-scholar role. You enact the first part of the scholar—you generate ideas—but you don't complete the role by writing them down so they can be shared.

Although there are many incomplete-scholar roles, four of the most common ones are described below. These roles are appealing because they provide rewards to you at a time when you feel the need for some kind of reward—after all, you aren't getting the rewards that would come if you were making progress on your writing project. Do you recognize yourself in any of these self-sabotaging roles?

Housekeeper

You sit down to work on your writing project and decide that your kitchen cupboards need cleaning or the laundry needs to be done or the plants need to be watered or your files need to be cleaned out. What is going on with all of these variations on the housekeeper role is that you are doing things other than writing in the belief that their completion will make writing easier. You believe that the conditions in your environment must be perfect before you can write, so you spend your time making those conditions perfect.

Model Employee

You enact the role of the model employee when you have a job to do—paid or otherwise—and let the demands of that job push your writing aside. Because there is never an end to what you can do on the job when you are busy being a perfect employee, the tasks multiply to fill the time available. You can also be a model employee in your personal life, choosing to be the perfect spouse, partner, or parent. Although you know your priority is to finish your dissertation, article, or book, you keep busy with less important, short-term tasks. Once you are immersed in the busyness of some other area of your life, there seems to be no room for any other high-priority task such as scholarship.

Patient

The patient is the role you adopt if your scholarly work consists largely of trying to cure yourself of whatever is preventing you from making progress on your writing. You can assume a patient role in various ways—by joining support groups, going into therapy, or focusing on physical ailments. In the patient role, you give power to some condition and allow it to stand in the way between you and a

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completed writing project. Your response is to do the work that reinforces and highlights the disease so that it becomes the thing on which you focus your attention, and you count this as work on your writing project.

Proxy Critic

You write a paragraph or a sentence. Then you start to wonder about what you've just written. "This isn't good enough," you say to yourself, and you stop writing. You feel like you need approval before you can proceed, but, of course, there's no one who can or will approve every sentence you write at the moment you're writing it. In this case, you have assumed the role of the proxy critic—an imaginary editor or a fantasy critic who stops the flow, development, and documentation of ideas by assessing them prematurely. In this role, you are forgetting that writing and editing are two separate processes. The first process is getting the ideas on paper, and the second (and separate) step is to revise—and this is the place where you scrutinize and assess your writing.

Enacting the Role of the Scholar: Writing Regularly

Perhaps you've recognized yourself in one of the incomplete-scholar roles, and you want to take up the role of the scholar so that you can finish your writing project. But how do you do that? Because what most of the incomplete-scholar roles have in common is that they allow you to do things other than write, to counter them, you want to make writing a regular, recurrent activity.

Evidence for how effective regular writing can be comes from Robert Boice, who did a study of 27 faculty members from various universities who were having trouble completing writing projects. Nine of them agreed not to write during the 10-week period of the experiment, another nine were encouraged to write only when they were in the mood, and those in the third group were forced to write during 50 scheduled sessions. This last group wrote about three times as much as those who wrote only when they were inspired. [1]

Are you ready to try the regular writing that makes you a scholar? The key to writing regularly is to work on your writing according to a schedule. Just like you would go to work at a job and work regular hours, do the same with your writing. Even if you just have an hour or two to devote to writing each day, schedule it. Make writing during that period a sacred part of your day.

Sometimes, reconceptualizing how writing fits into your day helps you keep a regular writing schedule. Many people conceptualize writing as something to fit in around their teaching schedules and their family activities. See if you can reverse that thinking. If writing is now your real job, try to see everything else as disrupting your writing time. When you are writing and it's time for you to go teach a class, our guess is that you typically think, "Oh, good, I can stop writing because it's time for me to go teach." When you conceptualize your writing as your job, your new attitude becomes, "Is it time for class already? Too bad! I'm really making good progress on this writing project, and I hate to stop."

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Author's Asking:

What techniques do you use to cut clutter, wordiness, jargon, etc. from your writing?

Andrew P. Johnson, Ph.D., Professor of Holistic Education, Department of Special Education, Minnesota State University, Mankato, MN:

"What you don't include in is just as important as what you do include. Splash your words on the page. Write your draft without regard to length or redundancy. Get the whole mess out there. First focus on and revise sentence-by-sentence. With each, only include the information that needs to be there to communicate the idea. NO EXTRA WORDS. Then focus on and revise the paragraph. Have you made the same point more than once? What doesn't need to be there? What doesn't the reader need to know? (The importance of having a sense of audience.) Then focus on and revise the section. Is there any redundancy? How could things be said simpler? (It's okay to simple it up. Nothing sounds quite so stupid as somebody trying to sound smart.) Simple words and sentences are the most effective and efficient for carrying big ideas. What you don't include is just as important as what you do include. In the music of writing, the rests are just as important as the notes.

