NAME: Michelle Simms

DEGREE: Master of Publishing

TITLE OF PROJECT: Social Editing: The Effects of Online and Social Media Marketing on the Editorial Process

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

Mary Schendlinger
Senior Supervisor
Senior Lecturer, Master of Publishing Program
Simon Fraser University

John Maxwell, Ph.D
Supervisor
Assistant Professor, Master of Publishing Program
Simon Fraser University

Brian Lam
Industry Supervisor
Publisher
Arsenal Pulp Press

DATE APPROVED: April 21, 2010
Declaration of
Partial Copyright Licence

The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the right to lend this thesis, project or extended essay to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users.

The author has further granted permission to Simon Fraser University to keep or make a digital copy for use in its circulating collection (currently available to the public at the “Institutional Repository” link of the SFU Library website <www.lib.sfu.ca> at: <http://ir.lib.sfu.ca/handle/1892/112>) and, without changing the content, to translate the thesis/project or extended essays, if technically possible, to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation of the digital work.

The author has further agreed that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by either the author or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without the author’s written permission.

Permission for public performance, or limited permission for private scholarly use, of any multimedia materials forming part of this work, may have been granted by the author. This information may be found on the separately catalogued multimedia material and in the signed Partial Copyright Licence.

While licensing SFU to permit the above uses, the author retains copyright in the thesis, project or extended essays, including the right to change the work for subsequent purposes, including editing and publishing the work in whole or in part, and licensing other parties, as the author may desire.

The original Partial Copyright Licence attesting to these terms, and signed by this author, may be found in the original bound copy of this work, retained in the Simon Fraser University Archive.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, BC, Canada
Abstract

The transition from print to digital technology in the publishing industry has affected not only how books are read and sold, but how they are edited and marketed as well. Small and large publishers recognize the need to interact with readers online, evidenced by the adoption of online marketing tools, specifically social media applications. To make the best use of online and social media, publishers must understand how interactions between readers, authors, and publishers—and the tools that facilitate those interactions—change their workflows and processes. This report examines the editing and marketing of Charles Demers’ Vancouver Special, published by Arsenal Pulp Press in November 2009. It describes Vancouver Special’s development and place in Arsenal’s list, analyzes the editorial and marketing processes in comparison to Arsenal’s traditional workflow, and recommends strategies for editors, who will need to be increasingly active in the online marketing of titles they edit.

KEYWORDS: editing; marketing; social media; publishing; online marketing; books.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editing and marketing of Charles Demers’ Vancouver Special, published by Arsenal Pulp Press in November 2009, informs much of the information presented in this report. Brian Lam, Susan Safyan, Janice Beley, Robert Ballantyne, and Shyla Seller at Arsenal Pulp, as well as former Arsenal Pulp editor Bethanne Grabham, generously provided material on past titles and guided my work at Arsenal during the summer of 2009. Their assistance and interest in a study of the collaborative relationship between editing and online marketing made this project possible. This report was also influenced by my experience working with the wonderful writer Charles Demers.

I am very grateful to Mary Schendlinger and John Maxwell, whose classes in the Master of Publishing program sparked the idea for a re-examination of the editorial process. Thank you for your enthusiasm and support during the completion of this project.
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>Abstract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>Contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Chapter One: Arsenal Pulp and <em>Vancouver Special</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.1 A Brief History of Arsenal Pulp Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.2 Arsenal Pulp's Unknown City Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.3 General Trends in Travel Publishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.4 A New Direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Chapter Two: Editing <em>Vancouver Special</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.1 Editorial Practices at Arsenal Pulp Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.2 Developmental Editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>2.2.1 Concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>2.2.2 Content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.2.3 Style and Display</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>2.2.4 Author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>2.3 Substantive Editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>2.3.1 Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.3.2 Editors' Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>2.3.3 Individual Essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Chapter Three: Marketing <em>Vancouver Special</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>3.1 Marketing on the Social Web</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>3.2 Online and Social Media Marketing at Arsenal Pulp Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>3.3 VancouverSpecialBook.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>3.4 Marketing During Acquisitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.5 Marketing During Developmental Editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>3.6 Marketing During Substantive Editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>3.6.1 Keywords</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6.2 Links
3.6.3 Excerpt and Review Material
3.6.4 Promotion
Conclusions
Appendixes
Appendix A: “Vancouver Book Ideas” submitted by Charles Demers
Appendix B: Developmental Editing Notes from Susan Safyan
Appendix C: Substantive Editing Letter from Michelle Simms
Bibliography
Sales of print books are falling. The Canadian Heritage-commissioned report *The Book Retail Sector in Canada* states that Canadian publishers produce more than 16,000 new titles annually, a number that increases each year; conversely, sales across most genres are dropping, as is the amount of time Canadians spend reading books.1 Canadians’ leisure time is perhaps migrating in increasing amounts from books or television to the Web. And while much of this leisure time on the Web is spent reading—on weblogs (blogs), online newspapers, online magazines, and other news sources, as well as email—a growing proportion of this time is spent on sites that foster interactivity: social networking sites; messaging applications; and photo-, video-, and music-sharing sites. In the face of this shift, publishers and editors must adapt, and quickly. Although online content and eBooks have not replaced the traditional printed book, online spaces have become a key tool in book promotion. As more and more independent bookstores disappear (and bookseller hand selling with them), online conversations have become the new word-of-mouth. And instead of relying of booksellers to perform this crucial task, publishing companies and their authors are reaching out and engaging with readers directly. Sara Lloyd, head of digital publishing for Pan MacMillan U.K., sums up the dilemma facing publishers in her essay “A Book Publisher’s Manifesto for the Twenty-first Century”:

In an “always on” world in which everything is increasingly digital, where content is increasingly fragmented and bite-sized, where prosumers merge the traditionally disparate roles of producer and consumer, where search replaces the library and where multimedia mash-ups—not text—hold the attraction for the digital natives who are growing up fast into the mass market of tomorrow, what role do publishers still have to play and how will they have to evolve to hold on to a continuing role in the writing and reading culture of the future?\(^2\)

The editor’s role has changed and will continue to do so during the transition from print to digital. Online content is quick to produce, quick to publish, quick to alter or update, and, most importantly, available to anyone with a computer and Internet connection. The fact that anyone with basic software and an Internet connection can publish online does not devalue well-written and -edited, professionally produced content, but it may make it harder for readers to find good content amid the slew of celebrity gossip, conspiracy theories, and status updates. Publishers have traditionally filled the intermediary role between author and reader, acting as arbiter, filter, custodian, marketer, and distributor.\(^3\) Within the print publishing world, editors have filled a highly specialized role: to select the writing that will reach the reading public, to develop ideas into full-fledged concepts, and to work with authors to bring their writing to its maximum potential. As book sales drop and time spent reading traditional print books decreases, the editorial process becomes a greater expense to already financially strapped publishers. That is not to say that editors will soon go the way of the independent bookstore: publishers, authors, and readers appreciate the role that editors fill. What will occur and is already happening, as this report will show, is that the role of the editor will


\(^3\) Ibid.
shift. Editing will remain a core role in book production, but it will encompass additional, fewer, or new tasks depending on the needs of the manuscript and author. More than ever, editors will need to be part of an intertwined network of people who simultaneously contribute to a book's publication; this report will show that there are new and larger areas of overlap between editorial and marketing roles.

The Web has revealed that reading is not a solitary interaction between reader and book. Reading is the foundation of a number of associated processes, including discussion, research, note taking, writing, reference following, and sharing. These activities, once invisible to publishers, now take place in visible and measurable online spaces. Publishers can follow the connections among these activities and, hopefully, can use this knowledge to encourage reading and the publication of quality writing.

This case study of the conceptualizing, editing, and marketing of Charles Demers’ *Vancouver Special*, published in November 2009 by Arsenal Pulp Press, is an analysis of the effects of online and social media marketing on the editorial process of a general trade non-fiction title. *Vancouver Special* made an ideal case study for this paper because the book's history and development are indicative of the external pressures facing small Canadian publishers and the steps these publishers take in response. As very much an “Arsenal” book (urban-focused, witty, challenging readers to question the world around them), the editing of this

---

Sara Lloyd, “A Book Publisher’s Manifesto for the Twenty-first Century,” 33.
title in comparison to Arsenal’s standard editorial practices demonstrates that social media tools, such as blogs, social networks, social news sites, bookmarking and cataloguing sites, and media/video/photography-sharing sites have shifted the focus of writing, editing, and marketing from individual, sequential pursuits to collaborative, concurrent ones. This report will show that for Vancouver Special, the social relationship of book publishing has made the transition from author-editor to author-reader, and that in collaboration, the editor and marketer facilitate this relationship during conception, development, editing, and marketing. The details presented in this report were gathered during an internship in the editorial and marketing departments of Arsenal Pulp Press, in Vancouver, British Columbia, during the summer of 2009. Under the guidance of associate editor Susan Safyan and marketing director Janice Beley, I was involved in a number of editing and marketing projects both in print and online. My main project was the substantive editing of Vancouver Special as well as the development of content and tools to be used in the book’s online promotion.

Vancouver Special is a book of political, historical, and cultural essays about Vancouver. It is the first in a potential new series of Arsenal Pulp city books, following in the footsteps of the Unknown City guidebook series Arsenal published from 2001 to 2007. The publication of Vancouver Special took place throughout 2009: Arsenal developed the concept in January and February, commissioned Charles Demers to write the manuscript in March, hired Emmanuel Buenviaje to provide the photography in late summer, edited the manuscript in August, and
launched the title in November. The marketing and promotion for this title took place throughout the year, much of it completed before the first draft of the manuscript was delivered. The significant amount of conceptual work and developmental editing that went into the title allowed Arsenal to maintain control over the book’s final content and work on a condensed editorial schedule.

This report is divided into three chapters. The first chapter provides background material relevant to the publication of *Vancouver Special*, including a brief history of Arsenal Pulp Press, the history of the Unknown City series, and a discussion of trends in the travel publishing industry that led to the termination of the series and the development of the concept for *Vancouver Special*. Chapter one also considers similar forces affecting book publishers across other trade genres. The second chapter delves into editing practices, from conception to developmental and substantive editing. *Vancouver Special* provides an example of a change in editorial practice for Arsenal that allowed the company to shape the book’s content and design from concept to finished product, taking on less risk. The third chapter focuses on the editor’s role in marketing and promotion. It explains and recommends strategies for completing the often-unrecognized tasks that the editor performs as part of marketing and promotion. This chapter concentrates on *Vancouver Special*, though it points out that these tasks will vary depending on the needs of the title and author.

Although I have divided editing and marketing into separate chapters, there is not a strict division in scope or sequence between the tasks performed during these
parts of the publishing process. My objective is to show that online tools (for both promotion and reading) have made the publishing process less linear, and that book publishing has become a network of tasks, with multiple connections between the people involved in a book's development from concept to finished product.
A BRIEF HISTORY OF ARSENAL PULP PRESS

Arsenal Pulp Press is a small publisher in Vancouver, B.C. Headed by Brian Lam, who has been with the press since 1984, Arsenal has grown from a local typesetter/printer/publisher into an internationally recognized publishing company that publishes fourteen to twenty original titles and twelve to fifteen reprints per year; Arsenal has over 200 titles currently in print. Arsenal publishes literary fiction and non-fiction; poetry; drama; cultural and gender studies; GLBTQ, and multicultural studies; cookbooks; guides; and visual art books. Across all genres, the thrust of the Arsenal list is “literature that traverses uncharted territories ... books that challenge and stimulate and ask probing questions about the world around us.” Since its inception, Arsenal Pulp has pushed the boundaries of traditional forms and narratives. Arsenal Pulp Press was launched in 1971 as Pulp Press Book Publishers by a collective of university students who did not see themselves represented by the “academic literary pretensions of Canadian literature at the time.” The company survived by taking on typesetting and printing work in addition to its publishing program. In its first decade, Pulp Press established itself as a publisher committed to the Vancouver literary scene, publishing many local authors who wrote “gritty urban literature,” a practice that continues today.

6 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
Pulp Press became Arsenal Pulp Press in 1982 after the bankruptcy of its national distributor; the company sold off its typesetting equipment to focus solely on its publishing operations. At this time, Arsenal Pulp remained a primarily literary press, “but there was an increasing interest in literary nonfiction, particularly in the areas of cultural, gender, and multicultural studies.” During this decade, Arsenal developed its series of Little Red Books, which included “quotations and anecdotes on provocative issues and personalities.” The series experimented with format (each book measured approximately three by four inches) and the content ranged from popular culture to politics, but the tone of the series landed squarely within the established Arsenal “voice”: provocative, humorous, edgy, and urban.

