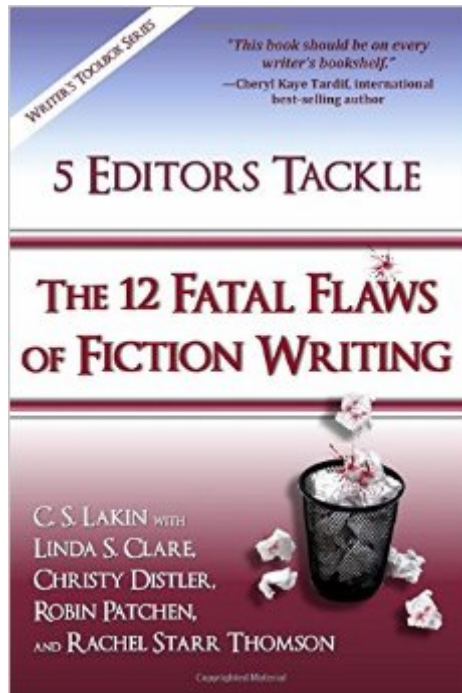


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# 5 Editors Tackle The 12 Fatal Flaws Of Fiction Writing (The Writer's Toolbox Series)



## Synopsis

Don't fall victim to the 12 fatal flaws of fiction writing. Fiction writers often struggle to improve their craft. And the biggest challenge comes from the inability to see what isn't working. The prose feels off. The scene isn't gelling. The dialogue sounds stilted or clunky. But they don't know why or how to fix it. This book lays it all out. Editors Tackle the Twelve Fatal Flaws of Fiction Writing demonstrates the deadly dozen pitfalls on the road to a strong story, along with revisions that show writers exactly how to avoid novel failure. No other writing craft book offers such detailed instruction in how to spot and remedy the major flaws of fiction writing. What makes this book an important addition to a writer's bookshelf? More than 60 Before and After passages showcase each of the twelve fatal flaws, which are then picked apart and examined to help writers spot these flaws in their own writing and fix them. Five editors with extensive background in both editing fiction and writing novels bring a wealth of insights, examples, and solutions to these flaws, using various genre styles and POVs. Each chapter ends with a checklist to help writers seek and destroy these fatal flaws in their manuscript, followed by bonus Before and After passages to help them test what they've learned. This in-depth guide to self-editing is an invaluable resource for any writer of any genre. It shows, not just tells, how to write better fiction. Using it, you'll be armed with the tools and skills you need to conquer the twelve fatal flaws of fiction writing. Here are some of the 12 fatal flaws:

- Overwriting** – the most egregious and common flaw in fiction writing. Nothin' Happenin' – Too many stories take too long to get going. Learn what it means to start in medias res.
- Weak Construction** – It sneaks in at the level of words and sentences, and rears up in the form of passive voice, ing verbs, and misplaced modifiers.
- Too Much Backstory** – the bane of many manuscripts. Backstory has its place, but too often it serves as an info dump and bogs down pacing.
- POV Violations** – Head hopping, characters knowing things they can't know, and foreshadowing are just some of the many POV violations explored.
- Telling instead of Showing** – Writers have heard this admonition, but there's a lot to understanding how and when to show instead of tell.
- Lack of Pacing and Tension** – Many factors affect pacing and tension: clunky passages, mundane dialogue, unimportant information, and so much more.
- Flawed Dialogue Construction** – Writers need to learn to balance speech and narrative tags and avoid the nose-to-speech.
- Underwriting** – just as fatal as overwriting. Too often scenes are lacking the necessary actions, descriptions, and details needed to bring them to life.
- Description Deficiencies and Excesses** – Learning how to balance description is challenging, and writers need to choose wisely just what to describe and in what way.

