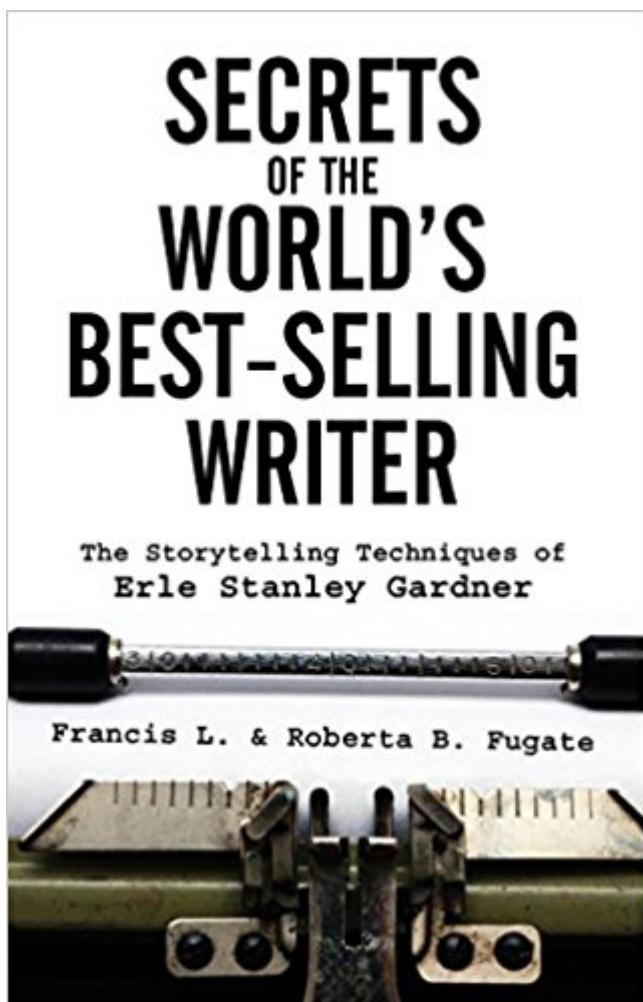


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# Secrets Of The World's Best-Selling Writer: The Storytelling Techniques Of Erle Stanley Gardner



## Synopsis

All the hard-earned storytelling skills of Erle Stanley Gardner, creator of Perry Mason and one of the best-selling writers of all time, are revealed in this informative, entertaining, and instructive book. The authors clearly present and analyze all the elements of narrative character, plot, conflict, and resolution as Gardner used them. Numerous extraordinary charts, diagrams, and outlines makes his hard-earned technical skills available to the reader in practical and useful forms. This book is ideal for Gardner collectors and fans, and equally for students of writing at all levels would-be writers, neophytes, and even published authors for it offers one of the most practical and professional courses ever in storytelling technique.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The stuff about his life and career was interesting, but the really valuable material for a writer is in the appendices: "Erle Stanley Gardner's 'Formula for Writing a Mystery'" "The Fluid or Unstatic Theory of Plots" "Page of Actors and Victims" "Character Components" "The Foundation of Character Background" "Chart of Romantic Conflict" "Conflicts of Mother Love" "Departures from Normal Theory of Story Situation" "The Plot Tide or Thrust" "The Mystery Aftermath Method" "The Last Plotting Notebook" Great stuff. As you might have gathered, Gardner is very analytical and systematic in his approach to plot. He had to be, to churn out as many successful mystery stories, novels, and TV scripts as he did. I read the hardback last year. I think I spent about \$100 for it. Definitely worth it, if you write mysteries. Ten bucks on Kindle is a steal.

I've read lots of books about writing fiction. This one's unique: a biographical study of the unusual writing methods of Erle Stanley Gardner -- creator of Perry Mason, and one of the most prolific and bestselling authors of all time. The book is drawn from Gardner's vast archives of correspondence, manuscripts, and notes. One of the most ambitious and analytical authors in history, Gardner kept records about everything he wrote, read, studied, or concluded. Authors Francis and Roberta Fugate sifted through this ponderous collection in order to determine what motivated this indefatigable writer -- and also how he managed to produce such a prodigious output of hundreds of stories, novellas, and novels at so rapid a pace, and for so many years. Fiction writers like me can certainly take inspiration and instruction from reading about authors like Gardner. His persistence in the face of years of early rejections and setbacks was admirable. Just as admirable was his openness to editorial criticism and his constant striving to learn and improve his craft. Throughout the text, and in a series of ten summary appendices, we find detailed essays, charts, and notes that Gardner prepared and referred to constantly, analyzing how to construct compelling plots, create memorable characters, and tweak his fast-paced style. Many of his methods and insights could be adopted or adapted by today's writers. My only criticism of the book is on its merits as a full-blown biography. A fuller work would have had to include interviews with others who knew him, and perhaps been a bit more probing about its subject's personal life, of which we get only a superficial impression. But the promise of this book is different, and it is stated right there in the title. It focuses more narrowly on Gardner's writing career, not his life generally. This biography promises to reveal Erle Stanley Gardner's writing secrets, and it fully delivers the goods. I recommend it to fellow authors who seek either the inspiration to face career setbacks and adversity, or tips and advice about crafting popular fiction. -- Robert Bidinotto, author, "HUNTER" and "BAD DEEDS"

Don't expect a clear how-to guide. The Fugates wade through the mass of papers Erle Stanley Gardner left and pull out some interesting notions. In a sense, it's the ideas these notions spark in the reader that are important. Some of the stuff is obvious, but perhaps writers overlook it. For instance, that readers want to escape and so have to be able to identify with the hero/heroine -- remembering that ESG wrote popular fiction. Other stuff is boiled down in a way that might make sense to you. I liked this: Purpose encounters Obstacle and creates Conflict. He also has an interesting take on advertising - see what is being advertised most, what is popular, and write that.

I am a huge Perry Mason fan. I collect the old hardcover editions and I have a first edition of the first

Perry Mason novel. I would have given this five stars if the title were more accurate. It is a biography of Erle Stanley Gardner and I really enjoy it and recommend it but I don't think the writer in the 21st century will learn a great deal of benefit. Gardner's career took place when young writers could make a great deal of money selling to the pulp magazines. If there is a corollary today, it would be Kindle Direct, Kobo, etc. If you like biographies and are a fan of Perry Mason, Donald Lam or Bertha Cool, by all means -- buy this book.

This may have at one time been a good book but its superficial analysis of the writer and the writer's techniques make it of limited value today.

Terrific book about writing, plotting, and character development. The various plot devices and methods used offer great advice. Interesting to see how Mr. Gardner was so prolific, willing to take advice, especially early on, and continued to study and hone his craft and style to the very end. Terrific book. A must on any writer or mystery readers shelf.

Wow! I enjoyed this book way more than I thought I would. Turns out old Erle Stanley Gardner was quite the interesting fellow! This book provides excellent insight into Mr. Gardner's work habits and the methods he used to plot his novels. I actually learned a lot. Secrets of the World's Best-Selling Writer is an excellent read for anyone interested in how successful authors go about their jobs.

Interesting if dry. A lot about lessons learned and plot construction. Skipped around between early works and Perry Mason.

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