



AUTHORSHIP

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SUMMER 2024

Editor's Say



Summer is here and we are excited about our Summer Issue. We have the perfect article to kick off our "BREAKING INTO PRINT" stories but we are going to need more to continue this column so why not add your story to this one? It really couldn't be easier, any length works. Send it via e-mail or trust the post office. Hey, even if this story in Authorship is your first break into print that's okay. That might be an interesting story.

A large portion of this issue is devoted to editing and there's an excellent reason for that. Sorry if you think I'm getting on my soapbox again, I am. The story goes like this: recently I was given a first novel. I'm sure the author's father thought he was giving me a pearl of great price. This parent is not a writer. He also announced that his child had self-published the book

and hadn't paid any pricey editor to "fix" the book. Sigh!

Not wishing to belabor the point, I won't enumerate the numerous problems with the book but will cover a few. First in less than ten pages, the author presented a totally unbelievable scenario. This book is supposed to be a romance but the heroine swears like a displaced truck driver (that maybe an insult to hard-working truck drivers) using the four letter "f" bomb whenever the author felt it might disgust the reader.

When I was teaching writing classes I used to stress "NEVER stop your reader!" they might not start back up. By page 47, I had stopped five

times and did not start again. This person is not an NWA member so they won't understand why one of those "pricey" editors might have really helped with this book.

As a professional writer, the best thing you can do for your work is hand it off to a professional. No matter how many times you have read your story, a fresh set of eyes will only improve your story.

Take the time. Make the investment. Hire an editor!

I hope you have a wonderful summer!

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A not-for-profit corporation founded in 1937. Copyright © 2023. NWA general membership \$65.00 U.S. funds, open to all writers; qualified professional membership \$85.00 U.S.; student memberships (must be accompanied by photocopy of student ID) \$35.00 U.S.; sustaining membership for individuals or companies \$250. Please add \$25.00 outside of U.S. for additional postage. Subscriptions \$20.00 U.S. includes postage and handling in U.S. Outside U.S. please add \$5.00 for extra mailing fees. Articles are considered for publication and may be edited and/or condensed. Query first with SA-SE.



A proofreader offers a last check of the small errors in spelling, punctuation, spacing, etc, prior to the manuscript, article, ad duplicate, or content being published.

For any light to medium copyediting, the editor will correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and issues with syntax; will ensure that singular pronouns represent singular nouns and plural pronouns, plural nouns; will put the assignment in proper manuscript format; will standardize records, bibliographies, and research lists; and can make style decisions predicated on the Chicago Manual of Style. The editor will manage endless details that a lot of authors don't realize, but web publishers are interested in.

All of that may result in an almost total rewrite of the book. Furthermore in doing the duties of simple backup and editing, a good editor can take a dynamic role in initiating changes.

In much edit work, phrases will be refined and reworded to boost clarity and to be rid of repetition, clumsy wording, or an overuse of passive words. Facts are checked out and corrected, parts may be rearranged if possible, and subheads and section titles might be reworked to make sure they are catchier, funnier, or even more remarkable. If, in their writing, writers sometimes become argumentative, cite personal ideas as facts, use too much slang words where it is improper, or have a blind place about when their firmness is no more "reader-friendly," a good editor can make suggestions to cure these problems. In various ways, a skilled editor will explain problems the writer has overlooked and can help writers find their tone of voice, refine their perspective, and bring their manuscripts to a far more perfect condition.

Once you've polished and honed your final draft to the best of your abilities, your manuscript will be equipped for editing. The editing addresses development of content, composition, style, and grammar, including spelling, punctuation, and style selections. Editing can be light or heavy or in between. It may be copy editing and enhancing, stylistic brand editing, substantive editing and enhancing, or structural editing and enhancing, or a combo thereof. You'll likely do lots of revisions following the first editing and enhancing pass, and you'll want a second pass of editing and enhancing done. Editing is performed in MS Terms by using a markup feature called monitor

by Brian J. White

changes. Keep the formatting as easy as possible for your editor. 12-point font, one-inch margins, and twice or 1.5 spacing. No elegant stuff at this time, please; your editor is focusing on your articles, not the looks of the publication. And don't be concerned about adding web page figures to your lot of material; these changes are made following the interior web page layout being performed.

