

Confessions of an Acquisitions Editor



by Phoebe Collins

Did you ever stop to think about that crucial first person who will read your submission? If you're like most writers, the answer is probably not. Your attention is focused upon the agent or editor to whom, after much research, you've taken great care to address your letter. It's understandable that you assume that the name on the envelope equals the hands into which your submission will go. Right?

Not necessarily. There's a "bouncer" to get past. Forget visions of grandeur regarding publishers, *New York Times* book reviews, and Pulitzers. Instead, focus on one goal at this point: getting past the bouncer.

While I'm the last person any self-respecting nightclub owner would hire to guard the door, let alone inspect the line behind the velvet rope—I'd just let in everyone—my ruthless, quick-read analytical skills are prized in other quarters. And, regardless of what you may have heard, my name is not Jennifer and I am not twenty-two! As a card-carrying member of the tribe known as acquisitions editors, I'm the one who