



readers'

CORNER

AV fall 2009 issue: kudos and a correction

Nicely done, but I have a tiny correction for the “Thirty years of editing” timeline that appears in the fall issue on pages 8–9. Last spring’s hilarious correspondence among several founding members revealed that we’re not quite agreed on the sequence and venues of some of the planning meetings. The first one, at Jane Springer’s, was indeed in 1979, but I’m certain it was earlier than “spring.” I recall driving down to her neighbourhood. The roads were slippery, and it was cold, cold. That’s not “spring” weather in Toronto. January or February is more likely.

The point wouldn’t be worth bothering about except that every timeline ever published becomes the gospel consulted when someone asks, “Didn’t we do X a few years ago? When and why?”

Lee d’Anjou

TO branch

Problèmes techniques

Je suis un membre votant de la section de la Capitale nationale et je ne peux avoir accès aux articles de *Voix Active* rédigés en anglais, par exemple le compte rendu sur le droit d’auteur au Canada, sans bien des «chichis»: effacer mon témoin www.editors.ca et ainsi perdre mon mot de passe.

Remarquez bien que j’ai eu à me battre avec le site de l’ACR pour trouver mon propre article, de sorte que ma critique ne porte pas sur les groupes linguistiques. C’est tout simplement technique. Dites-moi, qu’est-ce qui s’oppose à ce qu’il y ait une SIMPLE adresse internet,

disons, vers l’article de M^{me} Zanin... ou vers tous les autres? Doit-on protéger un secret d’État sur notre site? Voulons-nous que les locuteurs de nos langues nationales demeurent séparés, ou s’évitent, ou quoi? Cela laisse une impression très étrange de l’Association.

À mon sens, cela est absurde et peu pratique et frise le manque de professionnalisme, en ce sens que nos expériences en tant que réviseurs canadiens devraient pouvoir profiter à tous les autres réviseurs canadiens. C’est là une très importante façon de se perfectionner.

Une amélioration de l’accès internet à tous les articles en ligne de *Voix Active* serait très bien reçue.

Christian L’Écuyer

RCN

La rédaction regrette infiniment les problèmes que vous avez rencontrés sur le nouveau site Web VA en ligne/ AV Online. Comme vous le savez, l’un de nos objectifs est de faire de notre présence sur internet un complément des pages imprimées de Voix active/Active Voice, ce qui nous permet d’offrir plus de contenu aux lecteurs. Mais comme vous en avez fait l’expérience à votre corps défendant, nous avons quelque peu trébuché sur des difficultés de conception, de programmation et de mise en œuvre. Nous sommes heureux de signaler, toutefois, que le site du bulletin VA en ligne (www.reviseurs.ca/voixactive) et AV Online (www.editors.ca/activevoice) est maintenant opérationnel et que chaque article en ligne est accessible par un seul clic. Si d’aventure vous constatiez d’autres difficultés techniques en lisant VA en ligne/ AV Online, n’hésitez pas à nous interpeller. — La rédaction

Technical difficulties

I’m a voting member from the NCR branch, and I can’t access *Active Voice Online* articles written in English, say, the review on Canadian copyright, without a lot of fuss: if I erase the www.editors.ca cookie I lose my password.

I had to struggle my way through the ACR French site to find my own article, mind you, so this criticism is not about language groups. It’s simply technical. Tell me, what’s wrong with a SIMPLE URL, say, to Ms. Zanin’s article ... and to all the others? Is there a national secret to be safeguarded on this site? Or do we want to keep the people speaking our national languages separate, or to avoid each other, or what? This leaves a very awkward impression of the association.

In my opinion, that is nonsensical, impractical, and bordering on non-professional, in the sense that our experiences as Canadian editors should have the potential of benefiting all other Canadian editors. That’s one very important way of growing professionally.

If Internet access to all online articles of *Active Voice* could be improved, it would be greatly appreciated.

Christian L’Écuyer

NCR branch

Please accept our apologies for the problems you experienced on the new AV Online and VA en ligne websites. As you know, one of our goals at Active Voice/Voix active is to turn our Internet presence into an extension of our print pages, thus allowing us to offer more content to interested readers. But as you have experienced firsthand, we have had a few design and technical stumbles along the way. We’re pleased to report, however, that both AV Online (www.editors.ca/activevoice) and VA en ligne

(www.reviseurs.ca/voixactive) are now up and running, and each online article is accessible via a single click of the mouse. Please let us know if you experience any more difficulties with our websites. —Eds.

Too much protection? Why are we overusing the word “safety”?

In the '40s, '50s, and '60s, and maybe the '70s, kids who were protected the way most are protected today were called over-protected in the extreme. And it was predicted that any such kids would be childish crybabies, and in adulthood be unable to make their way in the real world, since they would never grow up. Many of us survived without being over-protected.

On a related note, “safety” used to be about not cutting off your hand with a chainsaw; now we

have “Internet safety” even though I’ve yet to see a knife come lunging out of my computer screen. Maybe “Internet *security*,” regarding the avoidance of phishing, scams, and predators, would be a better term for that.

But here’s the ultimate: we now have “cultural safety,” which would be a new politically correct term for sensitivity toward members of other cultures—a term chosen, perhaps, to emphasize the importance of such sensitivity. I guess it means that people of other cultures would be “safe” from being emotionally bruised by the norms and expectations, or insensitivities, of their “host” culture.

While I fully acknowledge the importance of (two-way) cultural sensitivity (we want to be welcoming and not insulting; welcomed and not insulted), surely this use of

“safety” dilutes the meaning of the word, doesn’t it? Doesn’t it make “chainsaw safety,” for example, somewhat of a Cinderella of terms? Doesn’t it make the dangers associated with using chainsaws, working near molten steel, or driving recklessly seem equivalent to an insult or an emotional bruise? This is akin to what’s happened to “awesome.” Now that word just means “nice,” “cool,” or “pretty”; it has lost its meaning of “inspiring awe.” Maybe I’m confused, but I thought “safety” was about mitigating or avoiding real physical danger.

Gary Lund
BC branch

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