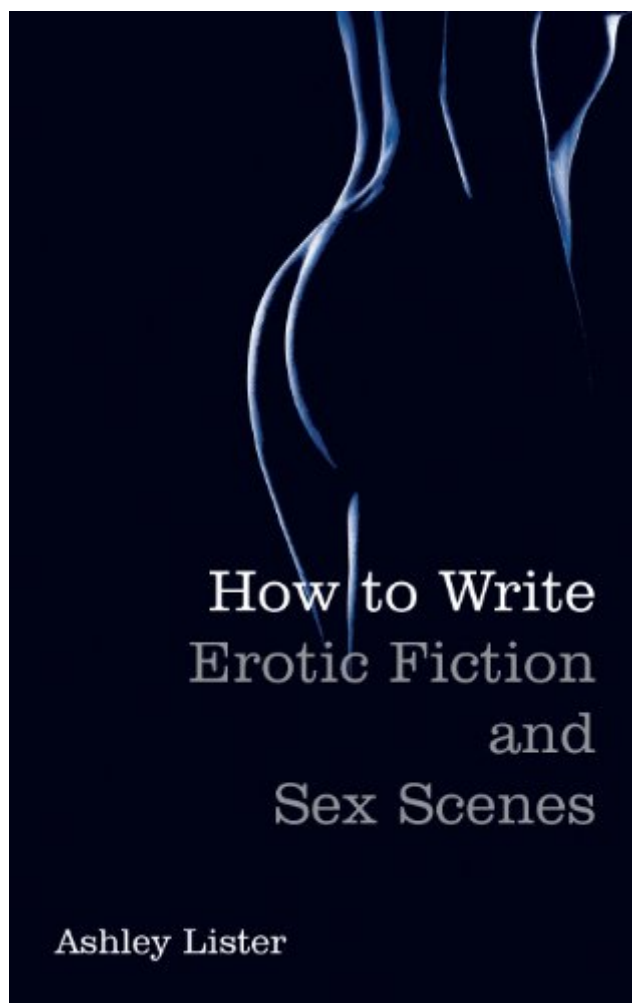


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How To Write Erotic Fiction And Sex Scenes



Synopsis

Whether you're writing a steamy erotic novel, or a romantic novel and want to take the reader beyond the bedroom door, writing a convincing sex scene can be one of the most difficult challenges for any fiction writer. *How to Write Erotic Fiction and Sex Scenes* is a practical guide to help every writer rise to this challenge.

Book Information

File Size: 903 KB

Print Length: 160 pages

Publisher: How To Books (November 15, 2013)

Publication Date: November 15, 2013

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00C1CT59M

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Not Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #1,564,796 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #71

inÂ Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Writing > Erotica #3829

inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Meals #10109 inÂ Kindle Store >

Kindle eBooks > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides

Customer Reviews

While this book is well-written and covers a great number of different topics involved in writing and publishing (or, more accurately, getting published) a work of erotic fiction, it just didn't live up to my expectations. I've been a writer, off and on, for almost thirty years, so much of what is covered in this book was far too basic and generic for me. For example, chapter three ("Learning the Basics") is entirely devoted to explaining the difference between writing in the first, second, and third person, and deciding which is right for you. That is a topic for a basic writing class, not a specialized book like this. My biggest disappointment was the content, or lack thereof, specific to writing a compelling sex scene. My primary desire was to achieve a better grasp of what works in that specific section of

fiction and what doesn't. If you decide to detail your scenes in a very coarse manner, what publishers (and market) will that work for and when will it not. My bottom line is that this book can be worthwhile to a novice writer, if one's expectations aren't set very high.

Ashley Lister's "How to Write Erotica and Sex Scenes" might best be described as "Erotic Writing 101". It makes a near-ideal primer for those just entering the strange, bewildering world of that more unconventional creative endeavor known as genre erotica. A well-known author, poet, editor and educator in Britain, Lister has apparently transcribed one of his own writing courses--as evidenced by the odd typographical style of the print edition, in which the author's own words appear in quotation marks. (First time I've ever seen that! An excess of humility, perhaps?) Material is presented matter-of-factly, and everything is very much to the point. Perhaps a little too much so, as the book seems rather dry in spots, akin to a rudimentary classroom syllabus. Topics are laid out neatly and patly at the beginning of each chapter, discussed briefly in the middle, and cursorily summarized at the end. Serious-minded readers (a student is literally "one who is eager" after all) may well appreciate this more formal, stripped down, academic approach. I wonder, though, if this same approach might well discourage the ones who need a book like this the most; those casually laid-back, if no-less curious or potentially talented auditors lurking in the back row, waiting to be inspired? Lister has included frequent and generous examples of "good practice", excerpts of first-rate erotic fiction drawn from the top of the A-list; the work of some of the most talented writers in the business sprinkled like cereal-box prizes throughout the text. Yet, at times, one might have wished for more in the way of inspiration from the author himself. Then too, I would have liked to see expanded and more deeply probing discussions of certain topics. I'd love, for example, to hear more about the differences between literary and genre erotica. (Lister suggests that genre erotica is almost always sex positive, while literary stories more often than not portray sexual relationships as broken, dysfunctional or unhealthy.) It would be fascinating--and fun!--to learn more about how erotic writers can use adult films as a source of inspiration. I suppose it would be possible to write entire books--or at least several extensive chapters--on those heavily-charged topics. As noted, Lister's outline is well-organized and thorough, yet I do think it might have benefitted from a little more depth in places. Perhaps he may do so in a sequel, say, "Erotic Writing 202"? My impression is that if one were to take out all mentions of erotic fiction here, and replace them with a discussion of classic English literature or some other popular genre, one would still have a fairly decent general introduction to the basics of fiction writing. As it is, the book includes a lot of valuable general information, the sort of which one might expect to find in any respectable entry-level text. This leads

me to wonder if, perhaps, more people might be encouraged to try their hand at writing if the prospect were sweetened, as it were, with sex; writing as a form of personal liberation; a way to express our too-long repressed erotic selves? Ashley Lister has given us much to think about. May the conversation continue for a long time, indeed. Recommended.

There is a lot of great writing advice here, but I bought the book hoping for help more specifically with erotic passages. I found only 1 of the chapters to mildly inspire me in terms of what I was looking for. I wavered between two or three stars, but opted for three as the book was well written and expertly presented. It just wasn't useful to me. Not really anything earth shattering here in terms of how to write the erotic part of erotica.

There are a number of passages written by erotica writers that Lister uses as examples in this book. One of my passages is used in the chapter "Planning a Compelling Plot." Of course, that's an honor for me. However, despite that, I can honestly say How to Write Erotic Fiction and Sex Scenes is not only an excellent book for erotica writers, whether aspiring or current, but it's also a good resource for writers of any genre. Lister covers everything from understanding erotica, to characters, to plot, to writing outside the box, to preparing for publication.

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