

Week two: Ch. 1 SC + Ch 2 of Einsohn

I really like Amy's writing style. Even though Ch. 1 is a dense chapter, a lot to think about, it doesn't push me away. She counts out what I need to think about so I can track it in my notes.

Yes, let's go for 4Cs: clarity, coherency, consistency, correctness. I've thought a lot about all of these things. But wow, easy to say, hard to do, eh? And in different ways. Clarity and coherency require talking to others about one's work, or at least thinking about how others read our writing. Consistency is a matter of focus and time, cross-checking, or using a style sheet. Correctness, well, I think that doesn't happen for writers for years.

Difficulty repeats:

- Slowing down (p. 4) -- I'm thinking about the grant I just wrote, and the last editing pass I made: at 4:30 am the day it was due. I wasn't exactly trying to be slow then!
- Getting out the style manual (p. 6) -- I harp on this all the time but I'll admit I get lazy and guess at times.
- "What copyeditors do not do" (p. 11) -- gawd. I have to restrain myself from over-editing all the time. Sure, sometimes I NEED to be a substantive editor and do a wholesale rewrite. But 15+ years into teaching I still have to read without a pencil or I mark little stuff when I should be thinking about big stuff, or vice-versa.
- Two pass editing (p. 17) -- more slow. But, I know, it's a better way.

Still. The examples here, short and long, help me focus on the tasks at hand. Good. I'll need it.

One thing I've got downpat: checklisting. It comes up over and over again here, building on the material in the preface. I'm very comfortable using lists to manage my work. So maybe I can do that for some of the things I find a challenge...

Week one: Prefaces to both books

Where do we (editors) fit in? I was struck by the ways both Amy and Carol positioned editors: for both, we are clearly at the bottom, with either readers or writers coming first. As a tech-comm person I'm a readers-centered kind of guy, but I can understand why writers might come first. They know the content, after all, so they should make decisions about how it's expressed. Readers get to make decisions about the content of the content, if that makes sense.

Sometimes Carol plays the "I'm just a little old editor" card a little too much for me. When she says "I'm surrounded and protected by knowledgeable and generous coworkers" (xi) I'm thinking, "*This ain't the Oscars, dear heart.*" Still, I get what she's saying—she's trying to be less of the expert-superhero-goddess who is a good editor because of talents bestowed on her from birth or whatever, and more of a craftsperson who learned along the way and is still learning by

consulting good reference books and following best practices like deferring to style manuals. Though her advice about relationships certainly isn't in the style manuals! That's one reason I really like her book. Even terminology. Not the "management" of traditional power structures but the "relationship" of understanding them as complex networks.