In the 1990s, the Arsenal Pulp publishing program included more urban and cultural studies titles, and expanded its scope to include cookbooks, guides, and visual art books—but always with a twist. The cookbooks capitalized on a growing interest in vegan fare and kept the personality of the author closely tied to the content. The Sarah Kramer series of vegan cookbooks are now classics in this genre. Similarly, the Arsenal Unknown City series of guidebooks celebrated the alternative, offbeat aspects of the North American cities they featured and kept the author’s voice at the forefront. Unlike many urban guidebooks, the Unknown City series was intended for residents of each city as well as visitors. During this period, Arsenal also established itself internationally as a publisher of LGBTQ literature.

9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
Today, Arsenal has a permanent staff of five: publisher Brian Lam, associate publisher Robert Ballantyne, associate editor Susan Safyan, production manager Shyla Seller, and director of marketing Janice Beley. As with many small publishers, two or three interns work in the office on a regular basis, usually on marketing and production projects or reading unsolicited manuscripts. Arsenal books are distributed in Canada, the U.S., Great Britain, Australia, and Europe, and translations of Arsenal books have been published in China, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Turkey, and Brazil.\footnote{Arsenal Pulp Press, “About,” Arsenal Pulp Press, http://www.arsenalpulp.com/aboutus.php.}

Arsenal’s success as a small Canadian publisher can, in part, be attributed to its ability to maintain the strengths of the literature it published as Pulp Press—provocative, intelligent, urban books with a social conscience—while expanding to new genres, formats, and markets. In particular, Arsenal has found success publishing for niche markets under the broader Arsenal-reader umbrella and developing series. Arsenal is known internationally in two niche markets, vegan cookbooks and gay and lesbian literature, both with small but devoted audiences. Arsenal’s first vegan title was Sarah Kramer and Tanya Barnard’s How it all Vegan! in 1999, which has been reprinted fourteen times and led to several successful sequels, as well as cookbooks by other vegan authors. Since 1993, with the publication of Queeries, the first collection of gay male prose published in Canada, Arsenal’s gay and lesbian publishing program has grown to include fiction, non-fiction, and short-fiction anthologies. Arsenal has teamed with Little Sister’s Book & Art Emporium in
Vancouver to produce Little Sister's Classics, resurrecting out-of-print gay and lesbian titles for a new generation of readers.

Little Sister's Classics is just one successful Arsenal series. During its Pulp Press days, the company published *Three-Cent Pulp*, a monthly literary magazine that sold in bookstores for three cents.\(^1\) Also in the 1970s, Pulp initiated the 3-Day Novel Contest, during which authors attempted to write a novel in a “literary marathon” over the Labour Day weekend.\(^2\) Arsenal no longer runs the contest (it was passed to Anvil Press in 1991 and is now run by the 3-Day Novel Contest Ltd.), but it distributes the winning manuscript as an Arsenal title. Other successful series include the Little Red Books, Queer Fear, Quickies, Queer Film Classics (established Fall 2009), and the Unknown City series, which led to *Vancouver Special*, the first in a potential new series of alternative Arsenal city books.

As a small publisher, Arsenal can attribute part of its success in niche markets and developing series to the company’s ability to maintain a consistent brand and voice across its titles. Arsenal creates opportunities for cross-promotion by finding overlap in the niche markets it appeals to; its strong brand is a major factor in the company’s successful use of online tools and social media in its marketing. *Vancouver Special* exemplifies the Arsenal brand: humorous, provocative, and urban. Although this was also true of its predecessors, the books in the Unknown City series, those titles competed for a share in the travel publishing market, a genre

\(^{1}\text{Arsenal Pulp, “Brief History,” Arsenal Pulp Press, http://www.arsenalpulp.com/titleimages/PDFs/Arsenal_Brief_History.pdf.}\)
\(^{2}\text{Ibid.}\)
heavily dominated by a handful of mega publishers like Lonely Planet, Fodor’s, and Frommer’s.

ARSENA L PUL P ’ S U N K N O W N C I T Y S E R I E S

The Unknown City series started in 1998 as the Secrets of the City series. The first title launched was Vancouver: Secrets of the City, which was inspired by an article in Vancouver Magazine (who co-published the title) with the same name. This was followed by Calgary: Secrets of the City in 1999, Victoria: Secrets in the City in 2000, and Edmonton: Secrets in the City in 2002. The Secrets of the City series worked to be different from other guidebooks, providing interesting and unusual facts about each subject city. In format, however, the guides were similar to industry conventions, such as the Lonely Planet or Fodor’s series. The series was renamed the Unknown City series after a trademark clash with the Ontario publisher ECW. ECW published a line of city guides called “Secret,” which had been trademarked.**14** The Unknown City series combined two Arsenal strengths: it sourced local talent and marketed a non-traditional product in a package that was familiar because it resembled traditional products in the category. Although the series’ primary audience was visitors, it was also marketed to locals. The first title in the series was marketed as an “alternative” guidebook that “takes you places where Fodor’s editors dare not go.” After establishing a name in Canada, Arsenal expanded the series into the United States. The eventual list of Secrets of the City/Unknown City series included Vancouver (1998, 2000, 2004), Edmonton (2002), Calgary (1999, 2002),

---


Although the tone and scope of the Unknown City series appealed to locals and travellers interested in an alternative take on each city, the format communicated that the primary audience was traditional travellers. The books ranged in length from 196 to 224 pages and measured six by nine inches, similar to the market-leading Lonely Planet and Fodor’s guidebooks. The Unknown City books were published in two colours of ink and incorporated photographs and illustrations. Also like the Lonely Planet guides, multiple authors were occasionally contracted to write each book, which indicates that the information provided in the book, not the author’s unique voice, was the title’s key selling feature. Arsenal marketed the Vancouver book as “full of fun and offbeat factoids, anecdotes, and statistics about Vancouver, as well as great places to shop, dine, and sightsee.”

Arsenal usually contracted authors for the Unknown City guidebooks through its network of writers and publishers across the country. Less often, writers approached Arsenal and proposed guides for their home cities. In most cases, Arsenal contracted one author per title, though occasionally two authors collaborated. Existing Unknown Guides provided outlines for new authors to follow. Many chapters and sections were repeated across titles, and content of the interior sections was left to the author’s discretion. Substantive editing of the Unknown City guides was contracted to a freelancer; Arsenal’s associate publisher performed the

copyediting. Bethanne Grabham, Arsenal’s associate editor during the publication of *Ottawa: The Unknown City*, the last book in the series, described the editing process as one that emerged organically between editor and author depending on the author’s need. She was not involved in the book’s marketing and promotion.\(^{16}\)

Sales of the Unknown City series began strong, which led to Arsenal introducing the series in the United States. At Chapters and Coles (prior to the Chapters-Indigo merger), initial orders of 800 copies led to final first-season sales of 2,500–3,000 at Chapters/Coles and close to 10,000 over the first two years (5,000–6,000 of those at Chapters).\(^{17}\) As Robert Ballantyne explains,

> This happened with Christmas season car stock orders that could take advantage of media, word of mouth, and hand selling. Managers would call us or we would call them and get big orders for stores. We spent several days in several cars during the Christmas rush delivering all over the Lower Mainland. This was also the days of more independent local stores. Lots of Duthie bookstores and a few others have since gone under, most buried by the loss of volume taken over by Chapters.\(^{18}\)

Industrial changes in readership and the supply chain at Chapters-Indigo led to a decline in sales over time. In 2005, Chapters-Indigo introduced a centralized inventory management system, called SAP. Chapters-Indigo implemented SAP to “improve efficiency and accuracy of supply chain processes; improve ability to tailor product mix; [and] respond more rapidly to customer demand.”\(^{19}\) Although SAP may have improved supply chain efficiency for large publishing companies whose titles were marketed to a broad, Canada-wide audience, it did not work well

---

17 Information provided through email correspondence with Robert Ballantyne, Associate Publisher of Arsenal Pulp Press, September 11, 2009.  
18 Ibid.  
for Arsenal and other small publishers who produce regional or other niche titles.

Prior to SAP’s implementation, individual regional managers had the authority to order specific titles for each store. After SAP, sales were centralized at the Chapters head office in Ontario, and replenishment of titles took place when SAP triggered it. The danger of this system for regional publishers was that if titles were not initially placed in stores where they would succeed, SAP would conclude that these titles did not sell and would not order them for additional stores.

After the implementation of SAP, a category manager named Sebastian Hanna was responsible for ordering regional titles for Chapters-Indigo. Hanna was known for being “opinionated about book design and cover[s],” and he did not like the covers of the Unknown City series. As Ballantyne explains, “This led to smaller initial orders which in turn lead to lower in-store visibility.” 20 Instead of a stack of books displayed face out, the Unknown City series was displayed spine out with few copies per store. As sales slowed, “a cycle of decline [took] over with no local managers getting behind the titles to make a difference.” 21 When Ottawa: The Unknown City was launched in 2007, Chapters-Indigo ordered only 200 copies, and none were ordered for stores outside of Ontario. In 2009, two years later, the Ottawa title had sold less than 800 copies (half of these at Chapters-Indigo), and the book has been discounted by an additional 30 percent to try to reduce the inventory at Jaguar Book Group, Arsenal’s Canadian distributor. Arsenal also launched an Unknown Ottawa website as part of the book’s continuing promotion. The difficulty with creating a website months after a book’s launch is that the

20 Correspondence with Robert Ballantyne, September 11, 2009.
21 Ibid.
author cannot be expected to contribute content to the site. Short of reproducing the searchable content and listings from the book online, Arsenal had to create the website's content in-house.

After a fight led by the Association of Canadian Publishers, some ordering power has been restored to individual store managers and Chapters-Indigo has hired several regional consultants “to try to help local authors and regional books get more attention.” Ballantyne describes these changes as “too little too late” and notes, “the shadow of SAP and a national buyer with no local knowledge [combined with] centralized ordering remains a serious challenge to Arsenal when thinking of publishing regional titles. Staff and managers don’t get involved in a significant enough way to overcome the still mainly centralized ‘system.’”

GENERAL TRENDS IN TRAVEL PUBLISHING

In addition to the challenges posed by Chapters-Indigo’s implementation of SAP, the travel publishing industry was experiencing a general decline in sales due to competition from online travel sites and a compromised economy. Prior to 2008, sales in the travel publishing industry had been climbing. In addition to enjoying increased sales of guidebooks, road maps, atlases, and other travel subgenres, publishers were producing travel books for increasingly niche audiences. Quill and Quire reported that travel guides were “directed at every niche, from shoppers and gourmets to people with pets, and gay and lesbian travellers.”

22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
niche guidebooks presented an opportunity for small regional publishers, who have an advantage over the large conglomerates: they are experts in the geographical area they publish about and often have connections to the local writers best suited to write these books. As Nancy Wise, owner of Sandhill Book Marketing in Kelowna, B.C., explained in 2005, the bottom line also favours smaller, regional publishers in these niche markets: “A commercial printer wants to sell 10,000 copies of a title a year. A smaller publisher can sell 2,000 books to a narrow audience and still be profitable, because the overhead is lower.”

By 2008, however, travel book sales had started to drop off as readers turned more often to free online websites for travel information. That year, British travel publishing consultant Stephen Mesquita produced a report on the travel publishing industry based on Nielsen BookScan figures that divided the genre into “core travel” (travel guides and maps) and “non-core travel” (travel writing, local history and phrasebooks). The report revealed that book sales in the travel genre fell by 8.7 percent in the U.K. Overall, trade book sales dropped by 1.5 percent, but the travel industry was hit harder than other genres. Within the travel genre, sales of road atlases and street maps fell most dramatically because of the popularity of satellite navigation systems and mobile devices capable of accessing the Internet. Road atlases and street maps dropped in sales 12.6 percent and 19.6 percent “by value,” compared to travel and holiday guides, which fell 4.8 percent in volume.

---

26 Victoria Gallagher, “Travel publishing left in the doldrums,” theBookseller.com, February 27, 2009.
28 Ibid.
The decline in sales has been attributed to “the knock-on effects of the collapse of several budget airlines and rising aviation fuel costs,” which contributed to an overall decline in travel, and to the growth of online travel sites. On the travel side, sites like Orbitz and Expedia offer deep discounts on flights and hotels, which cut out the role of the travel agent; on the publishing side, sites like lonelyplanet.com have the same effect on publishers and distributors by providing objective reviews, ratings, and information that can be easily contributed and updated by users. Another attractive feature of these sites is that most are free to access. As a means of providing the most value for price, these sites signal a common-sense shift in format. Like classified ads, which are in transition from paid services in newspapers to free online databases like Craigslist or eBay, travel information of the “where to stay, eat, and shop” variety can be accessed and maintained much more easily online, especially as mobile Internet and smart-phone devices become widely available.

Publishers in the travel publishing industry have reacted to declining sales in one of two ways: larger conglomerates with more capital at their disposal did not change the content of their titles, but presented them in new formats or with new marketing strategies; Arsenal, on the other hand, reconsidered the type of travel content it published in print.

