

Copy Editor: The National Newsletter for Professional Copy Editors

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Abstract

A review of *Copy Editor: The National Newsletter for Professional Copy Editors*, Mary Beth Protomastro, editor.

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The English language reveals the American people as restless souls who remain a work in progress. The tumultuous changes American society has experienced in the past twenty years, and indeed, throughout our short history, transform our very thought processes as they enter the vocabulary and usage of the spoken and written language. Innovative street slang, manufactured words and those borrowed from experiencing the world through global glasses, as well as the effect of a 'casualizing' trend in American life provide fascinating fare to the lover of language and heartburn for the editor who must digest and integrate the rapidly changing standards into finished manuscripts that bear some semblance of consistency.

For people who love the plangency and mutability of the English language or who wrestle with the proper format and spelling for the word 'email', *Copy Editor* should be required reading. The eight-page, bimonthly newsletter contains a cornucopia of tips, trends, debates and resources. Among other treats in the August/September 1996 issue, for example, is a list of ten solid reasons why an editor must use the Internet, as well as debates about the wisdom of substituting the word "presently" for "now," updates on dictionary slang, and an entire page of readers' letters covering connotations involving the use of "deadbeat" or "custodial" in descriptions of divorced families.

Copy Editor is the one newsletter I read from cover to cover and then wish there were more. It's about the English language. It's about American life. How could it ever be dull?

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