

# Writing the Blockbuster Novel

*By Albert Zuckerman*

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Every novelist dreams of it--writing the book that rockets to the top of the best-seller lists. Now, they can see how it's done, up close, in a book by an agent who has sold manuscripts that turned into hits. Here Albert Zuckerman covers the essential elements of the blockbuster novel and shows writers how to put them to work in their books. Zuckerman covers the subject thoroughly, from creating outlines and building larger than life characters to injecting suspense and more. His instruction is decisive, direct and clear and is supported with examples from *Gone With the Wind*, *The Godfather* and other blockbusters.

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Amazon.com Review**

*Writing the Blockbuster Novel* is part fiction-biology textbook, part cookbook. Its author, Albert Zuckerman, dissects the commercial bestseller, then provides recipes for each discrete element. Settings, according to Zuckerman, should be "topical, trendy, 'sexy'"--either newsworthy hotspots or uncharted territory--and main characters, à la Don Corleone and Scarlett O'Hara, should loom larger than life. Like Hollywood blockbusters, "mega-books" should be high concept, with high stakes. Zuckerman discusses point of view (there should be multiple), character relationships, plotting, revision, and especially outlining. "Every mega-book with which I've been involved was planned and replanned and planned again," he confides. Indeed, a 63-page chapter here features four versions of Ken Follett's outline for *The Man from St. Petersburg* and an analysis of each. Still, no matter how good your outline, remember that there's a learning curve. A beginning novelist writing a successful blockbuster novel, says Zuckerman, is about as likely as "a high school athlete trying to play with the Dallas Cowboys." --*Jane Steinberg*

### **About the Author**

Albert Zuckerman has been an agent for more than 20 years. He represents Ken Follett and has helped several other writers reach the best-seller list. He lives in New York City.

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#### **Mack Washburn:**

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