____________________
29  Ibid.
30  Although print sales of travel books fell sharply, the Turner-Riggs study points out that in Canada, the genre was the highest selling product category in terms of online book orders. Turner-Riggs, *The Book Retail Sector in Canada*, 68.
The prominent companies in the travel publishing industry include Lonely Planet, Fodor’s, Frommer’s, and Dorling Kindersley. These major players reacted to declining sales by taking their content online and adopting aggressive marketing campaigns in bricks-and-mortar stores, including co-op placements and complimentary ancillary merchandise such as maps, day planners, and Post-it Notes. Wiley Publishing Inc., which publishes the Frommer’s series of guidebooks, set up Frommer’s sections in Chapters superstores, Coles, and SmithBooks stores. Each four-foot-high stand-alone display rack held forty-five Frommer’s guidebooks face out at the end of a bank of shelves. The company also partnered with flight, rail, hotel, and car rental firms to allow readers to book travel and vacations from the Frommer’s website. More recently, the prominent U.K. travel publisher Dorling Kindersley, represented in Canada by Tourmaline Editions, produced a number of its top-selling travel guides as iPhone apps (small applications available through Apple to be viewed on an iPhone), initially sold for $4.99, then $7.99, just over half the price of the print editions. Craig Morgan Teicher, writing for Publishers Weekly in 2009, pointed out that “a company like Lonely Planet seems to be tailor-made for the app boom.” The travel guides and phrasebooks the company produces and now makes available through the iPhone App Store and other platforms offer audio and GPS-enabled maps that enhance, rather than replicate, the content available in the print books. Unlike companies that simply make the content of their print books

available electronically, these publishers produce titles that create new products for the specific medium.33

Experiments with format, medium, and promotion, such as guides published solely online or promoted through smartphone apps, show that publishers are searching for the best way to deliver content to consumers, and they are finding that the searchable information in their travel guides may be best suited to online distribution. In fact, travel publications may be one of the first genres for which online is perceived as a more suitable medium than print for much of its content. Travel content often consists of information that is frequently updated; in addition, readers looking for unbiased opinions and reviews for specific cities or countries will find them faster online, for free. Genres in which writing quality and depth of information are more important, or “slow reading” categories, will likely move online later, as readers still prefer printed books to screens for the reading experience.34 On the basis of this knowledge, Arsenal decided to end the Unknown City series and pursue a new series of city books that were less like traditional guidebooks and closer to general trade non-fiction titles.

A NEW DIRECTION

On November 6, 2008, Brian Lam, Susan Safyan, and Robert Ballantyne conducted a telephone meeting with Sebastian Hanna, regional manager for Chapters-Indigo. Because of declining sales across the Unknown City series of books, Arsenal had

34 However, this is changing fast, particularly among younger readers who are accustomed to accessing content across more media formats.
decided to reinvent the series; Hanna, who placed regional titles in Chapters-Indigo stores across Canada, described what he perceived to be the strengths and weaknesses of the line and gave suggestions for the design and tone of the new titles.

Strengths of the Unknown City series included the “author’s passionate engagement with the city, in unconventional ways,”35 and he saw Arsenal as well positioned for the university cities market, as well as “B” cities, such as Hamilton, Ontario, where few books about the area are available. Weaknesses, according to Hanna, included the series’ appearance, especially its covers. He suggested that Arsenal aim for a Moleskine appearance, with “some blank pages, big margins, [and] harder cover stock.”36

Hanna also provided the following suggestions: the guide should be for people who live in the city and should include phone numbers and other contact information, such as “a directory for recycling, green info, things a citizen of the city needs to know”;37 the commissioned author should “maintain accessibility and [not] get too literary/intelligentsia”;38 Arsenal should see the Book of Everything series distributed by Nimbus as an example.39 A challenge for Arsenal was that Hanna’s conception of the book did not match the audience he envisioned for it, or, as Susan Rabiner describes it in Thinking Like Your Editor, the proposed changes led to a problem with audience identification:40 the design he described, with its

35 Sebastian Hanna, quoted in Susan Safyan’s meeting notes, November 6, 2008. Hanna specifically describes Toronto: The Unknown City, one of the titles written by a single author, Howard Akler.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Susan Rabiner, Thinking Like Your Editor, 43.
Moleskine appearance, room for notes, and thick cover stock, suggested that the book would be a “companion you take with you as you explore the city.” However, the content he proposed was geared toward a local audience. Appealing to both locals and visitors was a goal for the new series, but it seemed unlikely that local readers would search out and purchase a book filled with information available for free online (or carry it with them to record notes), or that visitors would purchase a book well designed for exploring the city but containing information more appropriate for locals. Following the meeting with Hanna, Arsenal decided to reinvent the Unknown City line, moving away from the traditional idea of a guidebook series. It would not be branded like the Unknown City books, but would share a concept—a local author exploring, celebrating, and investigating his or her home city. Comparative titles were Douglas Coupland’s *City of Glass* and Chuck Palahniuk’s *Fugitives and Refugees: A Walk in Portland*.

As Arsenal moved forward from this meeting into the first of a series of editorial meetings for the book that would become *Vancouver Special*, the first question posed by associate editor Susan Safyan was telling: “We need to think about local authors … Whose voice do you hear narrating this?” Although Arsenal maintained control of the development and initial outline of the books, the contracted authors would have greater freedom with tone and voice. The first title for this new series would be about Vancouver for two reasons: Arsenal is located in Vancouver and has a developed network of connections to local writers, and, though the edito-

---

41 Susan Safyan (associate editor of Arsenal Pulp Press), notes from meeting with Sebastian Hanna, November 6, 2008.
rial schedule would be compressed, the title could be launched to coincide with the 2009 Christmas season and 2010 Winter Olympic Games.
“There are two areas of activity in the linear progression of a text between author and reader, which have previously remained hidden to the reader: the development of the text itself, including the writing and editing process; and the sales, marketing, and distribution of the text.”

— Sarah Lloyd, head of digital publishing at Pan MacMillan U.K.

Editing cannot be defined simply. Too often, it is categorized only in terms of the relationship between author and editor, a relationship often described in romanticized anecdotal terms, such as the collaborative relationship of Maxwell Perkins and Thomas Wolfe or, less affectionately, of Gordon Lish and Raymond Carver.

The processes of both writing and editing are considered solitary, the writer and/or editor locked away with paper and (red) pen. Some aspects of editorial work, namely copyediting and proofreading, lend themselves to study and documentation more readily. And in recent years, texts on developmental editing have been published. However, developmental and substantive editing can include a range of tasks that may overlap, or differ between publishing houses or specific manuscripts.

Offices of international conglomerates may divide the editor’s role into separate tasks because of the number of titles published each season. Acquisitions editors will acquire manuscripts from authors and agents, negotiate contracts, and have control or influence over the formation of the company’s list; they may also do some shaping and development work with prospective authors. Substantive, structural, and stylistic editors work with authors whose manuscripts have been
accepted for publication, organizing material, editing for language, flow, and length, watching for legal issues, assembling all additional material, arranging permissions, and generating marketing copy. The copyeditor corrects spelling, usage, and grammar, checks facts and calculations, and edits for consistency in headlines, subheads, and captions. Finally, a marking or coding editor prepares the final manuscript for type. At a smaller publishing house, a single editor may perform all these tasks in collaboration with the publisher, and in any size house, some or all of the tasks may be contracted out to freelancers.

The Editors’ Association of Canada (EAC) defines developmental editing as “co-ordinating and editing a project from proposal or rough manuscript to final manuscript, incorporating input from authors, consultants and reviewers.” This process “may include budgeting, hiring, design supervision and project co-ordination.” In comparison, the EAC defines substantive, or structural editing, as “clarifying and/or reorganizing a manuscript for content and structure. Changes may be suggested to or drafted for the author.” Substantive editing “may include negotiating changes with the author.” The EAC expands on its definition of substantive editing in its Professional Editing Standards publication, which details the skills required at each editing stage. Although the EAC’s editorial standards document was revised in 2009 in order to “reflect current technologies, to capture print and electronic publications equally, and to be genre-neutral,” it does not contain a sec-

44 This list is not intended to be exhaustive or exclusionary, but to provide employers with a general sense of what to expect from a freelance editor completing this work.
45 The EAC adopted its latest revision of this document on January 1, 2010.
46 Editors’ Association of Canada,
tion on developmental editing, nor does it include tasks related to online marketing that are consistently part of the editor’s role today. Marketing and editorial tasks have been intertwined in book publishing since the development of mass media, and acquisitions editors in particular have been responsible for marketing-related tasks, such as identifying audiences, researching competing and comparative titles, creating profit and loss statements, and developing marketing hooks, jacket and catalogue copy. However, web-marketing tasks, which rely on two-way communication and interaction with readers, are new. The EAC likely puts more emphasis on substantive editing because, for most general trade titles, the bulk of editorial time is spent on substantive editing, a process that may include multiple rounds of comments, queries, and revisions between author and editor.

The substantive edit may include many tasks that will aid in the book’s promotion. The editor may track keywords, flag sections suitable for excerpt in print and online publications, copy material to be used on websites, and note people, research, and publications for cross-referencing. These tasks will vary by publisher and by book but will become increasingly routine as community-based online marketing and publishing become more prevalent. This work falls to the editor in part because she or he is the one who is most intimate with the material and its relationship to the marketing plan. The end result of these tasks is a product much greater than the printed book, a network of products that create an experience, which is what readers pay for when they purchase a cultural product.47

In her Master of Publishing graduating report, "Implications of Authorship," Shyla Seller simplifies the distinction between the stages of editing; she explains that “clarifying and reorganizing for content and structure can describe both substantive and developmental editorial work, but developmental [editing] works with the idea (the proposal) while the substantive editing is done on the expression of that idea (the manuscript).” At Arsenal, specifically for Vancouver Special, developmental editing also included the meeting with Sebastian Hanna and a series of editorial meetings before Charles Demers was contracted to write the manuscript. The meetings consisted of brainstorming ideas for content, refining these ideas to develop an outline, determining the relationship of images and text, and finding the right author. This change in editorial process allowed Arsenal to take less risk by keeping more control of the title’s content in-house. This chapter will first explain standard editorial practices at Arsenal Pulp Press, and then examine the extensive developmental editing and limited substantive editing of Vancouver Special.

EDITORIAL PRACTICES AT ARSENAL PULP PRESS

In spring 2008, a group of five Master of Publishing students at Simon Fraser University under the group name Flip Systems completed Designing Editorial: An Exploration of Process, a project that attempted to capture key stages of the editorial process, which could then be used in the design of a content management system that would be useful to a variety of publishers. The research for this project consisted in part of a series of interviews with literary, scholarly, magazine, online, 48 Shyla Seller, “Implications of Authorship,” 6.

and general trade editors and publishers. From these interviews, the group concluded that each company’s editorial process was unique, and beyond that, that the process was often customized for specific titles. However, most companies shared a number of precise editorial stages, which occurred in the same sequence. As a part of this project, I interviewed Brian Lam, Susan Safyan, and Robert Ballantyne about Arsenal Pulp Press’s editorial practices.

Five features of Arsenal’s publishing practices influence its editorial process. First, the majority of Arsenal publications are commissioned works, titles developed in-house. Developmental editing is of major importance for commissioned works. At this stage the publisher and editor must determine the scope, goals, and occasionally the outline of a project before an author is approached. Second, Arsenal publishes between fifteen and twenty titles each year, most of them in the fall season. In 2009, Arsenal contracted seventeen titles for its fall list, the largest for a single season in Arsenal’s history. Third, Arsenal’s five full-time staff members, Brian Lam, Robert Ballantyne, Susan Safyan, Shyla Seller, and Janice Beley each take part in the editorial process at some point. Fourth, all members of the Arsenal staff regularly meet face-to-face at the Arsenal office to discuss editorial and productions schedules and each title’s marketing campaign. Fifth, the majority (80 percent) of editorial work is completed in-house; freelancers are contracted for occasional substantive editing but more often for proofreading. In spite of the fact that the fall 2009 list was the largest in Arsenal history, no freelance editors were contracted to edit titles for that season. These five features demonstrate that Arsenal

---

50 Ibid.
Pulp Press’s publishing process is extremely collaborative and all staff members are aware of each title’s progress. Collaboration between different departments allows the company to alter its editing (or marketing or design) process without disrupting the overall publishing schedule. Flip Systems documented Arsenal’s editorial process as follows:

- When a manuscript arrives, the editor logs it and the author data into an Excel spreadsheet on a central server that all staff members can access.

- Unsolicited manuscripts are read by the editor, volunteer readers, the publisher and associate publisher, or other staff members. In practice, the editor, editorial interns, freelance proofreader Linda Field, and other volunteers complete first readings of unsolicited manuscripts. Ideally, each unsolicited manuscript is read twice before a decision is made; however, manuscripts clearly unsuitable for the Arsenal list, such as children’s books, are rejected after a first reading or based on the submitted description of the manuscript.

