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Geoffrey J.S. Hart: Effective Onscreen Editing: New Tools for an Old Profession. Pointe-Claire, Quebec: Diaskeuasis Publishing, 2007. ISBN 978-0-9783227-0-0. Electronic monograph in PDF format available from http://www.geoff-hart.com/home/onscreen-book.htm US$20.00 (outside Canada). Shortly to be available for 'print on demand' via Lulu.com. 711 pages.

Would you like to search a long text for underlined words only without having to scroll down page by page, straining your eyes and spending hours on this tedious task, but you can't think of a simpler way to do it? Have you just started working as a freelance editor but have no idea how to set your rate? Are you annoyed by having to repeat one and the same command hundreds of times and wish it could be done by just one or two key strokes or clicks of the mouse? If you are bothered by these or similar problems, you will probably find *Effective Onscreen Editing* very useful. It might give you a nudge to try and investigate how you can use word processor more effectively. For those of you who refuse to treat your computer as anything more than a relatively sophisticated typing machine, because you believe that onscreen editing cannot replace on-paper editing, well—it does not have to replace it. It can complement it.

As Hart says in the first chapter, "this book is *not* a course in editing or grammar […]; it "is an overview of using computer software to edit." While this is true for the largest part of the book, there is still more to it. The book has 18 chapters and four appendices, followed by a glossary, bibliography, useful internet sources, and an index, with a short autobiographical note on the author at the end—a total of 711 pages. In addition to instructions on how to use a particular software tool for editing purposes, the author shares practical advice on how to backup your work, organize editing process, facilitate communication with authors, implement onscreen editing at your workplace (unless you are working alone), and even how to avoid or minimize computer-related health risks, such as eye strain or numb back. And there is always more than one way to do all that.

In explaining hows and whys of onscreen editing, Hart starts with the description of simpler word processor tools, such as those that enable you to move around the document, track changes, insert and delete text, find and replace words, and so on, and then moves on to more complex (relative to my level of knowledge) operations, such as creating macros to execute a series of operations in just one or two keystrokes and editing web pages, databases, and spreadsheets. Even if you already use these tools, you might discover one or two practical things you did not know about them. For example, using a Microsoft Word's spell-checker on texts swarming with specialized, technical terminology is usually very frustrating (or abandoned forever when frustration turns into despair once to often), because we end up clicking "ignore" or "add" for every other word. But did you know that you can create custom dictionaries yourself for different genres or even individual texts and use more than one dictionary of your own choice and creation at the same time? Even in Microsoft Word?

Whether you're a mouse or a keyboard person, you will probably agree that it is much quicker to use a keyboard shortcut than to reach for the mouse every half a minute and execute a command. It is healthier as well, as it reduces the number of repetitive actions we have to perform and thus reduces the appearance of repetitive strain injuries. Keyboard shortcuts are interspersed through most of the chapters and then listed all together in the Appendix III. If you can't find a keyboard shortcut that you need, you can create one yourself. Just follow the process instructions.

Because not all editors use Microsoft Windows, Hart made an effort to describe the onscreen editing techniques for Macintosh as well. Although the author opted for Microsoft Word as the most widely used word processor among editors to provide examples on where to find and how to use a particular tool, he says the same principles may be applied to most other word processors. The warnings about drawbacks, limitations or unreliable features of Microsoft Word are also handy—in addition to knowing what to do, one should also know what *not* to do.

Because of its length, wide range of topics, and at least an average level of software knowledge it requires from the reader, the book may seem overwhelming to read from cover to cover. However, you may use it as a guide and manual, focusing on individual chapters or sections and taking from it what you need. The green text boxes found on almost every other page usually contain a special warning, additional advice, or summarized information, but they can really be appreciated only if you read the chapter.

Onscreen editing goes hand in hand with using onscreen information sources. Hart's selection of online dictionaries, style guides, and reference literature is there not only to supply us with useful links, if they haven't already been included in our list of favourites, but also to remind us that the "world's biggest library" is just a click away. In addition to some tips on how to refine the search of the Internet, there is also a word of caution, reminding us to be critical about what we take and what we leave in this ever-expanding ocean of www's.

Effective Onscreen Editing is easy to read, informative, and well written with a right dosage of humour and witty quotations at the beginning of each chapter. It can help you turn a word processor you are using into a useful editing software, tailor-made to your needs and preferences. Although it will take you time in the beginning to learn how to operate it, once you do, it will, as the author says, save you time, minimize the number of errors, and improve the consistency of your editorial interventions. Once you print out the document you edited onscreen and find a typing error, it's not a proof of advantage of on-paper editing over onscreen editing. It just proves that editors are humans.

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