

Deborah Halverson, Editorial Services

Award-Winning Author & Veteran Editor

Description of Services

Deborah specializes in two kinds of editing: substantive and line editing. Substantive editing is appropriate when an author is looking for general feedback about overall pacing, organization, voice, etc. A line edit is the approach used when those larger issues are already sound and a line-by-line, word-by-word focus is needed to make the writing tight and clear.

Covered in substantive editing:

- Narrative voice
- Plot development/narrative arc
- Pacing
- Organization
- Characterization/character arc
- Point of view
- Setting
- Delivery of background information
- Visual storyline (picture books only)
- Read-aloud quality (picture books only)
- Youthful sensibility
- Age-appropriate subject matter and target audience

Covered in line editing:*

- Cutting/tightening of sentences, paragraphs, chapters
- Word choice
- Active verbs
- Rhythm
- Sentence variety
- Identification of passive construction
- Preservation of author's distinct voice and personal style
- Dialogue
- Chapter/section breaks
- Grammar/mechanics

* *Deborah line edits a novel only if she has previously substantively edited an earlier draft of that novel.*

Query letter review services also available.

DEBORAH spent a decade editing children's books at Harcourt Children's Books and is now an award-winning



author, freelance editor, and writing instructor for groups and institutions including the University of California, San Diego, Extended Studies Program. She's written the craft books *Writing Young Adult Fiction For Dummies* and *Writing New Adult Fiction*, teen novels *Honk If You Hate Me* and *Big Mouth*, leveled books for struggling readers, and picture books. Bringing to bear her thirty years of publishing experience, Deborah edits picture books and middle grade, young adult, new adult, and adult fiction and nonfiction on a freelance basis. She also edits graphic novels. She is also the founder of the popular writers' advice site DearEditor.com and serves on the advisory board for the UC San Diego Extension "Children's Book Writing and Illustrating" certificate program.

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The Editorial Process

Partial edits—In addition to full manuscript edits, Deborah offers partial substantive edits of novels covering one to four chapters. For details about partial edits, please email Deborah.

Delivery of unedited manuscript—Deborah receives manuscripts via e-mail as Word documents.

Estimate and confirmation—Deborah provides a time estimate for manuscripts based on word count, page length (double-spaced, 12-point font), and a review of the first five to ten pages of the manuscript (novel) or the whole manuscript (picture book) in order to assess pacing and editorial needs. A Letter of Agreement will be signed by both Deborah and the author once details have been finalized.

The edit—Deborah marks up an electronic document using Word’s “Track Changes” feature. For novels, she may mark up sample chapters or the entire manuscript, whichever she determines to be appropriate for the given project.

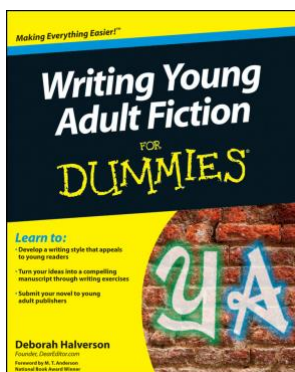
Cover letter—Deborah discusses general issues for the author to consider and expands on specific items marked in the manuscript.

Follow-up—Deborah will clarify or otherwise respond to authors after they’ve reviewed the cover letter and the edited ms.

Payment—Deborah requires payment for the first half of the estimated time prior to editing the manuscript. She bills the remainder of her fee. She accepts payments via personal check or Zelle, although Paypal.com payments may be accepted by special arrangement.

Fees

\$150 per hour for substantive editing, line editing*, and query editing. Free estimate.



Writing Young Adult Fiction For Dummies

Foreword by M. T. Anderson

A comprehensive, hands-on, friendly guide to writing YOUNG ADULT fiction and MIDDLE GRADE fiction.

Writing New Adult Fiction

Foreword by Sylvia Day

How to write and sell NEW ADULT fiction.

San Diego Book Award Winner



Accolades

DEBORAH has been working with authors—bestsellers, debut, veterans, and aspiring—for almost twenty-five years. The books she’s edited have garnered awards and topped a bestseller list, and many of the aspiring writers she’s coached have secured agent representation and book deals.

“Deborah’s feedback is smart and focused. She makes the kind of comments you can really do something with. My manuscript was sold at auction for a two-book deal.”

—**Jeff Hirsch**, bestseller, *The Eleventh Plague* & other YAs

“Deborah has her finger on the pulse of YA fiction and can diagnose even the most elusive problems in a manuscript. Her suggestions have proven to be spot on time and time again. She can take a book from good to great; a rare skill that requires a keen eye and nuance. Working through an edit with Deborah is educational and fun, not fear-inducing and depressing, because she also won't hesitate to tell you what you're doing well. My manuscript quickly landed a 3-book deal after her edit. I highly recommend her.”