- The vetting process is collaborative and more of a discussion than a yes/no process. The publisher makes the final decision to accept or reject.

- If the manuscript is accepted, the editor initiates contact with the author.

- Eighty percent of editorial work is done in-house; the remaining 20 percent, mostly proofreading, is contracted to freelancers.
Editors use the track changes feature in Microsoft Word for provisional edits. The editor sends suggested changes to the author, but the editor inputs all suggested changes other than any rewriting that has been requested. This process sometimes requires multiple rounds; the editor decides when the substantive edit is complete. After substantive editing, the manuscript is subjected to a stylistic edit, and then a copyedit. The author approves or rejects tracked changes but does not input them in the file. Any requested revisions, however, are completed in the file. The editor manages editorial traffic through all of these stages. When tasks are contracted to freelancers, the edited file travels through the editor before and after the author reviews it.

When the copyedit is complete, the editor sends the Word file to production.

The designer (most often Arsenal's production manager, Shyla Seller, but occasionally a freelancer) converts the file to an InDesign document and completes layout.

The designer sends proofs to the editor, and the manuscript goes through as many rounds of proofreading as the publication schedule allows. Often, the first proofread is completed by a freelancer, and subsequent rounds take place in-house. Changes are input by the designer. If more than one person proofreads the same draft of a manuscript, the editor collates the changes into a master proof, and the designer inputs them.
• When proofreading is complete and all corrections and changes have been input into the book to the editor’s satisfaction, the file is sent by FTP to the printer.50

The scope of Flip System’s Designing Editorial project did not include a discussion of the extensive preliminary planning that takes place for the majority of Arsenal titles, which are developed in-house; it also did not consider the stages of marketing that may dovetail with the editorial process—when the marketer becomes involved with a manuscript or any marketing-related tasks for which the editor is responsible. In the editing of Vancouver Special, for example, editorial tasks included tracking keywords, identifying sections suitable for a range of advance excerpts, and noting ideas or content that might be useful in online marketing campaigns. As more aspects of publishing move to online spaces—both marketing components and complete works—the editorial process has necessarily changed to accommodate the needs of an online audience, and to ensure that the work reaches those readers. The most fundamental question at the start of a project today, especially in the travel publishing genre, is one that did not need to be asked as recently as five years ago: what is the ideal medium for this title—print, online, or both? This is just the first of many considerations editors and publishers must evaluate as part of developmental editing.

For a company with a single full-time editor, it is a serious risk to commit valuable editorial time to the development of a title that may not be published.

51 Ibid.
However, the value of this investment—the substantial time spent developing a solid outline, organizing research, and ensuring the publisher, editor, and author have clarified the goals for the manuscript—is realized for titles that are successfully published. For these titles, adequate developmental editing ensures that the publisher and marketer will have material from which to create preliminary marketing plans, and the editor will have a clearer picture of the substantive editing that will therefore be required, which, in turn, helps him or her plan an editorial schedule for the season. The investment of the editor’s and publisher’s time during developmental editing “helps to sharpen and clarify the publisher’s statement of purpose by creating books carefully molded to fit a company’s list.” Because Arsenal commissions approximately 80 percent of its titles, developmental editing can be viewed as much a part of the business strategy as it is an investment in a single title.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDITING

In *Publishing for Profit*, Thomas Woll describes the process of developing titles in-house as an “excellent way to maintain control of [a] project,” because in addition to the ability to structure a project that will best fit the company’s list, the publisher-author contract can be structured to ensure the company gets what it needs. For the publisher, the benefits of maintaining control of the content and tone of a project extend to the process of commissioning an author. With part of the developmental editing complete, Janice Beley, Arsenal’s marketing director, was able to schedule

---

53 Woll terms these projects “internally generated manuscripts.”
the basic pieces of the marketing plan before the manuscript was submitted, even before an author was contracted. An early marketing plan allows publishers to be clear when negotiating the publisher-author contract about what will be expected of the author during promotion, instead of relying on an implicit understanding, common in cultural industries, that creators will aid in the marketing and promotion of their work. In conjunction, the early marketing plan and extensive developmental editing allowed Arsenal to draft catalogue copy and sell sheets, pitch the title to Canadian Manda Group (Arsenal’s Canadian sales agency, which sells its books to retailers but doesn’t physically distribute them), create an ad for the B.C. *Books for Everybody* catalogue, which was the book’s primary print advertising, and plan content for the *Vancouver Special* website.

Developmental editing, which is concerned with the concept for a title, often before it has been contracted for publication, is a time-consuming process that “requires more upfront investment in a book title” than does substantive editing. The upfront investment of an editor’s time in a project that may never be published is a considerable expense; developmental editing requires large blocks of time, one thing that is in short supply at a busy publishing company.” As Rabiner points out, “publishing house offices are generally such bustling enterprises these days that most editors make no attempt to edit during the nine-to-five workday. Instead, they

55 Richard Caves explains in *Creative Industries* that the marketing requirements of the author-publisher contract, like contracts in most cultural industries, are highly implicit, relying on “practices that are common knowledge in the community” (11). In book marketing, the “exchange,” what each party brings to a contract agreement, grows more complex as more parties are involved or as publishers need to predict their future digital content needs.


57 Susan Rabiner, *Thinking Like Your Editor*, 224.
put their kids to bed) or on weekends, until they are far enough into it to be able to justify working at home for a couple of days to finish it without interruption.” At Arsenal, the time Susan Safyan spends reading unsolicited manuscripts (an average of two manuscripts arrive daily) also takes place outside the office.

In *Developmental Editing: A Guide for Freelancers, Authors, and Publishers*, Scott Norton divides the developmental editor’s concerns into ten areas: concept, content, thesis, narrative, exposition, plan, rhythm, transitions, style, and display. Using the EAC’s definitions of the different stages of editing, what Norton describes encompasses both developmental and substantive editing, as well as elements of stylistic editing and copyediting. To describe the developmental editing of *Vancouver Special*, the majority of which took place before Charles Demers was brought on board, I will focus on four of Norton’s areas that were significant to the book’s publication: concept, content, style, and display. Because much of the developmental editing took place before an author was connected to the project (a situation not addressed in Norton’s book), I will also describe the process of commissioning Charles Demers as the book’s author.

**Concept**

The editor must consider the ways in which a book will reach its audience when assessing manuscripts and developing book concepts. When evaluating manuscripts, he or she must determine not only the mediagenic potential of the author (the author’s ability and willingness to promote his or her work through interviews

---

58 Ibid.
in print, on radio, and on television), but also the author's presence online or ability
to be part of a successful web-based marketing campaign. The definition of a core
audience for a title is no longer bound by geography, so alternative markets must be
taken into account. If a manuscript piques an editor's interest, the editor, working
with the publisher and designer, must determine the ideal format for each title. This
decision is no longer restricted to traditional design considerations: size such as
black and white, two colour, or four colour; and paper weight.

For Vancouver Special, developmental editing began with a series of editorial
meetings in early 2009, soon after the meeting with Sebastian Hanna. While
some of Hanna's suggestions were taken, it ultimately fell to the Arsenal staff to
conceptualize the book that would best fit the Arsenal list. Ideally, the title would
be competitive with other "alternative" guidebooks, though not formulaic. Arsenal
was not interested in creating a clone that would compete directly with guidebooks
already on the market, especially as the category had not performed well in the
past year.60 At the close of these developmental meetings, Susan Safyan and Brian
Lam created a short proposal for the untitled Vancouver book. Arsenal envisioned
a book of approximately 200 pages that would appeal to a local audience as well
as visitors to the city. The initial outline read much like a rough proposal that an
author would submit to a publishing house:

The proposed book would be a series of anecdotes and write-ups,
between 1 and 3 pages long, on various aspects of Vancouver's
past, present, and future. These stories, combined with numerous
photographs (not necessarily supplied by the author), will serve to
provide a wide-reaching, complex portrait of the city, warts and all.

60 Correspondence with Robert Ballantyne, September 11, 2009.
Possible subjects can include:
— City districts and suburbs (West End, the Drive, Richmond…)
— Interesting personalities, for better or worse, past and present (Joe Fortes, Jimmy Pattison, former mayor Louis D. Taylor…)
— Events like Expo 86, the Stanley Cup riot
— Stories with political, social, and cultural overtones
— Stories on well-known aspects of the city can focus on a specific part of it: for example, a story on Stanley Park could focus on the burial ground there, or on the devastating storm; a story on the Vancouver Canucks could focus on fan culture

The author’s voice and character should be present within the articles wherever possible and appropriate. The tone can be alternatively funny, angry, moving, insightful.

The audience for this book should be Vancouverites looking for an opinionated assessment of their city of residence, as well as for tourists looking for something deeper than a conventional guidebook.

Douglas Coupland’s *City of Glass* is a precedent, but that book is definitely the city according to Coupland (i.e. for fans of his writing style only).61

When evaluating proposals, editors look for answers to different questions depending on the author and the type of book. Broadly, however, a strong proposal will answer the following five questions:62 What is this book about?; What is the book’s thesis and what’s new about it?; Why are you the person to write this book?; Why is now the time to publish this book?; and Who makes up the core audience for the proposed book, and why will they find it appealing?"63 Arsenal needed to answer these questions because it needed to draft a document that would excite potential writers about the project. Much as an author attempts to grab the interest of an acquiring editor, Arsenal needed to attract a writer, making it clear that the conceptual problems had been thought through and he or she would be

---

61   Susan Safyan, Proposal developed in January 2009.
62   Rabiner’s “Big Five” should “not be taken as dogma,” (67) but they provide a general sense of the major factors an editor will consider when reviewing a proposal for a general trade nonfiction book.
63   Susan Rabiner, *Thinking Like Your Editor*, 67.
provided sufficient guidance to deliver a content proposal and manuscript in line with Arsenal's vision. The process of developing the proposal allowed the staff to consider the conceptual problems of the project. Arsenal was aware that the content would change and grow as the book was written, depending on the author's background and strengths. However, the preliminary proposal provided a sound and workable plan to guide the writer in his or her research, which would save time in the already-tight editorial schedule.

Content

Rabiner makes the case that when evaluating a non-fiction book proposal, the editor looks for evidence of authors who meets five requirements with regards to content: demonstrates real command of their material; knows how to pull readers into their world and make it come alive; has good command of the tools of rational discourse, displayed by precision of language, a sense for sound overarching structure, and good narrative skills; have a passion for their topic and a greater passion to leave their mark on it; and knows what the published literature has already said on the topic. Demers’ outline described the content of the Vancouver book as five main elements: longer essays that “look[ed] at the themes that have been with the city for all or most of its history,” including multiculturalism, immigration, and anti-Asian racism; shorter essays, punchier in tone, that “lean[ed] more toward write-ups,” for example, food in Vancouver, local celebrities, and neighbourhood write-ups; interviews with important citizens who “weren’t necessarily celebrities.”

---

64 For example, Hanna’s suggestions for design not lining up with the proposed subject matter.
65 Susan Rabiner, Thinking Like Your Editor, 68–69.
66 Reproduced in Appendix A.
such as Todd Wong, Sid Tan, Uncle Fatih, and Jack O’Dell; sidebars, which would be “fairly straightforward info boxes a la Vancouver Book of Everything”; and finally, stand-up comedy excerpts, from Vancouver stand-up comedians in Demers’ network.

Style and Display

Numerous factors affected Safyan’s developmental edit of Demers’ outline. Although her notes do not make explicit reference to changes in the book’s content,” the new design specifications reflect a subtle shift in tone, which was evident in Demers’ detailed outline, submitted at the end of March 2009. As edgy photography and the relationship of text and image became part of the central concept, the book shifted further from its guidebook origins and more toward a general-trade non-fiction book. Although the interviews remained part of the text, the information sidebars had been removed and the mini-essays, while still shorter in length, were closer in spirit to the longer ones. Instead of an alternative guidebook with a passionate author taking readers on an exploration of the city, the Vancouver book had become a collection of essays with greater emphasis on the author’s voice. Demers submitted a preliminary outline of twenty-nine to thirty-four essays: nine long essays (“Introduction/City Statement,” “Racism,” “Nature,” “Sports,” “Crime,” “Vanarchism,” “Municipal politics,” “Vancouver’s first peoples,” and “Art and culture”) and twenty to twenty-five short essays (“pot culture,” “hippy culture,” “dogs,” “yuppies,” “traffic and transportation,” “the Olympics,” “Expo 86,” “Vancouver celebrity culture,” “vegetarianism,” “buck-a-slice,” “class,” “the police,”

67 Safyan’s developmental editing notes for Demers’ outline are reproduced in Appendix B.
“coffee,” “real estate,” “Vancouver comedy,” plus essays on prominent Vancouver
neighbourhoods). Ancillary material such as the information sidebars, as well as
standard guidebook items like listings and recommendations was not discarded;
instead, that material would be produced and used on the book’s blog or website.
This decision demonstrates that in their developmental edits, editors are thinking
of these online spaces as more than promotional tools. As a complementary ele-
ment of the reading experience, the blog or website would contain the information-
based and searchable content brainstormed during developmental editing.

