

# Effective Editing

ECS 3167  
CW/CT

## FOCUS

What kind of an edit are  
you being asked to  
do?

What is your  
relationship to the  
writer?

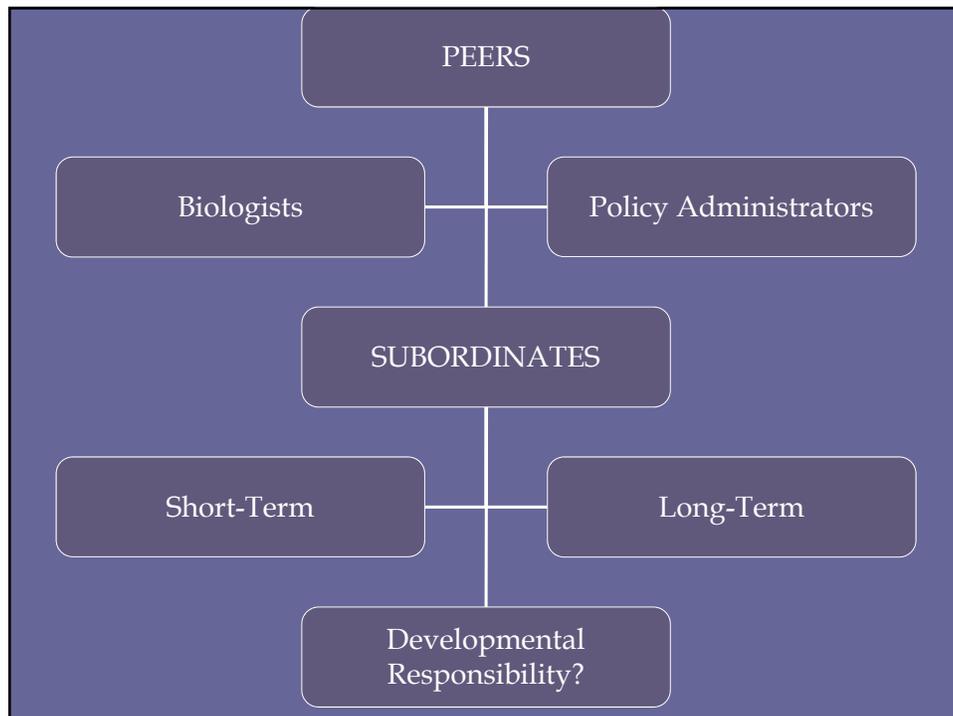
# Reminders

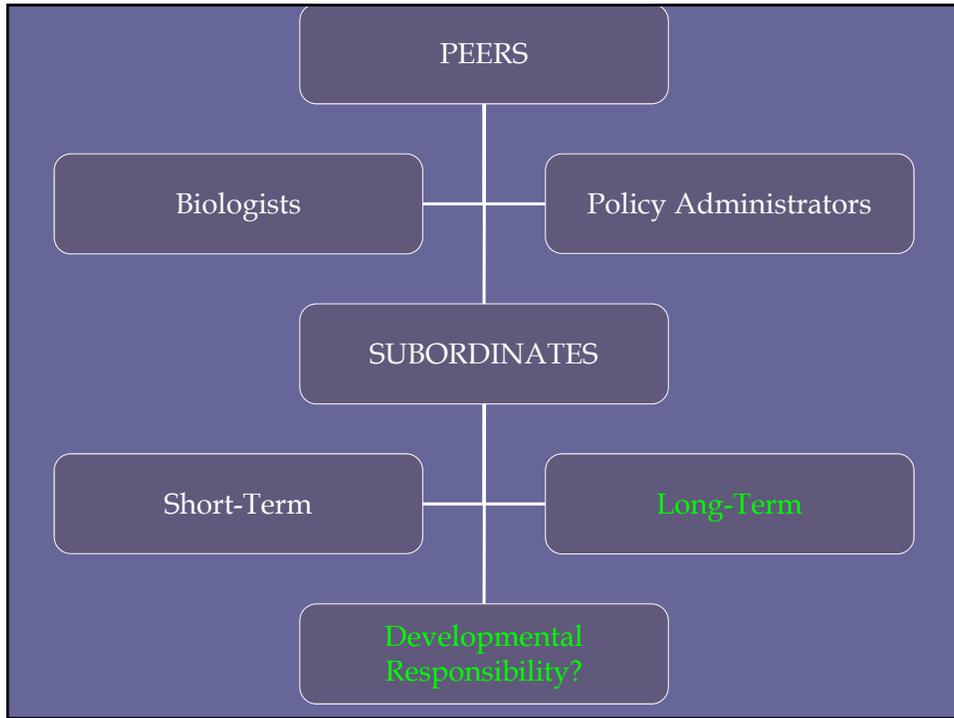
## Substantive

- Strength / quality of analysis and conclusions (biological and policy)
- Structure / organization
- Fact-checking / completeness of data

