

LAUREL LEIGH, M.F.A. Editing Services

Editorial Approach

If you've decided to seek the assistance of a professional editor, perhaps you've determined that some aspect of your material is incomplete or needs polishing. How much or how little editing is ideal for your story is the first topic to consider. While at times a major overhaul is warranted, often a moderate amount of judicious editing can help cohere your creative intention for the work, resulting in a dazzling final product.

I view an editor's role as helping to maximize the effect of what the author has created.

The best time to send me your work is when you have a draft manuscript that can benefit from a developmental edit or when it's further along and ready for copy editing. A developmental edit focuses on high-level story issues, such as troubleshooting the plot or rounding out characters; copy editing focuses on paragraph and line-level issues, with attention to overall effectiveness of each scene if desired. When launching an edit, we will jointly gauge the level of editing needed and discuss edits early in the process to ensure we're in agreement on the approach.

"Again and again, I have seen Laurel Leigh create projects that combine editorial integrity and marketing savvy."

—Leslie Jonath, Creative Director
Connected Dots Media

Scope of Services

As a longtime writer, teacher, and editor, my threefold expertise is in assessing and developing the material from different vantage points:

- As a fellow writer, I'm sensitive to the challenges of the creative process and understand the gut-wrenching effort it takes to craft a compelling story;
- As a writing teacher, I offer time-tested techniques to help writers translate their story ideas from concept to finished manuscript, expanding their repertoire of writing craft en route;
- And as a seasoned editor, I have experience guiding the shaping of a project and fine-tuning the text, while remaining true to the authorial voice and intent.

"Taking Laurel Leigh's classes has been the single greatest investment I've made in my writing career."

—Selah J Tay-Song
Author of the *Dreams of QaiMaj* series

I offer the following editorial and coaching services:

- Developmental and Copy Editing
- Developmental Reads
- Writing Classes (in Bellingham WA)
- Book Reviews

Laurel Leigh, M.F.A. • Writer/Teacher/Editor
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It's a Good Day to Write.

"For over a decade, I have turned to Laurel Leigh for her perceptive and level-headed feedback."

—Kirsten Menger-Anderson
Author of *Dr. Olaf van Schuler's Brain*

My Bio

I began working for Chronicle Books in San Francisco at the same time I entered the Creative Writing program at San Francisco State University, specializing in fiction. Writing and editing have always intermingled for me, and my editing approach reflects that dual perspective. As a published writer, I also edit for established book publishers, producers, custom publishers, and individual authors. I've acted as project manager for numerous titles published by Chronicle Books and have reviewed for *The Bloomsbury Review*. My fiction and memoir have appeared in the acclaimed literary magazine *The Sun*, and my short story "Shoeless" received notable mention in the prize anthology *Best of the West*. Several of my stories have appeared in *Clover: A Literary Rag*, published by the Independent Writers' Studio. My essay "Nurse," which received a Pushcart Prize nomination, appears in the Winter 2015 issue.

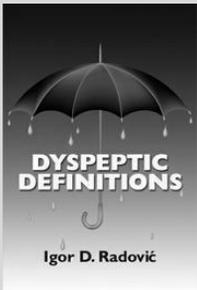
I now live in gorgeous Western Washington, where I have taught writing workshops for several years through both the university and community college's respected continuing education programs and have served as teaching faculty for the heralded Chuckanut Writers Conference. I author the blog Dear Writers and also co-founded the San Francisco-based Dogpatch Writers Collective and its blog. See more about me at www.LaurelLeighWriter.com.

Fiction Editing

I specialize in novels and short story collections, and will accept memoir if the material has a novelistic structure. Categorizing stories is my least favorite thing to do, since so many wonderful stories cross genres, but here's a working list:

- Literary Fiction
- Mainstream Fiction
- Young Adult
- Contemporary Romance
- Short Story Collections
- Memoir
- Other genres (by individual assessment)

I love stories! Whether I'm reading them, writing them, or lending professional editorial muscle to a project, nothing beats the satisfaction of seeing a great story idea take shape and move from rough scene list to polished manuscript. So let's talk about your goals for your story.



Nonfiction Editing

Many of the nonfiction projects I work on are publisher-generated, meaning I often remain with a project from its inception through galley stages and provide various levels of editing. The areas with which I am most familiar are pop culture, lifestyle, craft books, and cookbooks, although a marvelous self-published title I edited is *Dyspeptic Definitions*, a satiric collection by Dr. Igor D. Radović. I was the developmental editor for a popular little book called *Bixology*, a stylish miscellany for drink and art lovers alike, and also the project manager for *The Seven Stars Cookbook* (published by Chronicle Books for Caesar's Entertainment), which received a Gourmand World Cookbook Award.

Developmental Reads

Sometimes writers ask for a developmental read of their manuscript—when not yet ready for a full edit but desiring qualified guidance about aspects of the story. A developmental read is a good place to start if you're unsure whether the material is far enough along for detailed line editing or if you're stuck and need a fresh, expert perspective.

"Laurel Leigh's keen editorial eye, big-picture analytical capabilities, and fine touch with language have been an immense asset to me over the years."

—Yael Schonfeld Abel
Writer/Editor

Working authors for whom I've regularly read include Kirsten Menger-Anderson, author of *Doctor Olaf van Schuler's Brain*, Finalist for the Northern California Book Award in fiction; Robert Steven Williams, author of *My Year As a Clown*; and Yael Schonfeld Abel, short story artist published in *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, *Literal Latté*, *The Mid-American Review*, and more.

"Laurel Leigh combines creative energy with organizational know-how... I can always count on her to make good projects great."

—Beth Weber, Associate Publishing Director
Custom Publishing, Chronicle Books

Writing Classes

My teaching approach emphasizes gaining both writing craft and revision techniques, building on the idea that if a writer can craft a single compelling scene, that writer can craft a compelling short story or novel. My classes are offered through Whatcom Community College Community Education or occasional other venues in Bellingham WA.

Course List:

- Introduction to Creative Writing
- Revision Workshop
- Storyboarding

One-day Intensives:

- Character Speak: Writing Dialogue
- Constructing Character: The Engaging Protagonist
- Love Scenes
- Narrative Tapestries: Imagery and Theme
- Scene Work: Story-Showing
- Short Story

Specialty Classes:

- How to Write a Cookbook
- Writing Children's Literature



Reviews

I'm occasionally asked to provide book reviews or blurbs and will do so for a modest reading fee. If you are interested in a review, you can view examples of mine on Amazon. My in-depth review of *A Chinaman's Chance*, by American Book Award Winner Alex Kuo, appears in Volume 31 of *The Bloomsbury Review*.