The Vancouver book still had a strong guidebook feel, with elements that could
be used in subsequent books in the series. However, although Safyan’s developmen-
tal edit of Demers’ proposal focused more on design considerations and editorial
schedule than on content, these decisions went far in refining the tone of the book.
Unlike the Unknown City guidebooks, with their book paper stock and standard
size (6 by 9 inches), the Vancouver book would be “glamourous,” with “beautiful
production” and a larger format that would stand out on bookshelves.68 The cover
would have French flaps, and both the fonts and photography would function
as interpretations of the text. In her notes, Safyan described the book’s “seriality
of graphics” as a “layering of historical and graphical—[a] palimpsest” meaning
that the photographs would also reflect and complement the pattern of elements
Demers described in his proposal. Instead of small, captioned photographs, the
“edgy photography” would establish tension with a more elegant typeface in much
the same way the comedy excerpts and short, punchier essays would contrast the

68 Developmental edit notes from Susan Safyan at editorial meeting with Charles Demers,
March 2009.
political and historical ones. Demers’ manuscript closely followed the proposal and outline created during the developmental edit. The proposed list of essays struck the intended balance between the historical, political, and cultural themes, and the tone was appropriate for the book’s core audience.

Author

Once Arsenal finalized the concept of the book, each staff member created a list of potential authors before the next editorial meeting. The initial list included former and current Arsenal Pulp writers, as well as non-Arsenal writers who were well known and associated with Vancouver. A third suggested option was to co-publish the title with the Georgia Straight and engage one or several of their staff writers; this idea was decided against at the first editorial meeting. If Vancouver Special was to become the first in series of new, alternative guidebooks, Arsenal wanted to maintain control of all subsequent titles in the series and the growth of the series as a whole.

Former Arsenal writers under consideration included John Mackie, Sarah Reeder, Kevin Barefoot, Carellin Brooks, John Burns, and Karen Tulchinsky. Non-Arsenal writers under consideration included Jen Sookfong Lee, panelist on Canada Reads, author of the novel The End of East, and host of West Coast Words on CBC Radio One; Steve Burgess, Tyee columnist and freelance writer; Teresa McWhirter, author of Some Girls Do and Dirtbags; Ron Yamauchi, columnist for the Georgia Straight and the Tyee; Lee Henderson; Douglas Coupland; and Timothy Taylor. However, Arsenal considered both Coupland and Taylor unlikely
candidates and ultimately did not contact either about writing the manuscript.\textsuperscript{69} One can see the value in commissioning an author from either group. The former Arsenal authors were a known commodity: Arsenal had had a successful working relationship with each one, and Safyan knew that any of them would turn in a complete manuscript on deadline. Lam was aware of how much editorial guidance each would likely require, and Beley knew how adept and comfortable each was with self-promotion, both online and with traditional media. Conversely, working with a non-Arsenal author presented more unknowns, but would allow Arsenal to broaden its network of writers in Vancouver. In addition, these authors had more extensive media followings and, in general, might be more readily associated with Vancouver in the minds of readers, making them more likely to purchase the book.

Brian Lam approached the writers on a narrowed list, but none were able to commit to the project.\textsuperscript{70} Before the second editorial meeting, Shyla Seller suggested Charles Demers, who was eventually commissioned to write \textit{Vancouver Special}. Seller knew Demers socially and he had expressed interest in the project, so he was asked to put forward a proposal detailing content and format based on the preliminary proposal devised by Arsenal. Although he was not as well known in the Vancouver writing community as those on the original list of potential authors, Demers seemed ideally suited to the project. He was born and raised in Greater Vancouver, and his background included political activism, involvement with many

\textsuperscript{69} D&M Publishers planned to release a revised and expanded edition of Coupland’s 2000 Vancouver title, \textit{City of Glass}, for the fall 2009 season.

\textsuperscript{70} Some of the writers approached were unable to commit because of conflicting schedules or projects; one author initially expressed interested in the project but required a larger advance than Arsenal could offer.
community organizations, and a successful career as a stand-up comedian. He had written for the *Tyee* and rabble.ca, and was a co-founder of *Seven Oaks*, an online magazine of “politics, culture, and resistance.” His previous writing was witty and intelligent, and he was passionately engaged with the city of Vancouver. Demers had not been included in Arsenal’s initial list of authors for one key reason: he had never published a book-length work. In addition, Demers had a busy schedule: he had recently started work on *The CityNews List* as a co-host five nights a week, he was a working comedian with regular stand-up gigs, he was a founder and contributing editor of *Seven Oaks*, and he was publishing his first novel, *The Prescription Errors*, with Insomniac Press in September 2009. Although Demers’ other projects were attractive to Arsenal because of the additional media exposure they would bring to the book, Demers was a greater risk than the more established Vancouver writers, which went against all the developmental work meant to minimize risk on a title that could not be bumped back to a later season.

**SUBSTANTIVE EDITING**

Demers’ first manuscript submission was the introduction to *Vancouver Special* on June 4, 2009. I have devoted a section to the substantive edit of Demers’ introduction for two reasons: first, the introduction was longer than many of the individual essays; and second, the introduction was submitted fourteen weeks before the remainder of the manuscript and the edits allowed Arsenal to provide guidance for the author in the shaping and tone of the rest of the manuscript.

---

Introduction

Although Demers acknowledged that the introduction he submitted on June 4, 2009, was a first draft, his intention was to show the Arsenal staff what he hoped to accomplish with the manuscript as well as to establish the tone of the whole book. A strong introduction to a non-fiction book does three things: it tells the reader what the book is about, explains how the author came to write it, and makes clear how the book will enhance the readers’ knowledge of the topic. Conversely, *The Chicago Manual of Style* maintains that “reasons for undertaking the work” and “methods of research (if this has some bearing on readers’ understanding of the text)” is within the scope of a preface. *Vancouver Special* did not contain a preface, so all of the introductory material was included in the introduction. Demers’ introduction began with an anecdote about how easy it is for a stand-up comic in Vancouver to focus on the municipality of Surrey, a tactic that “sputtered and died” when attempted by the Canadian comedian Dana Carvey (of *Saturday Night Live* and *Wayne’s World* fame). Demers used this anecdote as a way to delve into what he sees as the “Vancouver superiority complex,” one of many contradictions of the city and its denizens that emerge throughout the book. Having grown up in Burnaby, Newton, and Surrey before moving into Vancouver proper, Demers is well aware that he is infected with this superiority complex; he did not attempt to paint Vancouver as an uber-green, multicultural, world-class city, yet he made clear that it is the only city he would want to call home. When describing his move to the Trout Lake area with his wife, he quipped, “Not exactly Gatsbyan social mobility,

72 Susan Rabiner, *Thinking Like Your Editor*, 197.
but at least we’re back in Vancouver.”

Demers submitted the introduction to *Vancouver Special* nearly six weeks before the first batch of essays, as the final deadline had been pushed back from July 31 to August 14, 2009, and the launch from October to November. Much of the content to be used on the *Vancouver Special* website, as well as elements of the print and online marketing campaign, had to be created in June and July. Therefore, Demers’ introduction provided the baseline information from which Janice Beley and I planned this marketing content and generated material to be sent to review media. In addition, only two and a half weeks would be allotted to edit the remaining essays and have Demers approve the edits and complete any revisions. It was therefore important to provide him with as much guidance for style and tone as possible.

As Demers had not worked with Arsenal in the past and *Vancouver Special* would be his first book-length non-fiction work, the edited introduction also served as a sample of the type of editing he could expect on the remainder of the book.

Editors’ Response

In our response to Demers’ introduction, Susan Safyan and I noted that the writing established a clear, knowledgeable, and entertaining voice. It provided a clear description of the book’s focus, which meets Rabiner’s first requirement—telling the reader what the book is about—and it introduced the stand-up comedy segments that would play a supporting role throughout the book. However, we felt that the introduction required work to maintain consistency in tone, and that it should place less emphasis on personal history and more on the broader themes of the

manuscript. We suggested that Demers incorporate parts of his family history into one or more of the essays to follow and to weave his personal history throughout the introduction instead of presenting it in one anecdote, as he had done in his first draft of the introduction. This approach would mimic Demers’ idea that Vancouver “seems to work in echoes of itself,” which we found appealing in its reflection of the overlap in personal and social histories. From a narrative standpoint, we suggested that a more fluid approach throughout the introduction would improve the pacing and lead to a more consistent tone.75 My letter to Demers stated:

Vancouver Special needs to be a personal book and your voice is clear, knowledgeable, and entertaining. To emphasize this narrative strength, it would help to weave the personal and family background throughout the introduction, as the memories and stories provide the context and impetus for the book. The paragraphs about your parents’ and grandparents’ arrivals in Vancouver are interesting and I appreciate how you have linked major events in your family history to Vancouver history. However, it would improve the introduction’s pacing if this section were shorter and focused on your status as a hybrid Vancouverite: on one side your roots go back three generations, on the other, you’re the child of a transplant from Quebec. Perhaps more detail will emerge in one of the essays?76

A second suggestion was that Demers describe his social and professional connection to the city earlier in the introduction, which would clarify both his point of view and his impetus for writing the book, which meets Rabiner’s second requirement of an introduction and Chicago’s guidelines for a preface. My letter to Demers went on to say,

75 Addressing consistency in tone was of more importance because it had been noted during the preliminary marketing meetings that uniting Demers’ disparate public images would be a challenge.
76 Letter from Michelle Simms to Charles Demers, June 2009.
Another way to help the reader along would be to describe who you are today earlier in the introduction. Knowing from the outset that you have a background in stand-up comedy, writing, and television (with a healthy dose of political and cultural activism thrown in) would make the point of view clearer.\footnote{77}

Throughout the introduction, Demers quotes local poets George Stanley and Wayde Compton, journalist Sean Condon, and authors Jean Barman and George Bowering, and gives a nod to the popular Vancouver blog Miss604.com. He notes the importance of Expo 86 as a turning point for the city: “For critical nostalgics on both the right and left, ’86 is when the city all went to hell. From the plaid-and-corduroy type progressives, the flak stems from Expo’s place in the city’s rhetorical and actual neo-liberal firmament,”\footnote{78} and points to the potential of the upcoming 2010 Winter Olympic Games to have a similar effect on the city. He includes a lengthy personal history that stretches back to his grandparents’ connections to Vancouver and describes his first memories of the city—as a six-year-old at Expo and at protest rallies with his parents. Although Demers dedicates much of the introduction to describing his personal history with Vancouver, the overarching theme of the introduction is quite different: “One of the foundational agreements of civic life is a commitment to a memory longer than a collection of personal anecdotes or even family stories.”\footnote{79} Demers closes the introduction with a reiteration of what readers will find in the essays that follow.

The way that this book tries to work is as a collection of essays, of varying lengths and subjects, about the themes and histories and features of Vancouver. There will be short write-ups about neighbourhoods and recent trends and sundry civic idiosyncrasies; pizza-by-the-slice, for example, or the whole Vancouver dog

\footnotesize

\footnote{77}{Ibid.}
\footnote{78}{Ibid.}
\footnote{79}{Ibid.}
obsession. I’ve included longer pieces on the things I feel have been a part of Vancouver for the whole of its history: anti-Asian racism, for instance, or the city’s history of political radicalism. There are interviews with some of the not-famous (or not-so-famous) citizens who give shape and texture to the city; some you’ll have heard of, others not.80

Rabiner’s third requirement for introductions to nonfiction books, to make clear how the book will enhance the reader’s understanding of its subject, is not as pertinent for Vancouver Special. As a collection of essays, the book’s goal is more one of atmosphere than argument, unlike, for example, most biography, history, and science texts. The reader’s understanding of the city of Vancouver is enhanced, but this is achieved through Demers’ stories and commentary rather than the facts he presents.

Mary Schendlinger provides students with a breakdown of the areas that need to be considered during a substantive edit in her Editorial Theory and Practice course at Simon Fraser University. At the broadest level, the editor must ask 1) What is the book about? 2) Does the text deliver on the intended purpose? 3) Is the writing appropriate for the intended audience? and 4) Is everything there?81 Because of the extensive developmental editing and sample edit of Demers’ introduction, Arsenal felt confident that Demers’ manuscript delivered on these four larger-picture concerns. One surprise in the first batch of Demers’ submissions was that all the essays were of similar length, not a combination of longer essays and shorter, punchier ones. The neighbourhood essays in particular were more in-depth than expected, which affected the order of essays in the book. Instead of organizing the essays to

80 Ibid.
balance short and long, political and comedic, Safyan and I felt the neighbourhood essays could stand on their own as a separate section. The fourth consideration, which asks if the manuscript requires additional information or apparatus, was addressed in conjunction with the photographer and designer. In this case, a hand-drawn map in the style of one drawn on a bar napkin was added before going to press, and sidebars and pull quotes, which had appeared in the Unknown City books, were eliminated.

