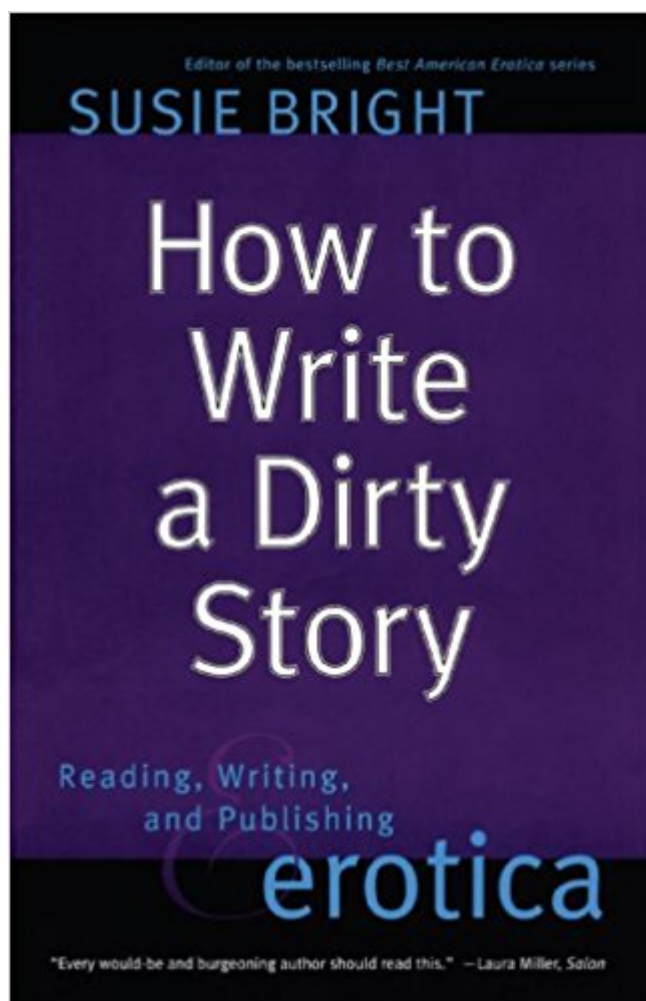


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# How To Write A Dirty Story: Reading, Writing, And Publishing Erotica



## Synopsis

For aspiring erotica writers -- and authors in any genre who want to make the "good" parts great Susie Bright is the first and reigning queen of contemporary erotica. In *How to Write a Dirty Story* she reveals her tricks of the trade and shows you how to heat up sex scenes in everything from traditional novels and romances to science fiction and humor. Easing the aspiring writer into the creative process, she tells you how to write the steamy plots and sensual characters that publishers and readers are looking for. Bright makes it easy to: Produce unique ideas \* Master erotic language Climax the story \* Sell your work to the right place Each chapter features practical writing exercises and suggestions for nonwriting activities that will galvanize the imagination and raze any creative or psychological hurdle. When it's time to go public, Bright draws on her own writing and publishing experiences and explains the most effective ways to find an agent, work with an editor, and grow a loyal audience. As irreverent as it is practical, *How to Write a Dirty Story* is the only book an erotica author -- novice or seasoned -- needs.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Authors of erotica have it rough, says Susie Bright in *How to Write a Dirty Story*. Their work is often judged before it is read. They are assumed to be sex gurus. And if memoirists find it tough to share their work with friends and relatives, imagine what it's like for sex writers. A third of Bright's book is devoted to general publishing issues. The rest deals specifically with erotica and should appeal to anyone whose writing includes sex scenes. Bright, who has been dubbed the goddess of American

erotica, is refreshingly straightforward about her subject. She likens a great erotic story to a great striptease act. Ideally, an erotic story takes all the time it needs, arouses both the reader and the author, is judicious with clichés and dirty words, and doesn't involve a complicated description of body-part placement or an excess of sex noises. Most important, a sex scene propels the story forward. If the story would work just as well without it, the sex scene shouldn't be there. And the good news? Even "really bad lovers can write great erotica." --Jane Steinberg

Laura Miller Salon Every would-be and burgeoning author should read this. Lavada Nahon Penthouse I invite anyone who wishes to get published to read *How to Write a Dirty Story* first! It will greatly increase your chances of seeing your words in print or online. Linda Jaivin author of *Eat Me* and *Rock 'n' Roll Babes from Outer Space* What a fabulous book! Well-written (naturally), provocative (of course), and eminently sensible. It integrates all aspects of the process. M. J. Rose author of *Lip Service* and *In Fidelity* From the exercises that Susie gives writers to the education she gives readers -- this book is a must.

I will begin by saying Bright is one of my favorite people. She was a groundbreaker in the 90s when it came to pretty much sex-positive anything and especially women's sexuality. And *How to Write a Dirty Story* was a valuable book - when it was first published. Bright really needs to update her work, since it addresses very little of the present-day publishing (especially e-publishing) marketplace. The book also suffers from a split personality: it contains "how to" content on both writing and publishing erotica. Better, I think, to focus on one or the other. Having said the foregoing, if a would-be writer is lost in the woods and needs a practicum in the basics, this is not a bad place to start. Bright's workbook exercises are effective (and applicable to creative writing of any type.) Readers could be spared some of the really bad erotica in the marketplace if those authors had only read Bright's book before they wrote their own.