Proofreading is not editing and enhancing; it's not about content, writing style, or grammar. A proofreader talks about varying elements from those an editor. Brand, paragraph, and margin spacing; widows and orphans; site numbers corresponding the stand of articles and index; position and reliability of headings, subheadings, headers, and footers; bad expression breaks or end-of-line breaks; reliability of photography captions and desks, charts, and results. Any typographical errors or other mistakes that might have been missed. In addition, it catches residual mistakes a first go round of editing and enhancing may have over looked, or new mistakes the writer may have added during the revision process.



A well-crafted novel requires more than just grammatical accuracy; it demands a compelling narrative and well-developed characters. This article delves into the distinct roles of copy editors, story editors, and book doctors in the realm of fiction, highlighting their unique contributions to the literary world.

Summary

In the world of fiction, the roles of copy editors, story editors, and book doctors are crucial yet distinct. While copy editors focus on grammatical accuracy, story editors enhance narrative depth and character development. Book doctors provide a final holistic review. This article explores these roles, emphasizing the importance of each in creating a compelling novel. Discover why developmental editing often takes precedence over copy editing and how these roles complement each other to produce a captivating story.

Understanding the Roles

Copy Editor

A copy editor's primary responsibility is to ensure grammatical accuracy, consistency, and clarity in a manuscript. They focus on:

- Correcting spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors.
- Ensuring consistency in style and formatting.

Clarifying ambiguous sentences.

Story Editor

A story editor, also known as a developmental editor, plays a pivotal role in shaping the narrative and characters. Their tasks include:

- Developing character nuances, contradictions, and core values.
- Enhancing the protagonist's backstory.
- Crafting multi-dimensional antagonists.
- Tying up subplots and story questions.
- Eliminating clichéd writing.
- Strengthening the setting to make it a vivid part of the story.

Making details crisp and clear to immerse readers in the scene.

Book Doctor

A book doctor provides a final, holistic review of the manuscript. They assess:

- The overall coherence of the story.
- The effectiveness of the ending.

The protagonist's ability to sustain reader interest over 300+ pages.

The Importance of Developmental Editing

Many novelists prioritize developmental editing over copy editing. A compelling story can make readers overlook minor grammatical errors, but flawless grammar cannot salvage a poorly constructed narrative. According to a survey by the Editorial Freelancers Association, 60% of authors believe developmental editing is crucial for their manuscripts ([source](#)).

Why Hire a Good Story Editor?

A marriage between fiction writing and story editing can create a phenomenal reading experience. Renowned writers like James Baldwin had exceptional editors such as Sol Stein, who was a novelist, editor, and publisher. Kathleen Krul, in her book "12 Keys to Writing Books That Sell," emphasizes the value of a good editor's vision. Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Toni Morrison also valued her editor's input, stating that "piercing knots in language and in ideas, assisting in the discovery of clarity, connections, illustrations, tone are what editing requires" ([source](#)).

(continued on page 5)

Writing the First Draft of a Story



If you are looking for a definitive guide to how to write a story, there isn't one.

But there are a few things that are true of the writing process for everyone. One of these things is the fact that editing and revising is what makes a story great. The rough draft is just the raw material. It doesn't have to be perfect or even nearly perfect. In fact, many successful writers admit that their first draft is usually no good at all.

In "Writing Fiction for Dummies", Randy Ingermanson and Peter Economy write, "many writers will tell you frankly that their first drafts are a crime against the humanities." In almost all cases, the real magic of the story does not emerge until after many revisions have been made. This is true even when it comes to the writing of professional writers. There are some writers who plan and outline meticulously, creating 50 or 100 page outlines before they begin to write. Their work tends to require fewer revisions, but even their rough drafts are pretty rough compared to the finished product.

Take off your editor's hat while you're waiting

Nobody's creative process is the same, so you need to identify what it is that will get you started, and more

importantly, get you to the end of your first draft. Perfectionism is a common obstacle. It can make you so afraid of writing something that's not good that you don't write anything at all. If this is your problem, keep in mind that creative writing and editing are two different parts of the process. You don't have to combine them into one step, and in fact this is nearly impossible to do. Even writers who edit as they go still write a scene or section of their story before they go back and edit it.

Creativity works best when it's allowed to just flow. Hemingway famously said, "Write drunk; edit sober." Though you may not want to follow his advice exactly, he made a very good point. Great fiction is often the result of uninhibited creativity that has been meticulously and ruthlessly edited.