The “smaller picture” considerations Schendlinger describes include content (information, analysis, balance, and originality), readability (appeal, authority, tone, order and shape; and clarity, concreteness, and flow), and impact (enlightenment and force). The substantive edits I requested came primarily under the “readability” category. In the four essays in which I made the most substantive suggestions, I asked Demers to expand on ideas, move paragraphs up or down to guide the reader, and rework information that appeared in other essays. In some sections, jokes that would have worked as part of a stand-up act did not translate to print, and obscure references needed to be clarified for a more general audience. Only the “First Nations” essay required more than cosmetic changes, an essay Demers acknowledged in the text he felt reluctant to write. In his worry over “getting it right,” the tone was “less immediate than other essays in the book ... [and] lost some of the personality and bite that [came] through so well in others.” I asked Demers to add three or four short paragraphs that addressed issues he felt comfort-

82 A full list of the requested substantive edits appears in Appendix C.
83 Demers, “First Nations,” unedited manuscript.
84 Letter from Michelle Simms to Charles Demers, August 21, 2009.
able weighing in on, and suggested four areas in the text where he might expand
on his research with opinion or inquiry. Compared to the method of publishing
employed for the Unknown City titles, the Vancouver Special process allowed
Arsenal to maintain greater control over the final product and produce the book
on a shorter timeline. In particular, the book required less substantive editing
because of the extensive planning that had gone into the book’s conception and
development.

Individual Essays

Demers submitted the remaining Vancouver Special essays in four batches and
requested that Safyan and I send the edited files back to him as a single, complete
manuscript. Demers likely made this request because he wanted to finish writing
before tackling revisions. His request allowed the editors to address the essays
individually and collectively and plan an order for the essays in the book. Overall,
the substantive edit consisted of two main elements: tasks traditionally viewed as
substantive editing (making comments, queries, and revisions to the text, compil-
ing a style sheet, and developing or contributing to marketing materials, such as
jacket and catalogue copy, or selecting excerpts) and new tasks related to the book’s
online marketing and promotion (tracking keywords, flagging sections for online
excerpts or blogger reviews, and suggesting ideas for contests run on social media
sites).

85 Ibid.
The time I spent at Arsenal Pulp Press revealed that the amount of overlap between editorial and marketing tasks increases relative to the importance of the Web in the book’s marketing campaign and distribution. For nonfiction titles like *Vancouver Special*, and for all publishers, including smaller Canadian presses like Arsenal Pulp Press, online marketing channels present a major opportunity. In the world of book marketing, the Web is a medium in which creativity still conquers budgets and personal voices can beat corporate messages. The online tools used in the marketing of *Vancouver Special* and the editor’s role in making the best use of them is the focus of Chapter Three.
“The media landscape is transformed, because personal communication and publishing, previously separate functions, now shade into one another. One result is to break the older pattern of professional filtering of the good from the mediocre before publication; now such filtering is increasingly social, and happens after the fact.”

—Media theorist Clay Shirky

The process of promoting a book begins up to a year before it is launched in bookstores. The marketer’s objective when creating a title’s marketing campaign, whether the campaign is based in traditional print and broadcast media or online, is not only to make the title stand out among the thousands of books published each year, but also to target the core audience for the title, generate interest in the author, and promote the publishing house’s entire front list whenever possible.

Since the 1950s or ’60s, trade-book marketing campaigns in North America have (depending on budgets) consisted of reviews and excerpts, print advertisements in newspapers, magazines, and journals, interviews on radio and/or television, point-of-purchase merchandise and in-store placements (“co-ops”) with independent bookstores and large retail chains such as Chapters-Indigo, and events such as launches and author readings/signings. In the last decade, the emergence of online tools, as well as the networking and purchasing patterns of consumers and their expectations as readers, has dramatically shifted much marketing and promotion in

the trade-publishing industry to the Web. Although both large and small publishers have scrambled to incorporate social media tools into their marketing plans, it is small publishers that stand to gain the most. These publishers, and even individual readers, suddenly have equal access to new marketing strategies and arguably have more flexibility to act on them quickly. Online marketing campaigns cost a fraction of print ones, and many of the most commonly used online tools are free. For small publishing houses, online marketing allows companies to “keep more marketing costs in-house, in employee time instead of dollars spent.” Online tools, and especially social media applications, put authors directly in touch with their readers—even Margaret Atwood is on Facebook and Twitter (@MargaretAtwood). It is not new for publishers to expect an author to play a key role in a marketing campaign, but online tools have shifted the author’s role from offstage (talking to readers) to front and centre (interacting with them). As more social and consumer interaction moves online, readers will increasingly use online channels to research and buy books, whether these are in print or ebook format.

*Vancouver Special* was not likely to draw the attention of nation-wide media or readers, nor does it fall neatly into a single genre. For those reasons, Arsenal decided to take a multi-pronged approach to its promotion, using a combination of print, in-person, and online marketing strategies. The print component (promotion in *B.C. Books for Everybody*) would be directed at British Columbia audiences, capitalizing on the local subject, author, and publisher; the online components would reach out to a broader audience. This approach would also take advantage of the

87 Ibid.
fact that Demers was extremely mediagenic, had an established following online, and was known in Vancouver as a stand-up comedian, writer, and activist. The challenge of marketing *Vancouver Special* would be promoting Demers as an author to each of these audiences. This chapter describes the tools Arsenal Pulp uses in its online and social media marketing, explains the decisions that went into building the marketing campaign for *Vancouver Special*, and considers how these decisions affected the book’s editorial process. It concludes with a set of recommendations for editors to follow when developing titles that will be marketed and promoted online.

MARKETING ON THE SOCIAL WEB

Janice Beley, Arsenal’s marketing director says that the traditional four P’s marketing mix—product, price, place, and promotion—is shifting to three C’s: conversation, collaboration, and community. Traditional book marketing, those four P’s, focuses, not surprisingly, on the book. Excerpts are intended to pique readers’ curiosity about its content, and reviews in major media outlets, when favourable, provide a stamp of approval and generate word-of-mouth interest.

To that end, publishers and marketers spend time, money and other resources trying to “convince the editors of the major newspaper book review sections and magazines that the book they are pushing is worth reviewing” because review and excerpt space is in high demand. Similarly, print advertisements, radio and television interviews, and in-store placements focus on the merits of the title unless the author is extremely well known. In *Creative Industries*, Richard Caves explains that,

---

Copies of new books went off to review media in the hope that reviewers would provide, if not a warm endorsement, at least information to let readers match the book to their interests. Publishers confined their direct selling effort (apart from a little print advertising) to retail bookstores rather than readers.\(^9\)

This type of passive promotion does not favour niche or regional publishers who need to target marketing to their intended readers. But now, large and small book publishers need to identify audiences and direct marketing efforts at them; niche products lend themselves to this targeted approach. Although it requires more time invested in audience research, online and social media marketing in the publishing industry puts more control in the hands of the publisher and author.

Online marketing focuses on community, not content. In *The New Community Rules*, Tamar Weinberg explains that because social media is based on community, relationships are key, and as such, it is important for marketers and authors to interact with readers:

> Social media is about genuine conversation and communication, and while there are tools to help you achieve that goal, social media marketing goes beyond just utilizing these tools—it is about empowering the voices of both the producers and the consumers.\(^9\)

For Arsenal, interaction with readers takes many forms. Janice Beley is active on Facebook and Twitter throughout each workday; her posts and “tweets” (the 140-or-fewer-character messages posted on Twitter) range from standard marketing fare, “Introducing the Real Vancouver Writers’ & Culture Series. We’ll have some Arsenal authors in the series this February. Check it out!” to goings-on around the Arsenal office: “Robert’s response to iPad (he’s our associate publisher): ‘It sure

\(^89\) Richard Caves, *Creative Industries*, 46.
would be nice if people did more stories about what's IN a book!" to personal messages: “Happy New Year to all of our Arsenal fans! Did anyone read an exceptional book or see a great movie over the holidays? I watched season one of the BBC Series, Outnumbered. It’s from 2007 and brilliant.” The last post received eight comments from five different Arsenal fans, who interacted not just with Beley but also among themselves, writing back and forth to each other. Although Beley uses social media as a marketing tool, the content in the majority of her posts does not directly push Arsenal or Arsenal books. Consequently, her messages engage readers and foster real relationships.

A second difference between traditional and online marketing in book promotion is that small publishers can compete directly with large conglomerates and, in some cases, have a distinct advantage. Many small companies like Arsenal have one person who becomes the “voice” of the company online. As marketing director, Beley presents a more genuine company representative than, for example, a number of staff members collectively writing a corporate blog. She is able to maintain conversations over days and weeks, and gets to know the readers who regularly post back to her. This is not to say that social media marketing is as simple as establishing rapport with readers; to convert social media marketing into book sales, companies need to know where to find readers, network with other online producers, and write thorough messages and posts that excite the reader and community about their products.91

91 Ibid.
The salient feature of traditional marketing strategies is that they all make use of broadcast media, which allow a message to be sent from one person to many. Clay Shirky, media theorist and author of *Here Comes Everybody: Marketing on the Social Web*, describes broadcast media as being “shaped, conceptually, like a megaphone, amplifying a one-way message from one sender to many receivers.” Communications media such as telegrams or phone calls, on the other hand, are “designed to facilitate two-way conversations ... like a tube; the message put into one end is intended for a particular recipient at the other end.” The point Shirky makes in his comparison is that marketing on the Web is not simply real-world marketing in an online space. Publishers need to focus their promotion and marketing on developing relationships with individual readers rather than broadcasting to groups of them.

Of course, print advertising is still important. Because it costs so much, print advertising signals that the publisher thinks the title is worth risking money on. The Internet has made what was once a high-barrier industry a no-barrier industry, so readers still rely on traditional marketing as an indicator of quality, much in the same way that they consider a book acquired and produced by a recognized publisher to have more value than one that is self-published.

**ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AT ARSENAL PULP PRESS**

Under the broad umbrella of online promotion, the three essential strategies for book publishers are search engine optimization (SEO) and search marketing,
profiles or partnering with online book retailers like Amazon.com, and analytics programs such as Google Analytics or Technorati. These tools ensure that readers will be able to find a publisher’s books and website, that they will be able to purchase books in as few steps as possible, and that publishers can measure the success of their online efforts. Once publishers have these three strategies in place, they get the most benefit from any online or social media campaigns built for authors and individual titles.

After publishers have established a presence online, the next step is to promote individual titles, for which there are three main categories of online tools: sites for sharing and distributing content, such as websites and sharing sites like YouTube and Flickr; social networking applications like Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter; and direct marketing purchased through a third party, such as Google Adwords. To build a comprehensive online campaign, authors and marketers need to know how each type of tool works in order to structure campaigns that will bring authors and readers together. For example, depending on the author’s capabilities and the book’s intended audience, one campaign may include search marketing, Facebook, and Twitter, while another may consist of blogging and Flickr. The key to finding the right combination of tools is to understand the web capabilities of each author, to find the book’s intended readers online, and to create specific, measurable goals for each campaign. To promote Vancouver Special, Arsenal Pulp decided to use a

95 An extensive list of these tools and how to use them for book promotion was compiled in spring 2009 by a group of five Master of Publishing students at Simon Fraser University. Their research can be found online on the BookProm wiki at http://thinkubator.cccsp.sfu.ca/bookprom/live.
customized blog, Facebook, Twitter, and media-sharing sites, as well as traditional print marketing.

VANCOUVER SPECIALBOOK.COM

During the development of *Vancouver Special*, Demers stood out as a potential author because he was extremely web savvy. As a founder of *Seven Oaks* magazine and regular contributor to rabble.ca and thetyee.ca, he was accustomed to writing for web audiences. He maintained personal profiles on Facebook and Twitter, and collective profiles for the comedy duo Bucket (Demers and friend Paul Bae) and for the television show he co-hosts, *The CityNews List*. However, his profiles were disparate and appealed to different audiences. The audience downloading clips of his stand-up comedy on YouTube was different than the one following his political feature stories for *Seven Oaks* or his book reviews for the *Tyee*. Similarly, those who followed Demers’ tweets on Twitter were not the same as the members of *The CityNews List* or Bucket fan pages on Facebook. As social media theorist Chris Brogan would describe Demers’ online profile, Demers maintained a number of “outposts,” or “places where you have an online presence out on the web ... [that] are meant to build your online presence by making connections and building relationships.”96 What Demers lacked was a “home base,” a website or online space “that [he would] own or maintain.”97 Because the home base (usually a conventional website or blog) is the space for sharing more and better content, outposts should be used for short interactions and to drive traffic to the home base. A home base

97 Ibid.
would allow Demers, or Arsenal on his behalf, to direct his different audiences to a single online space; a home base would eliminate the need for Demers to distribute content to each audience community individually. Using outposts to interact with each community, he could point each toward his home base. In addition, because *Vancouver Special* may be the first in a new series of Arsenal city books, it made sense to establish an online presence for the title, which would stimulate backlist sales when new additions to the series were published. Because the period between manuscript submission and launch was shorter than usual for Arsenal, collaboration between departments was important to the book’s success. The editors kept marketing in mind throughout the acquisition, development, and substantive editing processes.