— **Chris Babu**, *The Initiation series*, YA

“Deborah's expertise helped me fine-tune my debut novel *Written in the Stars* and was the smartest decision I made for my writing career. The lessons I gained from her advice stay with me to this day.”

—**Aisha Saeed**, bestseller, *Amal Unbound* and *Written Under the Stars*, YA

“My manuscript received two offers and both publishers agreed to have a two-book offer.... Deborah’s touch brought the book to a higher level.”

—**Ji-li Jiang**, award-winning, *Red Scarf Girl* & other YAs & picture books

“Deborah has a way of communicating her thoughts in a gently constructive way that makes sense. I incorporated her comments into the revision of my manuscript and landed a contract with Knopf.”

— **Annemarie O'Brien**, award-winning, *Dance with Borzois*, YA

“Deborah was a big reason I was able to sell my novel to a publisher. She has a keen eye, she works quickly and efficiently, her guidance is right on, and she sees the big picture.”

—**Sarah Scheerger**, *Operation Frog Effect* & other MGs, YAs, young readers, and picture books

“I worked on my first manuscript for years and wasn't getting anywhere. I was stuck. Until, I sent a draft to Deborah. She was able to look at it through the lens of an editor and make suggestions I hadn't thought about. Every one of them made my manuscript stronger. She pointed me in the right direction. It's the manuscript that got me an agent and my first book sale.”

—**Kim Turrisi**, *Just A Normal Tuesday*, YA

“Deborah’s perceptive editorial remarks helped me look at my manuscript in a whole new way and gently pushed me and my book to a higher level. After implementing her suggestions, I received a two-book publication deal. Her concise, discerning suggestions taught me many skills I have carried over in the crafting of other novels. I appreciated the timely manner in which she completed the edit of my book and the very reasonable rate she charged.”

—**Kristen Landon**, award-winning, *Life in the Pit*, *The Limit*, & other YAs

“The best person who ever happened to my novel, *Tiger Drive*, is Deborah Halverson. She was the first editor to see it. Thanks to her manuscript evaluation and her advice to ‘give us a reason to care about these characters,’ my debut novel went on to win Best New Fiction at the American Fiction Awards.”
—**Teri Case**, award-winning, *Tiger Drive* and *In the Doghouse*, fiction/nonfiction for adults

“Deborah did much more than line-editing. She suggested a completely new ending to my Christmas novelty book. It helped me avoid predictability and layered the revised work with much more complexity and depth. She’s awesome!”
—**Kimball Fisher**, bestseller, *Finding Baby Jesus* & other fiction/nonfiction for kids and adults

“In addition to being a keen editor with discerning tastes and inspired vision, Deborah is also an enormously talented writer who is tuned in to the interests and issues that engage young readers. Deborah’s energy, experience, enthusiasm, and knowledge make her an extraordinary teacher. She knows every aspect of writing, editing, manufacturing, and developing books for young readers.”
—**Robin Cruise**, former Deputy Publisher of Harcourt Children’s Books, award-winning author *Fiona’s Private Pages*, *Only You*, & other MGs and picture books

“Deborah is a crackerjack editor—creative, caring, clever—and those are just the C’s.”
—**Kathleen Krull**, award-winning, *Harvesting Hope* & other picture books

“I am reading and rereading Deborah’s letter, overwhelmed with the completeness of her work and the superb suggestions and help she has given me.”
—**Jeri Chase Ferris**, award-winning, *Noah Webster & His Words* & other books for young readers

“Deborah is not only an excellent, discerning, and responsive editor, she is also a great pleasure to work with. She has a fine command of language and a great sense of story.”
—**Jean Ferris**, award-winning, *Once Upon a Marigold* & other YAs

“I love Deborah’s editing style. Helpful, honest, yet not tearing me down.”
—**Deborah Honas**, MG fiction

“Never before have I seen so many suggestions to improve my novel! Deborah nailed down the thread I needed to take my novel to the next level.”
—**Diane Asitimbay**, *No Perfect People Please* & other fiction/nonfiction for kids and adults

“Deborah’s insight and suggestions are really working nicely. I love the way she challenges. I feel so good about how this is working out.”
—**Judy McSweeney**, MG fiction & picture books

“Deborah has a wonderful ability to maintain a bird’s eye view of a project, yet she manages to zoom in close to pick out important details.”
—**Maureen Hourihan**, MG fiction

“Deborah is not only extremely knowledgeable but also capable of sharing that knowledge productively. And her critiques provide valuable insight for our writers. She is an excellent instructor with a keen sense of what each writer needs to hear to improve their work and the sensibility to provide critiques in a manner in which they are well-received.”
—**Antoinette Kuritz**, Literary Publicist, Strategies Public Relations Consulting; Founder/Director of the La Jolla Writers Conference