



BEATRICE DAVIS EDITORIAL FELLOWSHIP



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Beatrice Davis Editorial Fellowship: Suggested Areas of Examination

The APA Editorial Working Group has compiled a list of potential areas of examination for the 2022/23 fellowship. Please note, this list is not exhaustive and applicants are welcome to propose additional topics.

Sustainability and supply chain

How are other territories coping with logistical problems post-COVID and the war in Ukraine?

Printing, delivery, distribution. Are they having issues? How are they addressing them? How are these things affecting schedules and the ability to edit, the quality of the edit and proofreading, especially topical non-fiction with a quick turnaround? How much unpaid/out-of-hours work is it creating?

Will these challenges affect how books *look* and how we read them? How we edit them? Books were so much smaller in the 70s, 80s, even 90s – to broadly generalise, they had smaller type, more mass-market editions – and in the 2000s they've become comparatively *large* (in adult, automatically a trade paperback for first editions in most cases, rarely an A format, and a lot of white space on the page in both kids and adult).

The ethics of editing

Who gets to be an editor? (The diversity issue.)

Who gets to be edited?

The power dimensions of the author–editor–publisher relationship. (Could include case studies on how this works in other nations with different cultural contexts where the power dynamics may be different.)

How much editing is too much? (Who is the real author in an invasive edit?)

How much editing is not enough? (Does a laissez-faire edit allow an author to be their authentic self or does it expose them to potential embarrassment?)

Changing business models

Can the impact of an edit be quantified? (In terms of the effect on the reading experience? In terms of the sales outcomes?)

Are editors dispensable?

Editing First Nations authors

An examination of how First Nations authors are being edited in Canada/the US.

An examination of how publishers in North America are approaching and championing First Nations writing.

Editors working with chronic illness/disability (and perhaps editors working with authors with chronic illness/disability)

There has been a lot of discussion about long COVID on the future of the workforce. We're an ageing population and it's not bleak to foresee that at least some of us will have a change in our health in the future. Are other publishing houses/editorial teams/freelancers/editor societies looking into how this might impact our work? Are there ways we can re-look at our industry to be as inclusive as possible? Are there actual accommodations we could be making or should be making? Do we need to re-look at our processes to be more inclusive?

Inclusive/conscious editing

This could include looking at whether overseas houses are using things like alt text, how many are creating guidelines around language, judging the editorial lines between guiding authors and the concern of censoring tone, voices, etc.

Editing literary fiction

Similar to the [study Alexandra Nahlous did for commercial fiction in 2009/10](#). This could include author/editor relationships. Do literary authors have different editorial expectations than 'commercial' authors? Do editors differentiate how they edit 'literary' authors compared to 'commercial' authors? Do other houses draw distinctions when allocating editors, thinking about the work, etc?

Editing trauma narratives

How are other publishers approaching this? How do houses devise best practice for editors working with traumatised authors? Efficacy of training/support, etc.

Editing graphic novels

Graphic novels is one of the fastest-growing genres, and is relatively new for Australian publishers.

Another possible topic is working with illustrators, with a focus on creating picture books and graphic novels.

The impact of audio books on editing

Authors 'tweaking' their text to make it more audio friendly. Is this something editors need to be aware of? Given the popularity of this format, does this different way of 'reading' change anything in the way we work? Should it? Are there any guidelines for authors or editors to keep in mind? Are editors overseas commissioning differently with this in mind?

The editor/writer

With more books by content creators published each year, what is the scope, and limit, of the editor's role? A sub-section could be fact-checking. If the 'author' is unlikely to take responsibility and the editor is doing a chunk of the writing, how does fact-checking proceed?

The impact of platforms on publishing (and not just TikTok).

The rise and rise of the celebrity author and the thirst for the creator with a 'ready-made' audience. This has a big impact on editors and how they are expected to work: significantly shorter timeframes to publication, the editor becomes more of a ghost-writer, the work and quality of the writing is often no longer the starting point for a book. How much of an impact does or will this have on expectations around publishing a book, and on readers?