




FALL

2016



Quill  
& Ink

**A Life of Variability**

The life of a freelance editor is often unpredictable, but it can be rewarding, exciting, and amazing. Here is some of what we experience on a day-to-day basis. **PAGE 2**

**On and On and On(to)**

When should you use *onto* instead of *on to*? Read these tips to help you choose! **PAGE 3**

**A Cup of Comfort and Community**

As fall settles in and we find ourselves indoors more often, it becomes even more important to make connections and feel warmth, both inside and out. **PAGE 4**



As of this issue, ScriptAcuity Studio has edited thirty million (30,000,000!) words. That equals five hundred (500) average-length novels edited over the course of seven years—or about 1.5 novels per week, each week, for seven years.

We love what we do!

# The Meanings of Fall

Fall has as many meanings as it has colors, scents, songs, and flavors.

Apple picking and its tantalizing resultant apple crisp, its fiery cinnamon tingling on your tongue. The spicy, dusty aromas of the leaves as they blaze out their final glory before their hosts snuggle in for their winter slumber. Orion winking into view, newly returned from his summertime stroll around the Southern Hemisphere, eager to once again shine his frosty light upon our part of the world. The scurrying little creatures of the forests and fields, rivers and ponds, planning and preparing and making snug and safe their winter homes. Piles of pumpkins and warmly colored squashes, shocks of cornstalks and smiling patchwork scarecrows gracing doorsteps and shops and town squares. The smoky sting of woodstoves and chimneys and cozy campfires warding off the chill of ever-earlier nightfalls. The hug of soft sweaters and fluffy socks.

Harvests. The crunch of the forest floor underfoot, foliage eddying on sidewalks and in the elbows of buildings along nippy, wind-swept streets.

The serenading of journeying geese high overhead.

Your breath ghosting as you laugh in the sun, cheeks pink.

While fall is a deeply sensorial time and often a bustling, swirling, industrious time of preparation and celebration, it also often offers a contemplative opportunity to observe the transitions around us—to slow down, take pause, and give thanks for the wonders in our midst. Especially while entrenched in such awe-inspiring natural transformation, we have occasion to recommit to cultivating community and to offering comfort to ourselves and others—to extend a genial hand and welcome someone to rest at our fires, to offer kindness to others. To remind us that in fortifying one another, we also fortify ourselves. To remember that, ultimately, we are all in this together.

What does fall mean to you?

—S&C—

AUTUMN IS A SECOND SPRING WHEN EVERY LEAF IS A FLOWER.  
— Albert Camus

## Quill & Ink

FALL 2016

*Quill & Ink* (quill-ink.com) is written, photographed, designed, and published seasonally by ScriptAcuity Studio.

### Behind the Name

- The quill represents creativity and self-expression, in the written word and also beyond it. Because the inky octopus utilizes a wide variety of tools in the course of its day and is associated with such attributes as adaptability, flexibility, diversity, focus, intuition, and transformation—among others—it thus seemed a fitting symbol for ScriptAcuity Studio.
- A little disclaimer: all thoughts, opinions, expressions, and comments are simply our perspectives.



Visit ScriptAcuity Studio at [scriptacuity.com](http://scriptacuity.com).

Contact us by e-mail at [editors@scriptacuity.com](mailto:editors@scriptacuity.com), or call us at 802.578.6200.

Copyright © 2016 ScriptAcuity Studio. All Rights Reserved.

# A Life of Variability

We're often asked, "What's it like to be an editor?"

A day in the life of a manuscript editor can be quite varied. We have edited everything from computer manuals to children's books and gritty poetry to science fiction novels. We have edited memoirs, psychological thrillers, religious materials, mythology, political propaganda, photography books, cookbooks, and much more. This is one of the many delightful aspects of our work because it offers exposure to a wealth of material that we might otherwise not consciously seek out. It's like accepting a generous invitation to dinner at someone's house, and the host serves you something you'd never heard of or otherwise would have considered trying, and when you dive in, you are pleasantly surprised.

Let's pause here to discuss the term *editing*, because it can (and does) encompass quite a number of different roles in this context. In the book publishing world alone—to say nothing of the worlds of newspapers or journals, and to say nothing of video editing or photo editing or audio editing—there are acquisition editors, developmental editors, production editors, managing editors, content editors, copy editors, line editors, and proofreaders. Some of these roles have alternative names, and often many of these roles are combined and/or have significant overlaps depending upon the publisher and its organizational structure and procedures.

When we specifically refer to editing in the context of our work,

we mean not only copyediting and/or line editing (sometimes referred to as *mechanical editing*) but also developmental editing, in which we conduct a critique of the manuscript, offering suggestions for strengthening it. Sometimes we rewrite sections or anything else that is requested. We also write book jacket copy and assorted other copy and occasionally coach writing.

The conditions of the manuscripts when we receive them also vary widely; sometimes we average about fifteen pages per hour on the first-round edit of a manuscript, and at other times, we may only average two or three pages; there are as many unique levels of mastery and understanding of how our written words go together as there are writers—and this, too, makes our work highly variable, interesting, and challenging.

Sometimes we simultaneously have many manuscripts—from multiple publishers and all with different due dates—in various states of completion, and at other times, we may have only one or two. Often we are concurrently working with more than one production and/or managing editor and with more than one house style and set of expectations. We have clients across a myriad of time zones—in fact, over the years, we have edited manuscripts sent from a host of countries across five continents.

