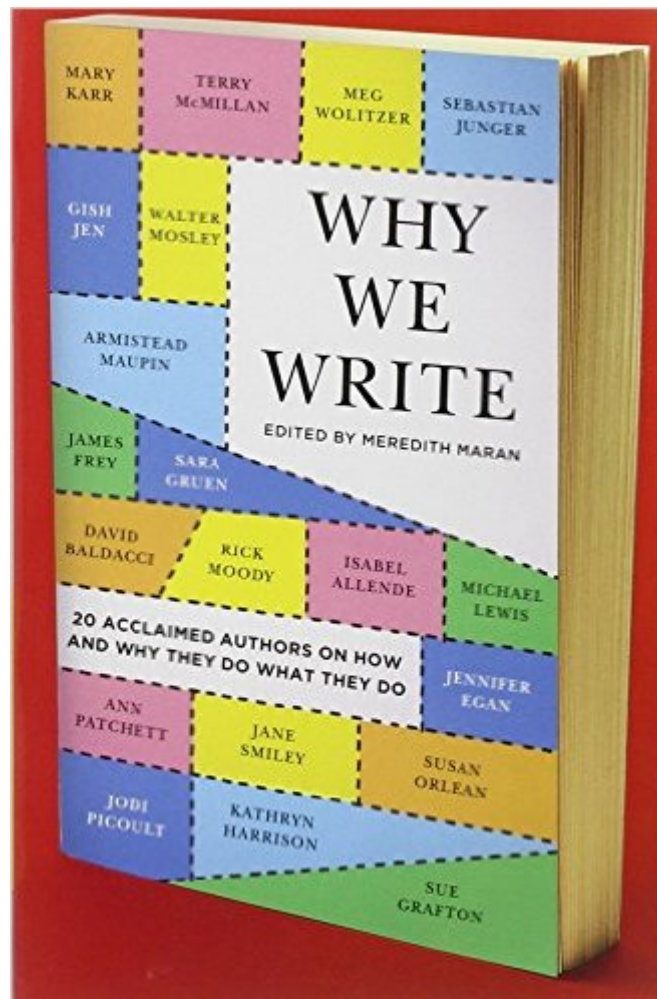


The book was found

Why We Write: 20 Acclaimed Authors On How And Why They Do What They Do



Synopsis

Twenty of America's bestselling authors share tricks, tips, and secrets of the successful writing life. Anyone who's ever sat down to write a novel or even a story knows how exhilarating and heartbreaking writing can be. So what makes writers stick with it? In *Why We Write*, twenty well-known authors candidly share what keeps them going and what they love most—and least—about their vocation. Contributing authors include: Isabel Allende, David Baldacci, Jennifer Egan, James Frey, Sue Grafton, Sara Gruen, Kathryn Harrison, Gish Jen, Sebastian Junger, Mary Karr, Michael Lewis, Armistead Maupin, Terry McMillan, Rick Moody, Walter Mosley, Susan Orlean, Ann Patchett, Jodi Picoult, Jane Smiley, Meg Wolitzer.

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Customer Reviews

Writing for most is a largely a labour of love. For a much, much smaller number it can be a lucrative profession. As editor Maran points out, "one million manuscripts are currently searching for a U.S. publisher. One percent of these will get the nod." Even then only thirty percent of published books turn a profit. Even with these daunting odds and a confusing publishing industry, more and more people are writing (which is great). The format of this particular book is clean, clear and appealing. Maran interviewed twenty notable authors and gives them each a short chapter. There is a nice balance between a standard set of questions and unique ones that flowed from the conversations. One of the things that works in its favour is the succinct length. The result is a comfortingly familiar set of responses mingled in with a wider array of pleasingly original bon mots. What struck me the most was honesty of response. All of those interviewed are extremely blunt in their assessment of

the trade. The long and short is, writing is a challenge both as a skill and as a business. What motivates these literary luminaries ranges from "sheer egoism" to "historical impulse" to bringing "order to the chaos of life". Among those in the book are David Baldacci, Sebastian Junger, Michael Lewis, Jodi Picoult and Meg Wolitzer. Sue Grafton delights with her reason for choosing the profession, "I write because in 1962 I put in my application for a job working in the children's department at Sears, and they never called me back." Most believe that to be a good writer, one must read. That is an oft-cited tip but Jennifer Egan takes it further by suggesting that writers should "Read at the level at which you want to write."

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