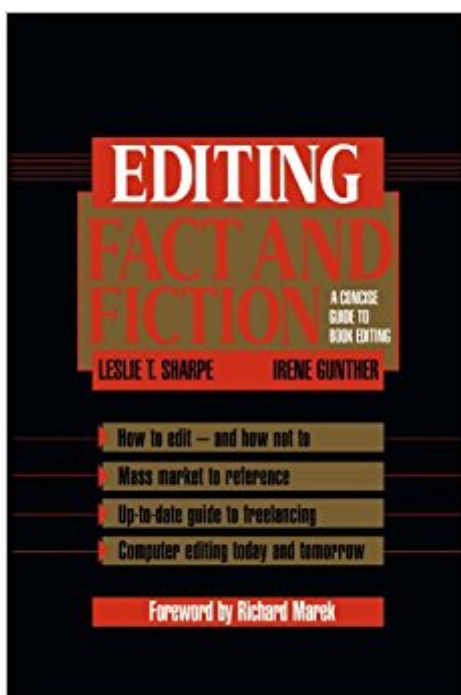


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# Editing Fact And Fiction: A Concise Guide To Book Editing



## Synopsis

Editing Fact and Fiction is a concise, practical guide for people interested in book publishing or already working as editors who want to learn more about the opportunities in various kinds of book editing. Writing in a lively, informal style, two editors with extensive experience in a wide variety of fields--fiction and nonfiction, trade and reference, academic and commercial publishing--explain what editors in different jobs really do. The authors take the reader step by step through the editing process, from manuscript to bound book. They discuss the principles of sound editing and provide many specific examples of how to--and how not to--edit copy. They also give examples of how to deal tactfully with authors and show when editorial restraint is the best intervention. Editing Fact and Fiction is a book to be read, not just referred to. It will be an indispensable guide for anyone thinking about a career in book publishing, a valuable resource for working editors who want to enlarge their knowledge, and a useful tool for senior editors training staff. Leslie T. Sharpe and Irene Gunther are both editors and writers. An experienced trade book editor, Leslie T. Sharpe teaches editing and writing at New York University and Columbia University. She is also a regular contributor to New York Newsday. Irene Gunther was a senior editor at Macmillan Publishing and has extensive experience in reference and college book editing. She is the author of a teenage biography and a contributor to various publications.

## Book Information

Paperback: 227 pages

Publisher: Cambridge University Press; First Edition edition (September 30, 1994)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0521456932

ISBN-13: 978-0521456937

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 15 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 12 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #663,741 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #242 in [Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Writing > Editing](#) #917 in [Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Publishing & Books > Authorship](#) #2829 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Linguistics](#)

## Customer Reviews

Every month, it seems, brings a fresh crop of books on writing. Whatever it is you want to write, you

can be sure there's a shelf's worth of books to guide you. But try to locate a book on editing, and you're likely to come up empty-handed. Editing is so dependent on instinct that a newcomer is expected somehow to just figure it out. We can imagine no finer introduction to book editing than *Editing Fact and Fiction*. Authors Leslie T. Sharpe and Irene Gunther explain what different editors (acquiring, copy, production, managing) do, as well as how those tasks vary depending on the type of book (fiction, nonfiction, children's, reference, textbooks, etc.). They address freelance editing, electronic editing, and publishing courses, and have compiled a terrific bibliography of useful books for editors. But most important, they have "distill[ed] our philosophy of editing into a set of guiding principles," principles "that will inform every editing decision." These principles are all about restraint and respect and having a deep understanding of the elements of good writing. "Do no harm," the authors advise. "Change as little as possible." A book belongs, ultimately, to its author, and it is the editor's job to coax out the best version possible. An editor, they say, is like a baseball umpire. "The best umps, like the best editors, are invariably the ones you don't notice. They guide the game but don't intrude on it." --Jane Steinberg

Sharpe and Gunther really know their stuff. From the job descriptions of editorial staff members through the minutiae of the actual editing process, they cover this field thoroughly and with astonishing concision. It is the editor's role, they contend, to make each book the best its writer could produce--and never to replace the writer's voice with their own. To this end, they show how careful pruning and sensitivity to rhythm and style are both necessary to the editing process, and they describe seven "principles to edit by"--economy, tact, flexibility, consistency, confidence, respect, and responsibility. Many readers may be drawn by the book's "Guide to Editorial Freelancing" and other job-related chapters, but the book would also be useful at reference desks for answering elusive questions of style. Pat Monaghan --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This is written well and explains various topics in an easy to understand way; however, this book doesn't really contain any new information that I haven't read in other editing books. If you are new to editing, this is a great book.

I am both a wannabe writer and a freelance editor. With my writer's hat on I found that seeing the editing and publication process through the eyes of practicing editors was very useful. With my editor's hat on the broad details on how the various types of editor should act when dealing with writers, publishers and other people in the chain when a book is being produced was also very

useful. My only problem with the book is that its age makes most of the material on computers and electronic publishing useless.

Even more information than I thought it would have

Gift to writing husband. He seems pleased.

Sharpe provides many useful articles, reliable information and there are even some insightful moments worth the purchase of this book.

Great condition.

This was everything I was looking for for overall information and understanding of copy-editing and content editing. Very helpful.

This is an editing book that practices what it preaches--it's well written as well as well edited. Most of all, it's the first book I've found that tells exactly what editors do--or, more to the point, exactly what editors should do and just don't these days. That, is, edit, and not write--that is, intervene, without changing the author's words or meaning. At a time when both editing and writing are on the decline, this book seems to me to be even more relevant than when it was published, nearly ten years ago. No wonder that it's still in print, but I would advise the publisher (Cambridge University Press) to get the authors to do a new edition. The chapter on technology is out of date, and the freelance chapter needs to be updated too. But for the core chapters on editing principles and philosophy, this book is the best I've read!

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