For the aspiring writer of sex-centric fiction, finding a source of sound information and advice can be daunting. Inspiration may be even more difficult to come by; affirmation nigh on to nonexistent. Good general books on the craft and business of writing are plentiful, and many of them are extraordinarily good pieces of writing in their own right. (Stephen King's *"On Writing"* may well be the best single-volume treatment of the subject.) Such books can be a helpful place to get started. But what about those issues specific to erotica? Where do we go to find out about, say, effective, realistic dialogue in explicit scenes? Where can we learn how to tailor our work to the needs of

genre-friendly publishers? More broadly, where can we find encouragement in a world that hates us insofar as it despises anything having to do with sex? Fortunately, the news isn't all gloom and doom; there are a few titles out there just for us. Among the best is Susie Bright's "How to Write a Dirty Story", which by now, some twelve years after its initial publication, has assumed the mantle of a "how-to" classic. "How to Write a Dirty Story" is part creative-writing course, part self-help book, and part pep rally. Less formal and more personal than many titles on the subject, this is often more about inspiration than technique. (For a more formally academic treatment of the subject I would recommend Ashley Lister's "How to Write Erotica and Sex Scenes" (2013) or Elizabeth Benedict's "The Joy of Writing Sex" (1996), which focuses on erotic content in literary and mainstream genre fiction.) Bright's style is sympathetic, warm, personable and always engaging, aimed at helping her readers cast off their inhibitions and hang ups, open and expand their erotic imaginations, and take their first steps on the liberating journey of honest self-expression. I can personally attest that her approach works! The best how-to books can, on occasion, change lives, and this one certainly changed mine, encouraging me to get over my guilt and reticence about the sex writing I had been doing in secret for many years, an intense guilty pleasure I never imagined sharing with anyone. Along with a series of exercises for testing and stretching the limits of our imaginations and better visualizing our fantasies, some of Bright's most powerful and valuable insights concern the ways in which a newly inspired and "out" erotic writer deals with the attitudes and reactions of his or her family. Reading this book helps us understand that we must be better than the bigots who despise us; we must outsmart them; out-enlighten them, and out-write them. We cannot--must not--displace one strain of reticence with another equally unhealthy form, because, in the end, silence is death. With some very good, practical advice on the craft of writing to go along with its quiet rabble-rousing, "How to Write a Dirty Story" is a deep, cool wellspring of experience, wisdom, and bracing encouragement. Wholeheartedly recommended

Just for a lark, I decided to try my hand at writing a steamy romance. Susie Bright's book provides oodles of valuable advice; she also gives the reader one of the best discussions I've seen on the publishing industry, including various types of publishing, agents, contracts, interacting with fans, and more. This book is an excellent resource for writers of erotica, but also for any writer who's looking to include some spicy love scenes.

While I've only recently read four books on this subject, this is the one I found most helpful. It was obviously written by an articulate, motivational expert teacher of the subject. Usually, I'm happy to

come away from a book of non-fiction with a useful idea or two. Not so with this guidebook. In this one I picked up very helpful tips in every chapter and often in every paragraph of each chapter. In 1974, the "Boston Phoenix" dubbed the author of this book the "goddess of American erotica." She's not lost her much deserved title since that time. She encourages the reader "to look at the Contents pages and skip around the chapters according to your interests...Discover how writing affects your own sex life, or get cracking on your publishing strategy. Consider this the erotic artist's Scout Manual." Because each short chapter can stand alone, and are only a few pages long, it's very possible to read the book on the subway, while having lunch, while riding the exercise bike at the gym (that's where I read it), or even while waiting for the bus without missing the events, or your stop, going on around you as you read. But do read it all. The material is distilled, pithy and to the point. The information reverberates with the ring of truth. And true to her claims the volume is very practical, is also an "inspirational book," "a book of Agitation and Propaganda" and "a Sex Book." For readers such as I, who have written some erotica in secret, even if only in diary form, this book will help us all come out of the closet. The chapter "What's Going to Happen to Your Sex Life" is one of my favorites both for correctness and for inspiration. It's not at all politically correct and says things in no uncertain terms. There is no beating around the bush in this guide. "This 'tuning in' to the sexual world is, in itself, erotic. Your fantasies will become infected with your vivid realizations. Your lover(s) will see a change in you. If you're satisfied with your present love life, it will be enhanced, if you're sick of it, your unhappiness will be a lot harder to hide." "For some erotic writers, storytelling is the dress rehearsal for scenes they are hungry to enact in real life. For other authors, the fantasy on paper is as good as it gets: they don't want to take it further. Real life, in their case would be anticlimactic." Ditto for the readers of erotica. They are searching for something and our prudish society has made it very difficult to discover and experience that longing via the written word. Obviously I liked the advice in this self-help book. If you are a potential writer of erotica, this tome will build a fire under you, help you shed your own inhibitions and maybe even eventually bring your own special fantasies to life for each of us to share and enjoy. This book is a "glory hole" of rich ore. And it's a lot easier to get than panning for Gold in the icy cold creeks of California or Alaska. This book is a treasure map. It will help the reader discover and understand themselves much better. That enlightenment will greatly improve your life. Well done, Goddess.

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