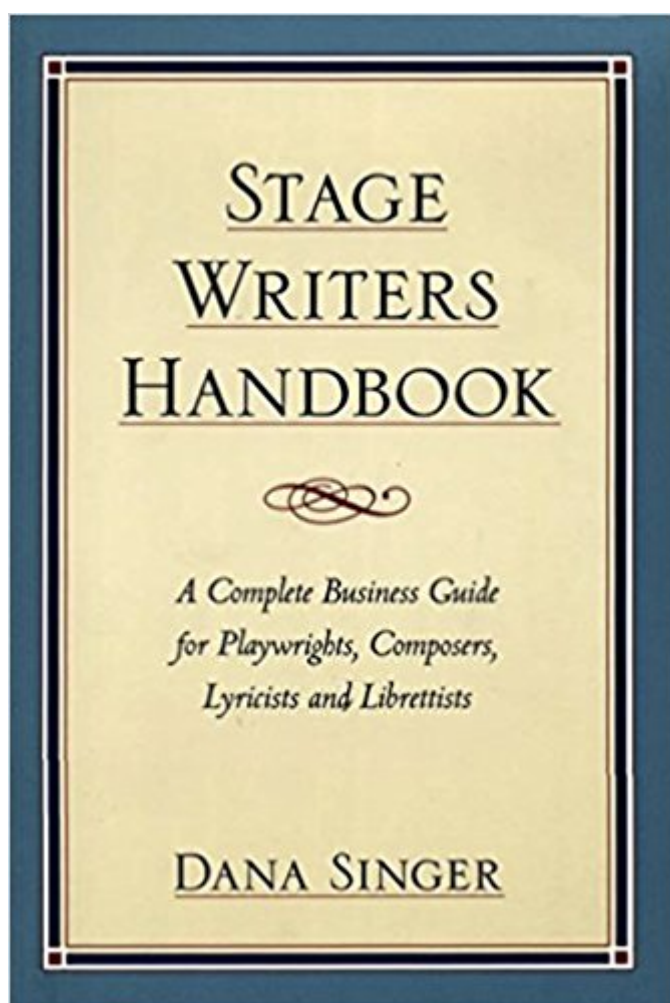


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# Stage Writers Handbook: A Complete Business Guide For Playwrights, Composers, Lyricists And Librettists



## Synopsis

The first comprehensive guide to the business of writing for today's stage.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A left-brained book for right-brained people. Or maybe it's the other way around. Subtitled A Complete Business Guide for Playwrights, Composers, Lyricists, and Librettists, the book sets out clearly and straightforwardly what to expect, what your responsibilities are, what your rights are, how much to charge for your services and how to protect yourself as a professional theater writer today. It's all here: copyrights, agents, contracts, script approval, credits, royalties . . . all the stuff that could make you--or break you.

Written in a straightforward manner, with complicated matters clearly explained, Stage Writers Handbook is truly a work no writer for the stage can afford to be without. Here, for the first time, Dana Singer gathers the information and ideas stage writers need to conduct their careers in a businesslike manner, with all the protections the law provides.

This book is a modest length and excellent first stepping stone for anyone looking to begin thinking about contracts, relationships, submissions, and more in the theater industry. Other reviewers commented that this book was lacking in detail about contracts, but the entire book was a succinct broad stroke to the whole industry. Just get a precise book on theater contracts. The empty star is

for the he/she/xe/Cthulhu pronoun egalitarianism. In a book about people and relationships in business, the patriarch irreverence could not have been more stifling.

I'd give it 5 stars, but the datedness of it knocks it down one. Great information, but costs for buying rights, etc are really out of date and the use of e-mail and the Internet for correspondence and research are not addressed.

I am thankful for The Stage Writer's Handbook. It provides me with information to help make me more savvy when it comes to negotiating with business prospects. Even if some of the information contained in this book is a bit dated, it still provides a starting point for me to look further for more current information on a particular matter.

This book is absolutely drop-dead necessary for playwrights who intend to work in the field--and for other writers, too. It includes scads of information you'll never get in any MFA program, like how to negotiate a good contract, how to decipher copyright law, how to divide billing fairly, and more. This is information you need, and information colleges and universities unfortunately don't get around to teaching. This book is primarily focused on U.S. artistic business and law. If you live in another country, parts of this book will be useful to you, but you'll need to do research as to your country's law and business conventions. At least if you have this book, you'll have an idea what it is you're seeking. Author Dana Singer published this book in 1997, and at that late date, it's odd that she didn't include more on using the internet in conducting your playwriting business. There are a lot of useful forms, organizations, and contacts provided in this book, but you'll need to Google them if you want to use the 'net for them. If a second edition ever comes out, hopefully there will be more weblinks, at least for the U.S. Copyright Office if nothing else. Your knowledge of the points in this book can make or break your playwriting career. Though dated and synoptic, it's the most thorough-going collection of information on the topic I've yet seen. Read it, memorize it, and keep it on your desk. You never know, right?

I recommend Dana's book often to new writers who want an overview of things like public domain and copyright. Even if someone expects to speak to a lawyer about a specific problem, this book can provide answers to general issues. Bill

...This is not a book about playwriting, nor is it that much help to a playwright who is trying to get

his/her work noticed. Yes, there is a section about marketing and promotion, but the writer here is a lawyer and this book is strongest when it deals directly with the many legal quandries a playwright can get into. I have already consulted it numerous times in regards to copyright issues and what were my rights going into a production. That said, I do find it curious that, while she has a large section dealing with various legal issues between a director and a playwright, she has left out entirely any discussion of problems a playwright may have with Actors Equity. How could, for example, future productions be encumbered if you allow an Equity production to go forward? That question wasn't answered, but many others were and for that I find this book to be invaluable.

I've been telling everyone about Dana's amazing book. The biggest surprise for me was that it's very readable--even enjoyable. It's not only a reference book to turn to when you have a question. I've read it through twice and gone back to specific sections when I needed them. It's already saved me from making a couple of big mistakes, gotten me off my duff to take care of some business I'd let slip and given me direction in areas I never quite understood. Give it to a friend - student, novice, mid-career or even established playwright, lyricist, theater composer or book writer - for his or her birthday. It'll be the best present they'll get.

Although one reviewer here bitterly insists that you must "know someone" in order to be published or produced, this is far from the case...as my own career attests! I was a complete newbie and managed to get published on the first try (and got reasonable pay, too). But back to the book. It is invaluable. Period. Here you'll learn everything you need to know about copyright, contracts, publishing and producing, and much, much more. If you want to be a working writer for the stage, you're gonna need this book. :)

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