Don't be left in the dark. Learn what causes these flaws and apply the fixes in your own stories. No one need suffer novel failure. You don't have to

be brilliant or talented to write strong fiction. You just need to be forewarned and forearmed to be able to tackle these culprits. And this book will give you all the weapons and knowledge you need.â€œThis book should be on every writerâ€™s bookshelf.â€•â€”Cheryl Kaye Tardif, international best-selling author

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As writersâ€™as you surely must be if youâ€™re considering buying this bookâ€™we are all undoubtedly avid readers. As readers, we instinctively know what works and what doesnâ€™t. Iâ€™m sure youâ€™ve all experienced moments of pure connection and immersion while reading your favorite novels; however achieving that same feeling in your own writing is never as easy as sensing what works (and omitting what doesnâ€™t). Thatâ€™s where 5 Editors Tackle the 12 Fatal Flaws of Fiction Writing comes in. As previous reviewers have mentioned, the book is beautifully laid out. Each of the twelve flaws is presented by multiple editors, and each offers samples of before (bad) and after (better). I found myself marking up the â€˜beforeâ€™ samples with red pen before turning to the â€˜afterâ€™ samples to see how my choices for improvement compared with the changes each author made in their improved version. I find I learn better by doing than listeningâ€™or reading, in this case. I also appreciated the different ideas, and similar ideas presented differently, that the five author-editors brought to the mix. Since each of us have different versions of the fatal flaws, this book is like getting five self-help books in one. Itâ€™s definitely an investment in your own writing career, and I canâ€™t wait for the companion workbook to be available! If any of you would like to purchase a package deal, I also highly recommend C.S. Lakinâ€™s book, Shoot Your Novel.

Itâ€™s my favorite self-help book ever; it really opened my eyes about what was lacking in certain scenes in my novel, and about why some worked and others didnâ€™t. And I didnâ€™t receive a free copy of that book in exchange for an honest review!

I received an advance copy of this book in exchange for this honest review. As an editor, I value opportunities for continuing education and refresher courses. So I jumped at the chance to review this book written by five of my respected colleagues. Together they explore twelve areas authors commonly find difficult to master. Taking one âœƒfatal flawâ• at a time, these editors take turns discussing ways to identify these issues and ways to fix them. Each editor has her own section within each chapter and gives her professional perspective on the problem at hand. Every section contains an example of a before passage with problems and an after passage that has been fixed. Having the five different perspectives also shows how different techniques can be used to accomplish different purposes. And at the end of each chapter, there is a sample passage for the readers to practice on. This allows the readers to apply what theyâ€™ve learned in each chapter. The advice is sound and there is a great advantage to receiving all five perspectives on each flaw. I certainly recognized these flaws as common errors I encounter in my editing and much of the advice is advice I give to my clients. I did learn a few new tricks, though, that Iâ€™ll be happily passing along to my authors. I gave this book four stars instead of five only because the format was not particularly my favorite. I would have preferred the five perspectives to be woven together seamlessly so the advice was offered in cohesive chapters instead of broken into sections. While this format will work very well for some readers and not as well for others, the content is valuable and practical and can be used by all. If youâ€™ve had trouble with any of these twelve fatal flaws, youâ€™ll surely appreciate owning a copy of this book!

As a novelist at heart, I couldnâ€™t wait to read this book compiled by several well-known book editors. Though Iâ€™m aware of the flaws that they discussed, I wanted to see if this book is one that I should add to my shelf or simply pass by. My conclusion? I wish Iâ€™d had this book when I wrote my first manuscript. We all learn differently. I didnâ€™t care for a novel-writing book that everyone recommended; instead, I absorbed every word of a more obscure writing guide. That meant a lot of time and money buying and reading two books. In 12 Fatal Flaws, however, three editors address each flaw, so if you donâ€™t connect well with one editorâ€™s description thereâ€™s a good chance one of the otherâ€™s will find your trigger. In addition to three commentaries, each editor provides before and after segments to help you see what good and bad

writing look like. But that's not all! For each flaw there's a checklist to help you edit your own work. Then there's another sample where you can apply the techniques you've just learned (followed by a revised sample to help you see if you've figured it out yet). This book works because it doesn't just tell you what to do, then hope that you understood it. These editors take you through the process of learning then practicing proper writing. It's definitely a book I would recommend to any novelist (and even to my fiction coaching clients). With so many examples, tips, and opportunities to practice, it would be hard to finish this book without walking away with a better understanding of good fiction writing.\*I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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