Planning, writing, and editing

This does not mean that you shouldn't plan anything before you start to write. It's fine if you do and fine if you don't. If you have ideas that you want to just get down, do it. But if you feel the need to be organized first and to write a plot summary or an outline before you begin writing, do that. Don't try to follow another person's method if it doesn't work for you.

No matter how much you plan, you won't be able to get away from editing and revising. Whole sections may have to be re-worked or deleted or added, and characters may change substantially from the way they were first conceived in your mind. It doesn't really matter how you get to the first draft, as long as you get there. There is a trade-off between

By Sharon Hook

writing more quickly and revising more quickly. Generally the more planning you do ahead of time, the less you will have to revise at the end.

The approach you take will largely depend on (1) what you need in order to get started writing: just an idea, a full outline of the entire story, or something in between and (2) how much you like/dislike the planning, writing, and editing processes.

Planning just the big picture

If you don't feel comfortable just jumping in, but you don't want to write an exhaustive outline before you begin, you might try the Snowflake method. This method involves planning out the big ideas of your story before you start writing. This way you'll have a reasonable certainty that your story will flow from beginning to end in a logical way. It does not require knowing all the details before you start. Your vision will likely change as you write, but you'll always have a sense as you're writing of where your story is going and why.

The key things to remember are to take off your editor's hat while you're writing, and plan as much or as little at a time as feels right to you. If planning anything at all before you start seems daunting to you, then don't. Just write. If writing without a detailed action plan seems impossible to you, then spend as much time as you need creating a detailed outline before you start.

*The Benefits of a Good Story
Edit*

A good story edit can bring several benefits to your manuscript:

1.Character Development: Nuances, contradictions, and core values of characters are developed, deepening conflicts.

2.Protagonist's Backstory: Enhances the protagonist's backstory, making them more relatable.

3.Antagonist Development: Creates multi-dimensional antagonists, avoiding stereotypical villains.

4.Subplot Resolution: Ties up all subplots and story questions.

5.Cliché Elimination: Cleans up clichéd writing.

6.Setting Enhancement: Makes the setting so vivid it stands out like a character.

Detail Clarity: *Ensures details are crisp and clear, immersing readers in the scene.*

Conclusion

In conclusion, while a copy edit is essential for grammatical accuracy, it cannot save a poorly constructed plot. A good content edit can breathe life into a story, making characters leap off the page and settings come alive. Novelists should consider both levels of editing as they complement each other, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of the manuscript.

Interesting Stats

According to the American Society of Journalists and Authors, 75% of successful authors attribute their success to effective developmental editing ([source](#)).

A study by Reedsy found that books with professional editing are 30% more likely to receive positive reviews ([source](#)).

By understanding and valuing the distinct roles of copy editors, story editors, and book doctors, authors can significantly improve their manuscripts, creating a more engaging and polished final product.



Now, through your National Writers Association membership, you can save up to 80% off the list price of office supplies.

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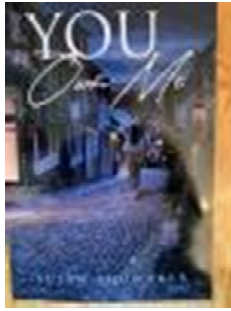
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Good News and Books by Members



BOOKS BY MEMBERS

You Own Me
By Susan Sue Shumaker

\$23.95

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Available online through Amazon
and Barnes & Noble

Katie--a lonely young woman without a past, seeks seclusion; timid yet explosive.

David--a family man without a family; insecure with something to prove.

Duncan--a man's man; happily married but in love with his best mate's girl.

Sydney Crane--a lost soul.

Running from a traumatic past, twenty-four-year-old Katie Nelson leaves America to start over in small-town England. She purchases a used bookshop and intends to disappear into the countryside. She is determined to make a new life in a new place with a new name. Who is the real Katie? What is she hiding?

Plagued by paranoia, fear, and memory issues, Katie is satisfied with her self-imposed isolation until her calm is broken when two very different men notice her. One is infatuated. One is obsessed.



