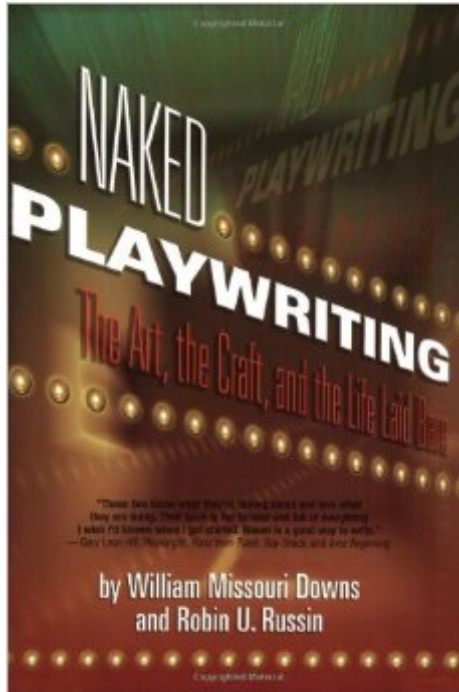


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# Naked Playwriting: The Art, The Craft, And The Life Laid Bare



## Synopsis

Offers a playwriting course, from developing a theme through plotting and structuring a play, developing characters, creating dialog, formatting the script, and applying methods that aid the actual writing and rewriting processes. This book also provides guidance on marketing and submitting play scripts for both contests and production.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There is an entire industry in publishing books about writing. Writers, especially aspiring writers, are very insecure about their work, and seek reassurance that they're on the right track from others. Most of the books produced to ameliorate writers' self-doubt are crap. But I can say with confidence that Downs and Russin's NAKED PLAYWRITING is not only the best playwriting book I have ever read, it is the best book I have ever read on any kind of writing, from the beginning of the process to the end. It's easy to talk about how to tell a good story, but how many books actually break down ideas point by point to determine which ones actually have a future? This one. Many would-be writing mentors talk about sitting down and writing, but how many have actually given instructions on how to create a style sheet on Microsoft Word so that you can create a perfectly formatted manuscript on your first try? This one. Everybody knows that the creative process isn't complete until the work is seen by an audience, but how many books demonstrate how to comparison-shop theatre companies, give you balanced pointers on how and when to get an agent, and show how to evaluate a contract to tell if it serves your interests? This one. The light conversational tone that

obtains through most of this book makes the information contained between the covers very approachable. The authors are aware that many of their readers will be beginning writers, but they also incorporate more intermediate and advanced information, so young writers can follow through to the end on what they've already begun. This book is not some compendium of lukewarm exhortations to write now and write more; it's an actual plan to turn your writing into a vocation and a life. Young writers buy a lot of books to get them started on the art and the craft. This is one of the few books those writers will actually keep on their desks through the years as they write.

A little context -- I studied playwriting in college several years ago and had productions of a couple scripts. Recently I've had a play germinating inside me, and I decided to give it a try. I discovered this book on a casual browse through a bookstore. This book is not only the best imaginable resource, it also serves to inspire and give you a chance to believe in yourself. Yes -- I was rusty and this book reminded me of the styles of plays available to draw on (I'm a bit into alienation and absurdism.), and it demonstrates clearly the difference between vague and uninteresting dialogue with that which contains dramatic tension. He is also the most practical of teachers. He makes regular suggestions for writing a play that has the best appeal for being produced. (Don't write a play with 50 characters and six scene changes, including a snowstorm in Siberia!) I would think this book is most useful if you too have decided to embark on the challenge of writing a play; otherwise I'm not sure what the appeal would be. It is not a great tome on dramatic theory. At every step of the way it is practical -- right there ready to help you express yourself and, one hopes, to write a successful play.

Okay, maybe its attractive title did draw this reader's attention to the book, but *Naked Playwriting* proves to be, as one other reviewer stated, not just a great one amidst so many How-To...books. *Naked Playwriting* is the best book I've read on writing, as well. I finished this and thought (yes, exhilarated) that every writer could benefit from this one. No matter what genre. No matter what style. *Naked Playwriting* is, incredibly, written by two voices, Downs and Russin, and yet it speaks so fluently, so masterfully, and so concisely--with this humor throughout--that I just trusted these writers were actually writers from the first line. That it speaks so smoothly to the reader, guides the reader, without pompous self-glorifying stories of their own past careers, speaks of the closeness these two writers stayed on course with the subject--and it speaks of the dedication to playwriting that *Naked Playwriting* follows. A well-crafted ship is, as the authors describe, the beauty of a stage play, carefully crafted, going somewhere, with purpose, and capable of taking others along on a

tremendous ride--that is what the great ones do--and that's what Downs and Russin have offered us. Read this, then reread, and continue to reference it--Naked Playwriting will become a manual to hold onto.

I recently took an online course entitled, "Introduction to Playwriting." I used this book and found it to be extremely helpful. It is easy to read and understand. This was my first attempt at playwriting. If it had not been for this book, I may not have completed the course. It's really that good.

Bought this book as a trial textbook for students in a Playwriting Course, but it was a little too dry for them (however, who likes their textbooks, really?). Very good information, however, and a good resource for me for lesson plans.

I have read my share of books on how to write a play or tell a good story. I found this the best of all of them in explaining important principles of how to write a compelling play without being overly reliant on examples from famous plays to do so as other books can do. The only reason I didn't give it 5 stars is because I feel the business/production/publishing side of playwriting was another book. In other words, I loved the meat and potatoes with gravy but the vegetables weren't as tasty. I know this will be a book I will use as a go-to guide. And it's already given me the confidence to more easily tackle my latest and longest play. Would highly recommend!

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