## Copy-editing

- Tone / style
- Grammar / typo





## 3 Tips

1. Separate praise from criticism.
2. Group mistakes into categories.
3. Limit your feedback.



## It's All About the Feedback!

1. Praise, praise, praise.
2. Ask questions.
3. Establish a checklist.

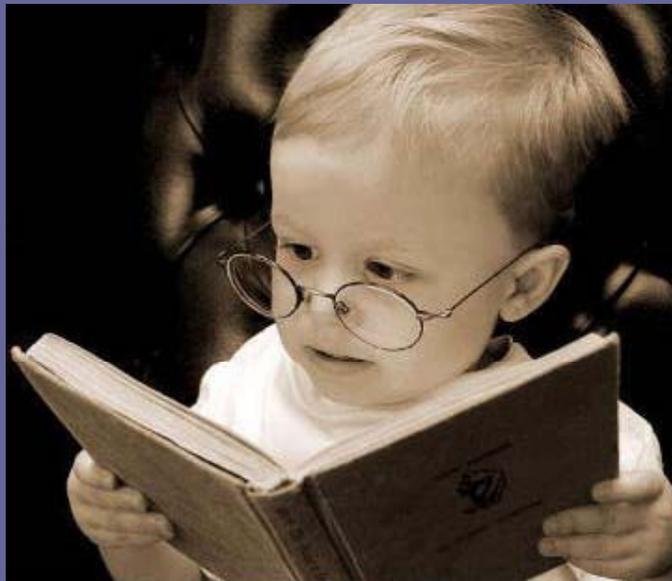


## The Subversive Copy Editor

- Periodical
- Book
- Freelance



## Spotlight on the Reader



## Three Cardinal Rules

- Careful
- Transparent
- Flexible



## Careful



Grammar must be precise because it clarifies the content.

Style must be consistent because it makes the document easier to process.

Rules may need to be broken for the sake of clarity and communication.

## DO NO HARM

1. Ignorant of grammar or style.
2. Confuses grammar with style.
3. Enjoys the power trip.



## Careful

- Know Your Grammar – refer to it.
- Know Your Style Manual – read it.
- Post tips till they're mastered. Then post new ones.
- Figure out the right answer AND the right way to do it.



# Transparent

I    ~ ~    You    ~ ~    We



# Transparent

1. Assume the author is the content expert.
2. Ask before making major changes.
3. Don't make "silent" changes.
4. Stay in clear, constant communication.
5. Maintain a professional demeanor.
6. Learn to say YES.



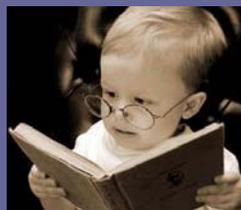
## Flexible

1. Pick your battles.
2. Admit when you're wrong.
3. Ask for help.



## When You Disagree...

...explain your reasoning,



in terms of the reader,

and ask for an alternative solution.

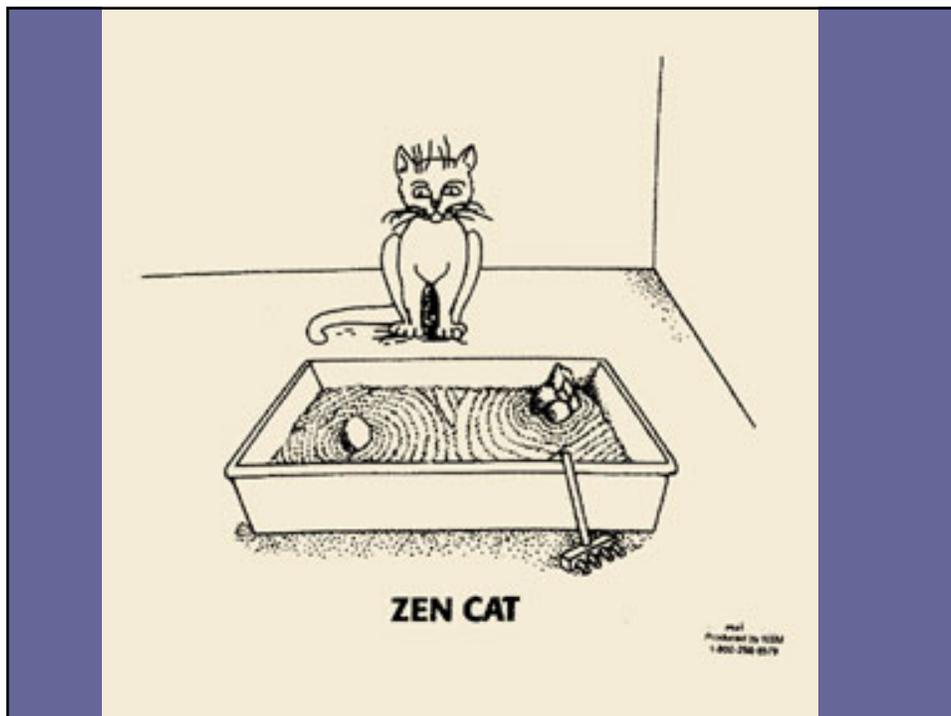
# Dangerous Manuscripts

## Mindless Tasks

1. Automate.
2. Delegate.
3. Reevaluate.
4. Accept your Fate.

## Complex Tasks

1. Is it wrong?
2. Is it confusing?
3. Is it ugly?





## Resources

- Saller, Carol Fisher. *The Subversive Copy Editor: Or, How to Negotiate Good Relationships with your Writers, Your Colleagues, and Yourself*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.
- Zweifel, Frances W. *A Handbook of Biological Illustration*.
- *Experienced Editors' Wisdom*.  
[www.Edsguild.org/wisdom.htm](http://www.Edsguild.org/wisdom.htm)
- Hart, Geoff. *Effective On-Screen Editing*. [www.Geoff-hart.com](http://www.Geoff-hart.com)
- *The Word MVP Site*. [www.Wordmvp.org](http://www.Wordmvp.org)