NWA BOOKSTORE

NWA GUIDE TO WRITING FOR BEGINNERS

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THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

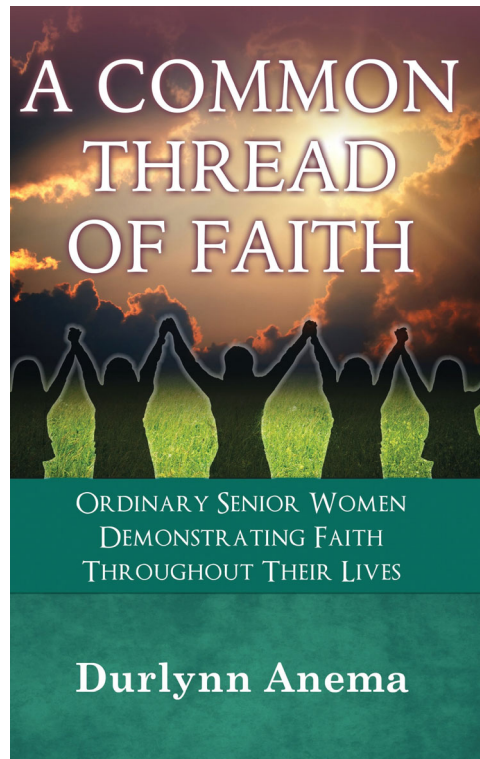
**"TO WRITE IS
HUMAN, TO EDIT IS
DIVINE."**

-STEPHEN KING

***ALL THE ABOVE BOOKS
MAY BE
ORDERED THROUGH NWA.***

Foundation News

We are still accepting scholarship applications, so if you know an outstanding young writer please have them apply. Applications are available on the NWA website under the 'Contests' link.



A Common Thread of Faith
By Durlynn Anema
\$14.95
ISBN: 978-0-88100-186-0

Meet twelve women who discovered aging has given them additional opportunities to be of use in the world through their lives of faith with a higher power guiding their path. These women find themselves in an interesting time. Faith moves them as it did for others over the centuries, and they refuse to have it replaced with fear and anxiety—words which have taken root and bloomed during the pandemic and afterward. Fear and anxiety are not in the vocabularies of these women.

These women differ widely in their early lives as well as in their varying attitudes and approaches to life. Some have often wondered if their lives were going in the right direction; some found their deep faith as a result of the life paths they took; some always believed they were guided by a higher power. Others were guided by parents; some by dreams; some by searching to find the truth; and others by circumstances beyond their control. All survived and became stronger women.

They have used their faith to help people in all walks of life, and have discovered that by caring for others their own lives change. Their talents range from music to crafts, from nurturing to organizing, plus using their physical difficulties to bring strength to others in the same circumstance. Two women describe a little-known disease called Meniere's in the hope that anyone suffering from it will be encouraged to find help.

All proclaim “victory” through the lives they have lived entirely through their faith.

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NWA SHORT STORY CONTEST

OPENS April 1 annually

PURPOSE OF THE CONTEST:

The purpose of the National Writers Assn. Short Story Contest is to encourage the development of creative skills, recognize and reward outstanding ability in the area of short story writing.

CONTEST RULES:

Any genre of short story manuscript may be entered. All entries must be postmarked by July 1. Only unpublished works may be submitted. All manuscripts must be typed, double-spaced, in the English language. Maximum length is 5,000. Those unsure of proper manuscript format should request Research Report #35.

The entry must be accompanied by entry form (photocopies are acceptable), entry fee of \$15 per submission, and return SASE if you wish the material and rating sheets returned. **OTHERWISE SUBMISSIONS WILL BE DESTROYED.** The U.S. Postal Service will not allow us to use your metered postage unless it is undated. Receipt of entry will not be acknowledged without a return postcard. Author's name and address must appear on the first page. Entries remain the property of the author and may be submitted during the contest as long as they are not published before the final notification of winners. Final prizes will be awarded in June.

JUDGING AND PRIZES

Judging will be based on originality, marketability, research, and reader interest. Copies of the judges evaluation sheets will be sent to entrants furnishing an SASE with their entry. First through fifth place awards will be announced in January. 1st Prize -- \$250; 2nd Prize -- \$100; 3rd Prize -- \$50; 4th through 10th places will receive a book. First through third place winners may be asked to grant one- time rights for publication in *AUTHORSHIP* magazine. Honorable Mentions receive a certificate.