**MARKETING DURING ACQUISITIONS**

In deciding whether to acquire a new title, editors consider not just the merits of a submitted manuscript, but also the publishing history and marketing potential of its author. Often described as “mediagenic” potential, the author’s ability and willingness to promote his work through interviews in print, on radio, on television, and now online is an important consideration for acquisitions editors. As a first step in assessing mediagenic potential, Arsenal requires authors to include a synopsis, chapter-by-chapter outline (for non-fiction), writing credentials, and marketing analysis with each unsolicited manuscript. Especially for first-time authors, who may not have an established reader base, the ability to “sell” the work and engage with the media is of major benefit to a prospective publisher. The medi-
genic qualities of an author are more a marketing consideration than an editorial one, but it is the editor who is the primary contact between author and publisher; therefore, it is the editor who initially examines these qualities in the most detail. As online and social media marketing becomes more elaborate and important to entire marketing campaigns, an author’s ability to self-promote online and engage with readers in online spaces becomes a key aspect of assessing mediagenics.

The first aspect to assess is an author’s writing beyond the manuscript. Not all writing styles are conducive to online interaction with readers; if the publisher asks the author to regularly contribute to a website, blog, or social media application, then style is important. Literary authors may be unaccustomed to breaking up their writing with headlines, lists, italics, and links—all of which contribute to digestible online writing. Even more frustrating for some authors is that blog posts are strongest when they are divided into concise paragraphs and, in general, when they do not digress from a main topic. Authors who are comfortable interacting with fans through personal blogs or on applications like Facebook or Twitter will offer more marketing possibilities when their book is launched. The second aspect to assess is an author’s web savvy. For example if an author proposed a title that would benefit from an online and social media campaign, an editor may ask if the author is able and willing to engage with an online community: What applications does the author already use for self-promotion? Does the author have their own website—and what kind of content is posted on it? How many fans or followers does he or she have on social media applications? Does the author post

---

promotional material, personal information, links to other online content, or all three? A third factor editors should consider when assessing an author’s online marketing potential is any commitments the author may have after his or her book is launched. All authors want their work to succeed, but not all have the time or desire to personally invest in an online media campaign. Unlike an author reading and media tour, which may be intense and all-consuming for a number of weeks, an online campaign requires regular updates and fresh content over a period of months.

MARKETING DURING DEVELOPMENTAL EDITING

During developmental and substantive editing, the editor’s concerns shift away from the author and focus on the scope, contents, format, and style of the text. From the wealth of brainstormed ideas, only a fraction will survive the refining process that takes place between brainstorming, crafting a proposal and outline, and writing the text. The editor’s primary concern is to develop a well-researched and thorough outline that will aid the reader and ensure the finished book is saleable. Online marketing tools that are rich in content, such as websites and blogs, have expanded the experience of reading a book. As cultural products, books create value through the experience they convey, not by what they are physically.99 By generating quality content on their websites and blogs, authors add value to their books; the developmental edit is a good time to set aside content that is not appropriate for the bound and printed book but is valuable material for the book’s promotion.

99  Peter S. Grant and Chris Wood expand on this distinction in Blockbuster and Trade Wars to note that as “public goods,” books are not consumed through repeated use, 46–47, 56.
While developing content for the Vancouver Special blog, I realized that much of the material had actually been suggested and culled during the book's developmental edit. This material was more in line with the original Unknown City books: it included top ten lists, addresses for notable business and historic sites, and recommended places to visit. This kind of material can help a blog succeed because it is highly searchable online. People who search related terms (“best sites in Vancouver,” “where to eat in Vancouver,” or “cool stores in Vancouver” for example) will be directed to the Vancouver Special site. If the editor knows that a website or blog for the book will be built, it will influence the criteria she or he uses for developing an outline. Because an effective book website does not merely replicate the book’s content, interesting or informative material not appropriate for the print book may be ideal for the website instead of requiring the editor to reshape the material for print or cut it entirely.

Developmental editing is also the stage in which a book’s intended audience is pinpointed. The sooner editors share this information with the marketing team, the sooner marketers can find these readers online. For Vancouver Special, Arsenal identified the key audience as educated Vancouverites who are passionate about and involved with their city. Many members of this audience are readers of the city’s most popular blogs, which include BeyondRobson, Miss604, and Urban Vancouver. If Beley could secure reviews of Vancouver Special on these sites, those reviews would reach a target portion of potential Vancouver Special readers. However, developing a relationship with bloggers can take many weeks or months of regular contact, which is why it is important to start early.
MARKETING DURING SUBSTANTIVE EDITING

To an author or reader, the substantive editing process would appear to be the stage of editing least likely to be affected by marketing—the author’s marketing strengths have been assessed, the book’s intended audience has been identified, and a preliminary marketing plan is (hopefully) in place. In practice, however, marketing concerns always guide substantive editing, and now, substantive editors undertake more detailed marketing activities, such as tracking keywords, listing references that may be available online, flagging sections for excerpts to be offered to a wide variety of book bloggers and other reviewers, and listing possible promotions that tie in to the book’s content. As the person who spends the most time working hands-on with the text other than the author, the editor is able to complete these marketing tasks with the least amount of guesswork.

Keywords

Keywords are the terms most likely to be used by readers when searching online for a specific item or site. By including these keywords in a website’s title tag, page url, main heading, and body content, publishers optimize their site and improve its ranking in search engine results. A higher ranking brings more visitors to a site. Keywords should include words that people would associate with the product or brand, as well as terms that differentiate one product from others; they may also include commonplace search terms like “best” or “most” paired with distinct words.

To develop keywords for the Vancouver Special website, vancouerspecialbook.com, terms associated with the product or brand include “Vancouver,” “book,” “Vancouver book,” “Arsenal Pulp,” and “guidebook.” Examples of terms to differentiate the book from others in its category are “Demers,” “Charles Demers,” and “alternative guide,” and common terms paired with distinct terms include “best Vancouver guide.” Although a book’s marketer will have more experience finding popular search terms (by using Google Trends, for example) and researching likely spelling mistakes or synonyms, the editor is the in-house expert of a book’s content. The editor is the most qualified to suggest search terms that, though less common, will be directly related to the book. For Vancouver Special, readers searching for these less common terms are more likely to be quality visitors—those looking for the Vancouver Special book or website rather than Vancouver books in general.

Keywords make up one part of the on-page optimization editors can contribute to; keywords can also help authors improve their off-site optimization during the editing process by compiling links.

Links

When editing a manuscript, especially a non-fiction text, the editor maintains a list of references and details to fact check. As part of this process, editors can help authors improve their off-site optimization by compiling a list of references—to other books, articles, writers, websites, or information—available online, which the author can then link to from his or her site. Like an index, these links show readers where they can find related material; unlike an index, links can connect readers to the information with a single click. By directing readers to material that
influenced or informed the writing or the book, the author is both adding value for readers and strengthening connections to other producers in his or her community. In addition, these other producers may then link back to the author’s site, improving its search results ranking. On the Vancouver Special site, readers could find links to maps, businesses, or historic sites mentioned in the book; articles and books Demers referenced; and links to influential blogs about Vancouver. Some of these blogs linked back to the Vancouver Special site, and many posted a review or excerpt as well.

Excerpt and Review Material

Before publishers embraced the Internet as a marketing and distribution tool, limited space was available for books to be reviewed and excerpted. Newspapers, magazines, journals, and other print media receive far more material than they could possibly review, and the large book-publishing conglomerates (with their larger advertising budgets) wield much more influence than small, independent publishers when it comes to attracting reviewers’ attention. Print media also tends to gravitate toward titles that will appeal to the largest section of their readership—well-known authors and award winners—leaving little room for regional or niche titles.

Limited review and excerpt space has presented a major challenge for small publishers, because reviews can have a major impact on sales. A readership study by the Department of Canadian Heritage in 2005, Reading and Buying Books for Pleasure, found that Canadians regard book reviews the third most important
The study also found that the Internet is a growing influence on reader’s book-buying habits: 37 percent went online in the year prior to the survey to find books or information about books, and 12 percent went online to purchase books. The figures surely have risen in the five years since the survey. The explosion of websites that post book reviews has opened the doors to titles that would not have been reviewed in print media. These sites include personal blogs and websites, online book clubs, online retailers and websites of brick-and-mortar bookstores, social cataloguing sites like Shelfari and GoodReads, and sites devoted to reviewing books in specialized fields. Today there are even aggregators of the best book review websites and the best book blogs. An added benefit to online reviews is that readers can access them for weeks and months, if not years—unlike, for example, the book review section of the print edition *Globe and Mail*, which changes every Saturday. Most important, online book reviews, blog posts, and cataloguing sites function both as “book reviews” and as “recommendations from friends,” because social sites encourage relationships that cannot be developed in print media.

The key to garnering reviews and excerpt space online is developing relationships with reviewers and establishing that your book is of interest to the site’s community of readers. As editors know, a single book may appeal to a number of different audiences. Although *Vancouver Special* appealed generally to Vancouver readers, subcategories of this audience that the book would especially appeal

---

101 Turner-Riggs (quoting *Reading and Buying Books for Pleasure*) reports the four most important sources for finding out about books as recommendations from friends (40%), gifts (24%), book reviews (23%), and advertisements (19%). Turner-Riggs, *The Book Retail Sector in Canada*, 17.
to are left-of-centre politicos, history buffs, and fans of Vancouver’s stand-up comedy scene. If editors are able to pinpoint niche readerships for marketers, then the marketers can start to develop these relationships months before the book is released. To procure excerpt space online, editors can provide marketers with excerpts targeted to specific reader groups. This tactic would have worked well for *Vancouver Special* had the editorial schedule allowed for it. Because of the condensed timeline, Demers had only submitted three of the planned thirty essays when Beley needed to secure review and excerpt space for November, when the title would be released. Had Demers submitted all the essays by this time, Safyan and I would have provided input in deciding which essays to send to each media outlet or blogger.

Promotion

A final marketing strategy for editors during the substantive edit is to keep track of any promotional ideas that emerge from the book’s content, and that the marketer may not be aware of. One such idea is contests, which can be held to build an audience and generate interest leading up to a book’s launch. Tamar Weinberg cautions that they should not be launched until “you have already built some momentum and have a loyal following.”\(^{102}\) Arsenal has had much success hosting contests on its online home base, Arsenalia, and promoting them on its outposts, Facebook and Twitter. The company can leverage the loyalty of its outpost fans or readers to generate interest in new authors and titles or provide a second wave of buzz for backlist titles.\(^{103}\) During the substantive edit of *Vancouver Special*, when

\(^{103}\) During the summer of 2009, Arsenal ran contests to promote Natasha Kyssa’s new *Simply
we realized that the neighbourhood essays made up a more substantial portion of the book than planned, Arsenal decided to host a contest on the *Vancouver Special* website inviting readers to share stories of their Vancouver neighbourhoods. The contest ran throughout January 2010, and the winner, chosen by Demers, received a signed copy of the book plus a photographic print by Emmanuel Buenviaje. The promotion successfully drew readers to the *Vancouver Special* website and encouraged their participation. Using analytics, Arsenal could see that readers discovered the contest from its promotion on Demers’ Twitter feed, Arsenal’s blog, Facebook and Twitter feeds, as well as from other blogs that promoted the contest. In his blog post announcing the winner, Demers wrote,

> First of all, I want to thank you for your thoughtful, sometimes sleazy, always wonderful reminiscences of our fair city. I don’t think we could have hoped for such outstanding entries if we’d held this contest in Toronto [hold for audience applause]. Choosing the winner was a difficult task, because in a way, you’re all winners… because you don’t live in Toronto [hold again for audience applause, laughter, high-fiving]

> Honourable mentions go to the cheek-biting story and the raccoon/hooker story. When choosing first place, however, I came down to two choices, the difference between them being that one was overwhelmingly familiar to me, and the other totally foreign.

> Meghan’s walk through Strathcona is an immediately relatable experience for me—whenever my wife and I are heading downtown and have time to walk from our place on the East side, we go through Strathcona, a truly historic Vancouver neighbourhood which, as Meghan made clear, is alive with new discoveries. On the other hand, I have never witnessed Melodie’s Opera Man. But in the research period leading up to my writing *Vancouver Special*, I put a call out to my facebook friends asking whom they would like to see interviewed for the book. A huge number wrote back that I should interview this opera guy, whom I had never heard of, much less seen.