And then there is the variability of our working environment itself. While we generally work at our cheerful dining room table, which is surrounded by windows over-

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 3**



## On and On and On(to)

Knowing when to use the correct words is always tricky, even more so when it depends on how those words function in the sentence. Choosing between two similar-sounding nouns or verbs (e.g., *compliment* and *complement*) is one thing, but what about when the same word or similar words are used as different parts of speech? In the case of this article, we'll analyze the words *on* (both the adverb and preposition) and *onto* (preposition). Fortunately, the *Chicago Manual of Style* (*CMS*) is there to help elucidate, especially *CMS* 5.220, which discusses the finer points of word usage.

As *CMS* advises, it's the sense of the sentence that will help determine which word should be used. To begin with, *onto* implies motion, where *on* does not:

- He climbed *onto* the roof.

- He is now *on* the roof.

But when *on* is part of the verbal phrase, *on* is treated as an adverb. Consider the case of the verbal phrase *hold on* (which does indeed have its own entry in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, eleventh edition):

- He held *on to* the ledge (verb = *hold on*).

And compare this to the previous example:

- He climbed *onto* the roof (verb = *climb*).

A trick that many use is applying a preposition before the word *on* to help determine if it is *on* or *onto*. If adding *up* (or a similar preposition) makes sense in the sentence, *onto* is most likely the correct word:

- He climbed *up on* the roof => correct => He climbed *onto* the roof.
- He held *up on* his hat => incorrect => He held *on to* his hat.

And it's possible that both *on to* and *onto* might appear in the same sentence.

- He put his hat *onto* his head and held *on to* it.

And let's not forget that the preposition *onto* also means "in or into a state of awareness about":

- I'm *onto* you.

Finally, note that there are other similar verbs and verb phrases, such as *turn* and *turn on*:

- They were turned *on to* new ideas (i.e., They gained appreciation of new ideas).
- They turned *onto* the correct street (i.e., They turned and were then on the correct street).

While this does not cover all cases, all instances, and all verb phrases, it does cover one of the more common occurrences you may see. ▪

### LIFE FROM PAGE 3

looking our gardens and offering gorgeous morning and afternoon natural light, we also avail ourselves of the opportunity to work from the peaceful comfort of our sunny patio amid fluttering butterflies and the serenade of our neighbors' free-range chicken choir, which frequently struts its way across our backyard, much to our amusement. We can also seek out a cozy fireplace in a beautiful library in which to stage our mobile office or even a pristine mountaintop or a deserted stretch of nationally protected seashore for as long as our laptop batteries hold out.

And then there's the work we do when we aren't on our computers at all. We frequently hash out thoughts and ideas during leisurely nature walks or while driving around to-

gether—whether it's around town running errands or on much longer distances to visit family or for an occasional few days away. Unsurprisingly, some of our most inspired work has occurred during seaside strolls or while quietly marveling at brilliant sunsets.

As freelancers, we also experience significant variability in our income and in the schedule in which we receive payment from assorted clients. Then, too, there is the fact that what we earn is directly related to the number, size, condition, and turnaround time of the manuscripts with which we are entrusted and also to the ebbs and flows of the industry in general; there are times of the year when the number of projects being juggled by publishing houses dwindles and other times when there is a profusion of man-

uscripts simultaneously requiring attention. The unpredictability of this aspect of our lifestyle requires excellent planning and discipline.

It would, therefore, be difficult to dispute that the life of an editor and especially of a freelance editor is diverse, dynamic, and variable. It is also an exciting, liberating, and often adventurous existence.

We love what we do, and we are grateful every day that we are editors! ▪



# A Cup of Comfort and Community

We laughingly shook out our umbrellas and hung them to dry while exchanging neighborly greetings with Karen and Melissa. Safe from the cloudburst's drenching clutches on an early fall morning, we eagerly made our gourmand selections and then snuggled into a delightfully puffy-pillow-strewn couch to sip our brew, nibble our treats, and savor some bright and cheerful conversation in direct contrariety to the streaming rain beyond.

And all was well in our little world.

It is little wonder that Catalyst Coffee Bar in nearby Saint Albans enjoys bountiful rave reviews and a great deal of positive attention. Self-proclaimed coffee aficionados herald the exquisite quality of the siphon-style coffee and the impressive knowledge of the baristas. Aesthetics enthusiasts regale the decor with its cozy nooks, comfy couches, and ubiquitous artwork. Practicalists endorse the steadfast Wi-Fi and many power outlets for all their technological requisites. Delighted clientele exalt the baristas' brilliant smiles and unfailingly inviting, welcoming, and soothing amiability.

And while all these elements are unequivocally veridical and synergistically unify to create a truly spectacular coffee shop, it is the last of these that compels us to persevere in our faithful pilgrimages. After all, we can brew coffee, feel snug and cozy, and run our computers from home. But there is no way to replicate the greater sense of community and connectedness that Karen and her crew so thoughtfully create and generously foster at Catalyst.

To say that we feel welcome is indeed accurate but in no way does the experience sufficient justice.

Catalyst nurtures a sense of coziness and comforting familiarity; we are greeted by name and with genuine smiles, we are asked about events in our lives, and we are warmly introduced to others who are similarly enjoying coffee and companionship. Resultantly, we regularly interact with people we've met there and are getting to know some of them as a result. Catalyst encourages community building by hosting yoga workshops, artist mixers, readers' and writers' groups, and special events, and the owners and staff envision an active social and performance

space there, as well.

With the nip of autumn solidly established and winter's isolation peeking at us from around the craggy trunks of increasingly barren trees, we are especially grateful to have such a restorative place to rest and reconnect. Piping cups of world-class coffee, a soothing environment, and conversations with fantastic people fuse to create a warm blanket of community that help us feel snug regardless of climate or circumstance. ▀

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CATALYST AT  
[CATALYSTCOFFEEBAR.COM](http://CATALYSTCOFFEEBAR.COM).



