Pro Se Style Guide

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Introduction

If you are receiving this vital instrument of editing, welcome to Pro Se Productions! In this text, you will find everything you'll need to be a successful Content Editor, Copy Editor, or Formatter for Pro Se. Starting with the basics, you'll be able to handle a manuscript with the ease of a master in just a few pages, running all three steps (or just one!) in order to create fine stories and books for future generations. You're part of the New Pulp Movement, so let's show them what you've got.

Ready, Set, Go!

Content Editing

A Preface:

When you are assigned as the Content Editor for a particular manuscript, the process starts with you. You're the first line of improvement to a soon-to-be Pro Se Novel. So with this position come several responsibilities that we will detail in the headings below.

You've got a fresh manuscript. So where to start?

The first thing you'll want to do is make sure the document is not corrupted and it is complete. Scroll through it, looking for any odd characters, any strange missing chunks of text or large sections that are formatted differently. Once that is done, there are three things you'll need to do so that this edit will go smoothly for you and the author. They are as follows:

- A quick cleanup. All Pro Se manuscripts should be formatted as follows:
  - o 12 Point Font
  - o Times New Roman
  - o 1" Margins
  - o .25 First Line Indents at the beginning of every new paragraph.
- Every Manuscript should be titled. In order to avoid confusion at a later date, make sure to have both the title of the manuscript, centered and bolded on the first page. Underneath that, put the author's name. The final product should look like this:

<div align="center">

The Pro Se Style Guide
by
Morgan Minor

</div>

- After that is complete, then save the file in this style: "**TitleContentEdit**" When you get done it should look like this: **TheProSeStyleGuideContentEdit.doc**

Once these three steps are completed, it's time to tear into the meat of what you're reading. And to do that, you've got to understand the manuscript before you can content edit. So what is content editing? Let's define it, Pro Se Style.

> **Content Editing: The process of reading, understanding and asking questions to enhance the content, plot and supporting details of a manuscript in order to improve both the enjoyment and variety of the reader.**

Now that you know exactly what you'll be doing, here's where to start!

Content Editing

As a content editor, you are responsible for analyzing the manuscript you've been assigned. There are several major points that you must look for when doing your first read through.

1. Continuity. Does Bob stay alive the entire story? Does he die on one page, and is mysteriously alive on another? This is a continuity issue that must be addressed.
2. The Pace and Flow. Does it move from scene to scene easily? What about the language? Is it jarring? Is it too long? Does everything happen at once? These are questions to help analyze the manuscript.
3. Timeline Continuity. Going from the past to the future can be boring sometimes. But going from the future, to the past, to the present and then back to the future is just silly.
4. Show, Don't tell. The reader will want to see what is going on, not be told all about it. Info dumps are detractors from good stories—we don't want a lot of information at once.
5. Be aware of Time. If it was 4:00 in the afternoon and then two paragraphs later it's midnight, well, that's a very fast rotation of the Earth, now isn't it?

Now that we know what we're looking for, this is how you notate your comments within the manuscript itself.

- Select the line or paragraph that you wish to draw attention to.

> Ex: "Wilson wandered aimlessly for days, but couldn't seem to find water. Up and down, around and around, all he could see was sky. But that didn't stop him. Oh no. There was water in the sky. And that's how he found Bubba."

After you select, change the font color to blue so that the author can then see which area you're referring to. After that is done, then type your comment in the body of the manuscript itself in red font, surrounded by parenthesis.

> Ex: "Wilson wandered aimlessly for days, but couldn't seem to find water. Up and down, around and around, all he could see was sky. (Wouldn't he be seeing the ground too?) But that didn't stop him. Oh no. There was water in the sky. And that's how he found Bubba."

Once your edits are made, you will then email it directly to the author, who's information will be provided for you at the beginning of your work. Also, you should inform the DCO/Editor-in-Chief that the edits have gone to the author so that they're able to timeline the editing. Once that is done, the author will then send back a retort or acceptance, and you will then go back through the manuscript and above process until all blue/red marks are settled and removed. The manuscript, now labeled/saved as **TitleContentEdited.doc** is then sent back to the Director of Corporate Operations to move into Copy Editing, which is our next step!

Copy Editing

A Preface:

Once Content Editing has been completed, it moves on to you, the Copy Editor. There are a great number of responsibilities that you as a Copy Editor must be aware of, which will be explained below!

Now that this manuscript has been edited for content, it comes to you for clean up!

Start from the beginning! Pro Se has several requirements for a manuscript when it heads for formatting. On the very first page, the title page, this information should be listed as follows:

Name of Manuscript
By
Author Name

The name of the manuscript should be bolded, and all following information should be plain text. The entire work should be in 12 Point font Times New Roman. This should be at the top of page one, and the body of the manuscript following below it, with one line space in between.

Name of Manuscript
By
Author Name

Bob Farrow was an interesting little man. He never quite understood how his life got this way—nor, how his wife had gotten so mean….