*Raw Living Foods Detox Manual* and Ivan E. Coyote’s backlist titles.
In the interest of acknowledging just how much there is to learn about Vancouver, even when we think we know every corner and alleyway of our city, I’d like to award the free, SIGNED (if you can believe it!) copy of *Vancouver Special* to the Opera Man stalker, Melodie. Congratulations on the opportunity you’ve just been given to read my wonderful, wonderful book.104

Like other social media tools, the contest served as a platform for Demers to interact with readers by engaging with the writing they submitted and acknowledging the role his friends and extended online community played in shaping the content of *Vancouver Special*.

The marketing of *Vancouver Special* consisted of traditional print and in-person marketing alongside an extensive online and social media campaign. This approach allowed Arsenal Pulp Press to connect Demers with local readers, reach the disparate niche audiences the title would appeal to, and capitalize on the company’s and Demers’ existing online communities. Three months after the book’s release, it had been reviewed or excerpted in the *Georgia Straight*, the *Tyee*, *WestEnder*, Beyond Robson (blog), *Vancouver Review*, *re:place Magazine*, *Vancouver is Awesome* (blog), *Discorder*, *thecommentary.ca*, *the Vancouver Sun*, and the national edition of the *Globe and Mail*. The book trailer created by Demers’ colleagues at *The CityNews List* had been viewed on YouTube 466 times as of March 2010, while contests run through *VancouverSpecialBook.com*, Facebook, and Twitter had encouraged interaction between Demers and his readers. The marketing efforts of Arsenal Pulp and Demers have generated “a lot of attention since [the book’s] publication.

last November,”

which has continued through 2010, when *Vancouver Special* was shortlisted for the Hubert Evans Non-Fiction Prize at the B.C. Book Prizes.

The publication of *Vancouver Special* required Arsenal Pulp Press to tackle the three C’s of online marketing: conversation, collaboration, and community. The author, editors, and marketers worked together throughout the development, editing, and marketing of the book in order to create content, discover new audiences, and interact with readers through real-world and online channels. Their collaborative approach contributed to the success of *Vancouver Special*, and looking forward, Arsenal Pulp has established a strong base from which to develop and launch future “city” books.

The first chapter of this report describes the setting and pressures that led to the development and publication of *Vancouver Special*. These pressures include the challenges of producing niche and regional titles as bookstore hand selling disappears and purchasing decisions become increasingly computerized and centralized by national chain bookstores. Chapter two explores the editing process at Arsenal Pulp Press, a small, independent Canadian publisher. The developmental and substantive editing of *Vancouver Special* indicates that the editorial process is shifting toward a greater emphasis on in-house development and collaboration between departments. The editor is an increasingly critical player in the marketing of titles as online marketing (and the original and repurposed content it requires) is undertaken well before a title is launched. The third chapter describes the influence online and social media marketing has had on editors. It details marketing tasks carried out by editors during the acquisition, development, and substantive editing of *Vancouver Special*. These tasks demonstrate a marketing transition toward developing relationships and interacting with readers instead of broadcasting marketing material to them. Examples of this transition at Arsenal Pulp are contests and promotions that take place on Facebook and Twitter, as well as Arsenalia (the Arsenal Pulp Press blog), which encourages interaction between the publisher, its authors, and its readers. Online and social media marketing focuses on community building rather than advertising, on sharing content rather than simply stimulating sales.
New media, especially tools with interactive aspects, have altered many publishing processes and roles. This report has shown that the role of acquisitions and substantive editors has become more intertwined with marketing roles as it becomes increasingly important for authors to connect with their readers after a book is launched. Acquisitions editors must assess an author’s ability and willingness to take part in online marketing campaigns and determine whether manuscripts are best suited to a web or print format; substantive editors keep track of keywords, identify material for online excerpts and reviews, and contribute promotional ideas that stem from a book’s content. The additional overlap of editorial and marketing tasks requires editors to think about a book’s audience in greater detail. Once an intended audience (or audiences) has been identified, editors need to consider where these readers learn about and buy books, how they prefer to read, what cross-marketing opportunities may be available within a publisher’s list, and which online tools will most effectively make readers aware of an individual title.

The value of substantive editing has not diminished, but has shifted to include more developmental work on concepts and outlines as more titles are developed in-house. The “editorial relationship,” previously between editor and author, may be headed toward a more direct reader-author relationship as the publishing process becomes more transparent. Readers want to interact with the authors of the books they purchase, and the editor’s job may include identifying ways to facilitate that connection, during and after a book’s publication. It is not yet clear what effect this author-reader interaction will have on new original work, reader expectations, or book sales.
Publishers have found that the traditional one-way communication marketing models are no longer working: fewer authors are embarking on multi-city tours, choosing instead to reach out to and interact with readers online, and newspaper or magazine ads and reviews may carry less weight as periodical sales fall. Both large and small publishing houses are scrambling to stay on top of new online marketing tools, especially social media platforms, and we may see future editorial processes shaped by the increasing overlap between editorial and marketing.
APPENDIXES
Early summer, 2009
Vancouver book ideas
Five Main Elements
- Whole-timeline essays
These would be longer essays looking at themes that have been with the city for all or most of its history. [E.g.: multi-culturalism, immigration and anti-Asian racism (staying the same — public safety, hygiene, gambling, assimilation — except inversing rich/poor); traffic (start with 1907 footage to Georgia viaduct opposition to bus strike); Vanarchism and political radicalism (from IWW to Robeson concert to DOA to Jaggi Singh and APEC); sports (from the Millionaires and the Canucks/Lions to failed attempts at franchises like the Voodoo and the Ravens to the Giants stepping in in the face of expensive Canucks tickets)]

- Mini-Essays and write-ups
These would be shorter, punchier essays, leaning more toward write-ups; including, for instance, write-ups about food in Vancouver (usually starting with a specific example to get into something more general; so, start with Naam sesame fries vs. Bo Kong Dim Sum, then get into vegetarianism in Vancouver); local celebrities (growing up in Burnaby tragic (Terry) Fox vs. (Happy) Michael J. Fox, then the latter becomes tragic too, start with personal anecdote about cookies); neighbourhood write-ups (Little India and how there’s more white people at All-India Sweets, brown at Himalaya)

- Interviews
There would be transcriptions of interviews with important citizens who aren’t necessarily celebrities. Examples: Todd Wong, Sid Tan, Bonnie Beckwoman, Uncle Fatih, Jack O’Dell, Sumera Thobani, etc. Photos would be included

- Info sidebars
These would be fairly straightforward info boxes a la ‘Vancouver Book of Everything,’ maybe set up like Mark Leier’s sidebars in Rebel Life

- Stand-up comedy excerpts
These would be italicized excerpts from Vancouver stand-up comedians; takes on Vancouver (e.g. Graham Clark’s jokes about the bus, Paul Bae’s joke about hoping traffic accidents aren’t caused by Asians, Alicia Robin’s joke about earthquake body-ID and Lululemon)
APPENDIX B: DEVELOPMENTAL EDITING NOTES FROM
SUSAN SAFYAN, MARCH 2009

Vancouver book ideas
- political/historical/civic
  - Whole-timeline essays
    - 1907 footage to Georgia Viaduct opposition to bus strike
  - Vanarchism and political radicalism (from IWW to Robeson concert to DOA to Jaggi Singh and APEC)
  - sports (from the Millionaires and the Canucks/Lions to failed attempts at franchise like the Voodoos and the Ravens to the Giants stepping in in the face of expensive Canucks tickets)

Mini-Essays and write-ups
- Interviews
  - These would be transcriptions of interviews with important citizens who aren’t necessarily celebrities.
  - Examples: Todd Wong, Sid Tan, Bonnie Beekwoman, Uncle Fatih, Jack O’Dell, Sunera Thobani, etc.
  - Photos would be included

Info sidebars
- These would be fairly straightforward info boxes: a la “Vancouver Book of Everything,” maybe set up like Mark Leier’s sidebars in Rebel Life

Stand-up comedy excerpts
- These would be italicized excerpts from Vancouver stand-up comedians’ takes on Vancouver (e.g., Graham Clark’s joke about the bus: Paul Bae’s joke about hoping traffic accidents aren’t caused by Asians, Alicia Tobin’s joke about earthquake body-ID and Lululemon)

...
Hi Charlie,

Here, for your approval, is the edited manuscript for *Vancouver Special*. I had a great time reading and editing the essays—they’re intelligent, well written, and, obviously, funny. Many paragraphs were shared around the office after one of us was caught laughing aloud. Also attached to this email is a copy of the style sheet, which lists spelling, grammatical, and other stylistic conventions compiled during the editing. Please return the final, approved edited manuscript by or before 28 August 2009, but feel free to send the essays back in small batches as you complete them.

As I mentioned in a previous email, the editing has been done using Word’s “track changes.” Please ensure you have this toggled on when you open the document so you can see the comments and questions in the balloons in the right-hand margin. If you make any additional changes or corrections, also make sure that Track Changes is turned on before you do so—thank you. Please don’t “accept” or “reject” the Track Changes—if you want a word stetted that we’ve deleted, for example, you can note that in a comment box or insert a note in the text. Please go over each page very carefully, checking all the editing (including checking for editorial glitches) and doing any rewording, updating, fine-tuning, and finalizing of your manuscript. You will also see two typesetting codes, [small caps] and [end small caps], for the designer. Please double and triple-check the spelling of all names, personal and group, and note any of these changes on the style sheet.

As we discussed when you were here on Tuesday, there is no major substantive work that needs to be done! The majority of changes are grammatical, but I have also suggested some rewordings that will enhance the clarity and flow of sentences. In a few essays, I have made more substantive suggestions, such as expanding on an idea, moving a paragraph up or down to guide the reader, or reworking information that appears in other essays. The suggestions are also flagged here for you to refer to.

False Creek

Per the discussion on Tuesday, the Yaletown essay has been renamed “False Creek.” With that change, I have suggested starting the essay with paragraph four, which begins “Each on its own shore of False Creek, Yaletown and
Granville Island/False Creek South are like half-siblings born of very, very different fathers.” Following this, the essay has been organized to keep the Yaletown paragraphs together and the Granville Island paragraphs together. (Yaletown first, so the concluding paragraph still circles back to the phrase “That neighbourhood is going to be the new Yaletown.”)

Davie Village

So many of the observations here are spot-on. However, the use of the words “fags” and “faggiest” raised a flag. Because two members of your immediate family are gay, you are admittedly closer to the gay community than many people; but not being a part of it yourself, we wondered about the sensitivity of using the f-word. Similarly, the insinuation that members of the Bach Choir were intrinsically gay in “Rich People” may be a stretch for some readers.

Crime and Chinatown

These essays both describe Chris Mathieson’s Sins of the City tour. I have suggested concentrating that content in “Crime” by moving paragraphs over from “Chinatown” or vice versa. You can then reference from one to the other. It may be worthwhile to looks at the essays side-by-side, and then decide where you feel the information is most complementary.

First Nations

The tone here less immediate than other essays in the book. I think in your worry about “getting it right” and not offending anyone, it’s lost some of the personality and bite that comes through so well in others, like “Moving Around” or “Vanarchism.” To inject some of that personality, please consider adding three or four short paragraphs addressing issues you feel comfortable weighing in on. I’ve suggested two spots in the text where it might be appropriate to expand on the Gustafsen Lake Sundancers and give a personal take on the 2010 Games. Two other ideas you might consider are the Nisga’a treaty (although that’s not specifically a Vancouver issue, there is a large Nisga’a population here) and fishing (rights, salmon populations …) If you need something to get started, here’s a link an article about a Native/non-Native clash on the Fraser River just last week: http://www.cbc.ca/canada/british-columbia/story/2009/08/18/bc-native-fishing-confrontation-fraser-river.html
As the turnaround on these edits is so quick, don’t worry about permissions, marketing, or any of the website content until after editing is complete. We’ll be here to help with that afterward. Please get in touch with either me or Susan if you have any questions.

Best,
Michelle
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arsenal Pulp Press, “About,” Arsenal Pulp Press,

——— “A Chat with Charles Demers,” Arsenalia,

——— “Brief History,” Arsenal Pulp Press,

——— “Secrets of the City,” Arsenal Pulp Press,

Askew, Kim. “Travel Publishers Take New Routes to Reach Consumers,” Quill & Quire, September 1, 2000,

Brogan, Chris. “How Outposts Improve Your Ecosystem,”


http://www.vancouverspecialbook.com/uncategorized/the-winner-is.

Editors’ Association of Canada. “Definitions,”
http://www.editors.ca/hire/definitions.html.

“Professional Editing Standards,”