ENTRY FEE AND CRITIQUES

The entry fee per submission is \$15. If you wish to have your submission critiqued, please request this on the entry form. Entry fees are used to pay judges and prize money.

NWA SHORT STORY CONTEST FORM

To:NWA Short Story Contest

National Writers Assn.

10940 S. Parker Rd. #508

Parker, CO 80134

Entry # _____

Date _____

Amt _____

RP _____ Y _____ N

Please enter the enclosed entry (title) _____ in the NWA Short Story Contest.

_____ My entry fee \$15 is enclosed.

_____ Please charge my _____ Mastercard _____ Visa # _____ Exp. date _____

NAME (PLEASE PRINT) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

TELEPHONE # _____

_____ You may retain my submission for a critique after judging. I am enclosing \$5 per thousand words for critique.

NWA POETRY CONTEST

OPENS JULY 1 annually

PURPOSE OF THE CONTEST

The purpose of the National Writers Assn. Poetry Contest is to encourage the writing of poetry, an important form of individual expression which has a limited commercial market.

CONTEST RULES

All entries must be postmarked by October 1. Only unpublished poems are eligible. All poetry forms and styles are eligible as long as they do not exceed 40 lines. Authors retain all rights and may submit their entries to publishers while the contest is in progress. Anthology rights will be requested for the first through third place winners. The entry must be accompanied by entry form (photocopies are acceptable), entry fee of \$10 per poem, and return SASE if you wish the poem and rating sheets returned. POEMS WILL NOT BE RETURNED WITHOUT SASE. The U.S. Postal Service will not allow us to use your metered postage unless it is undated. Receipt of entry will not be acknowledged without a return postcard. Author's name and address must appear on the first page.

JUDGING AND PRIZES

Judging will be based on originality, technique, adherence to poetic style, and emotional value. Copies of the judges evaluation sheets will be sent to entrants furnishing an SASE with their entry. Winners will be notified by January 31. 1st Prize -- \$100; 2nd Prize -- \$50; 3rd Prize -- \$25; 4th through 10th Places will receive a book of the winner's choice. Honorable Mentions receive a certificate.

ENTRY FEE AND CRITIQUES

The entry fee per poem is \$10. If you wish to have your poem critiqued, please request this on the entry form. Entry fees are used to pay judges and prize money.

NWA POETRY CONTEST FORM

To: NWA Poetry Contest
National Writers Assn.

10940 South Parker Road, #508
Parker, CO 80134

Entry # _____

Date _____

Amt _____

Please enter the enclosed poem (title) _____ in the NWA Poetry Contest.

_____ My entry fee \$10 is enclosed.

_____ Please charge my _____ Mastercard _____ Visa # _____ Exp. date _____

CVV# _____

NAME (PLEASE PRINT) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

TELEPHONE # _____

_____ You may retain my poem for a critique after judging. I am enclosing an additional \$16 for evaluation.

AUTHORSHIP GUIDELINES

PURPOSE: Authorship magazine is the “in-house” publication for the National Writers Assn. It is read by thousands of members on a quarterly basis. Currently the magazine is a 10 to 241 page publication with a four color cover.

SCOPE: Articles submitted for consideration to Authorship should have a writing slant. Material should deal with writing “how-to’s” or current market trends. We are overstocked on inspirational “How I became a successful writer...” type material and will not be interested in any of these articles. Articles slanted toward aspects of fiction—creating characters, setting scenes, etc. are of interest and will be our primary interest. Humor is a plus — writing is serious enough without a totally serious article.

We do not accept fiction. Poetry is published in our winter issue, if it has a writing theme.

SUBMISSIONS: All submissions should be in standard manuscript format, approximately 1,250 to 1,500 words, accompanied by an SASE if the material is to be returned. Authorship uses AP style with the exception of state abbreviations. If the author is not aware of proper manuscript format, they should request NWA RR#35 prior to submitting. Manuscripts accepted for publication will be requested via e-mail in Microsoft Word format in text files with line breaks. NO tabs, fancy fonts, bullets, charts, or tables. If charts or tables are necessary, submit them like art work. Electronic files will be given preferred treatment as this prevents typos in final copy.

Sharp clear photos of article authors will be requested if material is accepted.

PAYMENT: We are currently paying \$10 honorarium per article or a \$10 reduction on membership dues.