Once the title is corrected, move on to the body of the text. Your role here is to look for anything that would catch the reader's eye. Specific examples include:

- Misspellings. Look for obvious misspellings of every day words. Cow should be spelled 'C-O-W', not 'cwo'.
- Missing words and Double Words. Read closely! The human brain has a tendency to fill it in when it's not there!
- Capitalization. Proper names, places and the first word in a sentence are always capitalized.
- Correct punctuation. Look for periods, exclamation marks, question marks, quotations, etc. If you have questions, please contact the Director of Corporate Operations.
- Overuse of punctuation. Triple and quadruple use of punctuation is both distracting and unprofessional, and used only in extreme cases. (i.e. "What?!?!!")

- Commas. In Pulp fiction, commas are used sparingly. This is a genre specific mode. However, they can be used to separate run-on sentences.
- Run-On sentences. In Pulp fiction, run-on sentences are considered acceptable if used correctly. However, for Pro Se, no more than two individual ideas can be included in a single sentence. (i.e. Incorrect: "Walter waddled down the road, eager to find food, because that's what he was out here to do for days and days."
Correct: "Walter waddled down the road, eager to find food. That was because he was out here to do that for days and days.")
- Fragments. In Pulp fiction, these are used to create stylistic rhythms in the reader's head. These are called beats. They are a physical punch within a story, and are used for great and dramatic effect. However, entire paragraphs should not be made up of only fragments. The acceptable amount within any given paragraph is 3 to 4 per 10 lines.

When reading through the manuscript, comments and corrections should be made in a fashion that they are recognizable to the author. In Pro Se fashion, the way to do this is shown in an example below:

> "Lucas had never seen a ~~wmoan~~ woman quite like Joan. Red haired and blue
> eyed, she made him stop everything he was doing and stare. <u>"</u>Dang Marie!"
> he thought sheepishly. "Don't wear that red dress!"

For misspellings and sentences that should be altered, red font with a strikethrough is the proper way to show you want it removed. To add, or enhance a manuscript, red font with the desired wording is the key. For punctuation changes, red font with an underline so it can be recognized—punctuation is hard to see sometimes!

Once you've completed your edit of the manuscript, you will then email it to the author who will accept or reject your edits. Once you both come to an agreement with the changes in the manuscript, as the copy editor, it is your job to remove the artifacts or 'edit marks' left by the editing process. This includes strikethroughs, underlines, red/blue colored wording, etc. Also, you are required to make sure it fits the guidelines as stated at the beginning of this document! As a review they are:

- .25 paragraph indents
- Times New Roman
- 1" Margins
- 12 Point font
- Single line spaces between paragraphs
- All section breaks should be denoted by five asterisks (*****)
- All chapter headings will be centered and bolded

Pro Se Specific Guidelines

Pulp has its own style and has been around for a long time. There are specific attributes to Pulp Fiction, and Pro Se follows certain guidelines to bring our works into the New Pulp era, giving them a modern spin!

- Serial Commas. At Pro Se, we do serial commas as follows:
  - o "William loved cars, girls and money." Not "William loved cars, girls, and money."
- Hyphens.
  - o Hyphens will be eliminated at every possible point. Realistically, we will only condone their use when used between sentences. "William loved cars, girls and money—there was nothing he couldn't buy."

- Italics and Bolding and Capitalizations.
  - If Bolds or Italics are present in the manuscript, they remain untouched unless discussed with the Director of Corporate Operations.
  - Capitalized words should be left alone as well. "LISTEN!" "LOOK!" etc. should remain that way unless discussed with Director of Corporate Operations.
- British versus American Spellings. As we are an American based publisher, we will only allow Americanized English spellings, i.e. Color versus Colour, etc.
- Proper names. "Yes sir," is the proper way to use sir in regular day-to-day conversation. If "Sir or Ma'am" is the only name the character is called, then it will always be capitalized. In regular every day conversation, it will always be lowercase.

Congrats! You're done with Pro Se's Style Guide!

All information contained here is both for your benefit as well as the author, an easy to follow guide to make editing as painless as possible.

For any further questions, please refer to the Director of Corporate Operations.

Thanks for reading!

To All Who Read This,

First, thank You for the work you are about to do. Some of you have been writers and editors with us already, while some of you are putting your skills to work for Pro Se for the first time. Regardless of which, I can't tell you how important you are to the creative and production process that is what Pro Se Productions is all about.

Please read through this guide and follow it as closely as possible. One of the important things for any Publisher to do is to establish clear and consistent guidelines across the board so that there is uniformity to not only behind the scenes procedures, but also to the final look of the books we produce.

Writers, consider these in addition to the submission guidelines that you have discussed with Morgan and/or found on the webpage. The more you can observe what is in this guide, the faster the editing process becomes. Editors, if you have additions you feel need to be made to this guide, please send them to Morgan. She and I will consider them and will issue updates if necessary.

I really cannot say it enough, but thank You all,

Tommy Hancock

Pro Se Productions Editor in Chief