I know when I review book proposals or journal submissions I sometimes find myself wanting to yell to the writer, 'GET TO THE POINT!' Many beginning writers make the mistake of thinking an article, chapter, or books calls for you to dump everything you know about the subject at hand. Information dumping results in long, nebulous articles that force the reader to fish around to find your point - and which often are left unread. (Short, precise articles and chapters have a MUCH greater chance of being read.)

This points to the importance of really defining your question or the focus when writing a chapter or article. Restrain yourself. Refrain from kitchen-sinking (throwing everything in but the kitchen sink). You may have a lot to say or a lot of really good ideas ... however, unless these ideas related directly to your question or focus — save them for another day.."

Barbara Waxer, Author of *Internet Surf and Turf: The Essential Guide to Copyright, Fair Use, and Finding Media* (TAA Texty 2006), Adjunct Faculty Santa Fe Community College:

"Speaking as both an author and a developmental editor, here's a quick and efficient method: 1) In Word, turn on Track Changes and change the view to Final (so you see only the edited version, not the edits); 2) Change everything to active voice, if necessary; 3) Delete every adjective and adverb; 4) Break up any sentence that has more than one clause and delete any nonessential clauses.

Now you have a stripped-down document that shows only the essentials. Accept the changes that insert active voice, then carefully reinsert adjectives and adverbs that actually enhance or clarify the point. If you're not familiar with Track Change, reject the changes you made initially."

Rae Andre, Professor, Organizational Behavior and Theory, Northeastern University, Boston, MA, and Author of the new text *Organizational Behavior: An Introduction to Your Life in Organizations* (PrenticeHall 2008):

"I've reduced clutter by following, religiously, Strunk and White's *Elements of Style*. You will never suffer from the 'verys' or 'the fact thats' again."

Barbara Audet, Assistant Professor, Journalism, Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY, and a Kiplinger Fellow in Public Affairs Journalism in 1999-2000 at The Ohio State University:

"There is a new edition of the classic Strunk and White out that is illustrated. Circling these in your copy is one way to flag words that I call 'comfort zone words.' My recommendation is on first draft you include them, because your brain is wired to get that next thought out using them. Just know which words are your pet offenders. Circle the howevers, the verys, the yets, the stills, etc. and delete them. Your writing will have so much more power in the end. You will see these are generally not necessary but we are taught to use transitions from such a tender age, it is a hard habit to break."

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If you can't quite conceive of yourself writing in a sustained fashion for extended periods of time, you might try the 40-minute cycle. This is a system in which you do 40 minutes of sustained work, take a 20-minute break, and then repeat the cycle. You might set a timer for 40 minutes so you know when that period of time is done and it's time for a break. The 40-minute cycle prevents you from becoming physically tired and also motivates you to write on the days when you don't feel like it. Knowing that you just have to complete two 40-minute cycles, for example, doesn't sound too bad.

Maybe you're someone who has trouble keeping yourself on a schedule. You can easily slide into adopting or perpetuating one of those incomplete-scholar roles and never quite get around to making or sticking to a schedule where you really do work on your writing. Here's something that might help: Keep a record of how many hours you write each day, and share that record with someone at the end of every week. Without a commitment to share your record with someone else, you can easily convince yourself that you will begin writing tomorrow.

When you are done with your scheduled writing period for the day, stop. Put your writing aside. It's OK! You've met your goals for the day, so there's no reason to feel guilty. Whatever you turn to next, give it your focused attention and have fun with it. You may be tempted to keep writing if you are making good progress, but learning to stop at regular times for breaks is an important part of learning to write regularly. Stopping at the end of your designated time keeps you from becoming hungry or exhausted, both of which make writing much harder. Plus, stopping at a point when you are eager to write more makes it easy for you to begin writing at your next session.

Writing regularly is a mechanism that helps you do what scholars do—develop ideas and document them. By writing regularly, you will find that those incomplete-scholar roles become less appealing as you are rewarded with completed writing projects, confident assumption of the scholar role, and the wider rewards that come with sharing your ideas with others.

Dr. Sonja K. Foss and Dr. William Waters are the authors of Destination Dissertation: A Traveler's Guide to a Done Dissertation *(Rowman & Littlefield, 2007). Sonja is a professor in the Communication Department at the University of Colorado Denver, and William is an assistant professor and the director of composition in the English Department at Northwest Missouri State University. They are also the co-directors of Scholars' Retreat.* www.sonjafoss.com/html/retreat.htm

1. Robert Boice, *Professors as Writers: A Self-Help Guide to Productive Writing* (Stillwater, Okla: New Forums, 1990), 82-83.

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