



Allegra Huston

Author & Inspirer

“I believe imaginative writing is a gift everyone can give themselves—for creative satisfaction, for fun, for insight, and for making sense of our experience of living in the world.”

“When I was writing my memoir Love Child, I was shocked by how much I didn’t remember. So I thought, fine, if I can’t write what I know, I’ll write what I don’t know.”

That frustrated insight has become the book and online course *Write What You Don’t Know: 10 Steps to Writing with Confidence, Energy, and Flow*. Both inspirational and practical, *Write What You Don’t Know* is the distillation of the Imaginative Storm method, which I developed with my collaborator of over 20 years, the poet and creativity coach James Navé.

In my 30-year career, I’ve published a bestselling memoir, a novel, and two guidebooks for writers, as well as articles for publications in the US, the UK, and France. I’ve edited hundreds of books, whose authors include Booker and Nobel Prize winners. I’ve also written many screenplays and worked as a film development executive.

When I began to write, I thought I knew what I was doing. But I hit every wall, and made every mistake. So I feel I’m uniquely qualified to help those who want to write but are hitting their own walls—and to encourage others to experience the joy and insight of imaginative writing.



My explanation of how you can write what you don’t know





Ignite your imaginative intelligence and discover a level of creativity and self-expression you've never experienced before.

The Imaginative Storm method is a unique collaboration that brings together two very different approaches: my academic background (a First in English from Oxford University) and professional experience as Editorial Director of one of the UK's most respected literary publishers, and James Navé's experience as a championship-level slam poet and Artist's Way facilitator. It's a collaboration between the head and the heart, between spirit and intellect. Literally, between the rational mind and the imagination.

The core principles of the Imaginative Storm method are:

- trying to write well is the enemy of writing well
- mess is currency, not a liability
- let your imagination lead the dance with your rational mind

The Imaginative Storm method enables everyone (yes, everyone!) to unleash their imaginative intelligence and explore their creative potential.

“Enjoy life more. Be happier. This is quite a claim, but this has been my personal experience with the Imaginative Storm method. Some of the effects it had on me: Feel happier, alleviate boredom, keep curious about what will happen next. It can make you brave. Make you want to try what you’ve wanted to do, but feared.”

—Cloverling, Amazon review



Write What You Don't Know brings together everything James Navé and I have learned from each other, and from the thousands of writers we've worked with over more than two decades.

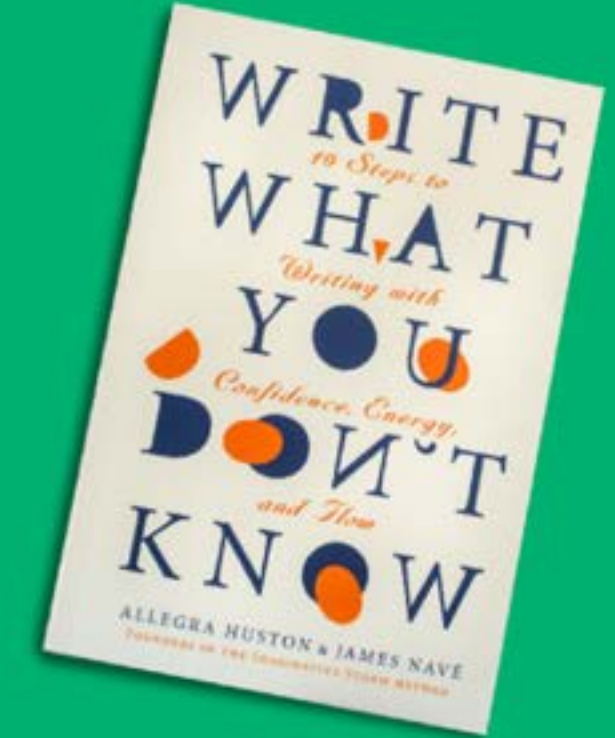
The core benefits of the Imaginative Storm method are:

- transforming your inner critic into your inner coach
- overcoming writer's block for good
- finding your own strong, authentic voice
- packing your writing with emotional power

I am the poster child for the Imaginative Storm method. Lynn Barber, the most feared literary critic in the UK, said in her review of my memoir *Love Child* that I am “incapable of writing a dull sentence.” If she only knew! I wrote nothing but dull, pompous, self-conscious sentences until I found the Imaginative Storm method.



What people
are saying about
Imaginative Storm



Praise from the pros

“Brilliant! Not only are your concepts and exercises both common-sensical and revolutionary, the writing is so calm, intelligent, friendly, unpretentious, precise, loving, funny and warm . . . I love this book. It’s so true and so excellent and kick-ass.”

— **Kate Christensen**, PEN/Faulkner Award-winning author of *The Great Man* and visiting faculty at Iowa Writers’ Workshop

“A true treasure trove of helpful exercises and insights. Like having a friend guide you through the process of getting in touch with your own creativity. I’m certain it will be a classic in its genre!”

— **Nicole Perlman**, screenwriter of *Guardians of the Galaxy* and mentor at Sundance Screenwriters Lab

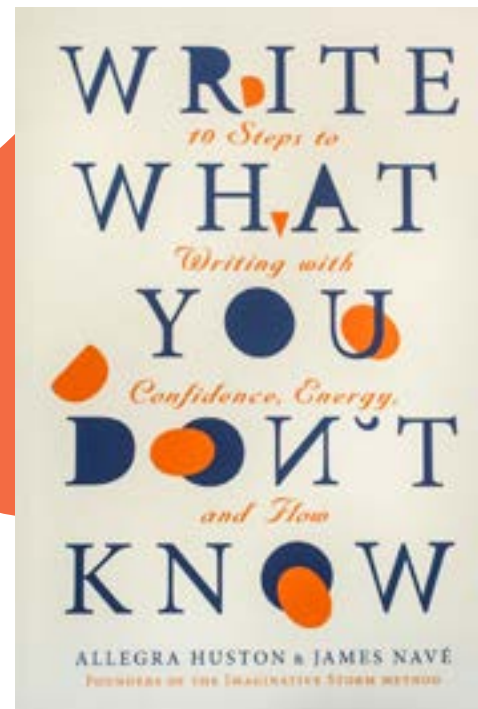
“A valuable, engaging, and accessible resource that is super FUN to work with to broaden ALL writing abilities. It certainly has helped me unlock and unleash my creative writing abilities and I am recommending it to my students in journalism school where I teach. I cannot recommend this book highly enough!”

— **Professor Judy Walgren**, Associate Director, Michigan State University School of Journalism

“Write What You Don’t Know is a challenging and fun read, pulling and pushing you to the pen. I felt encouraged to play with my writing, try new things, and overall just bring joy back to my writing process. Insightful, interesting, and innovative.”

— **Jahman Hill**, poet, professor at the University of Alabama, and author/performer of the award-winning one-man show *Black Enough*

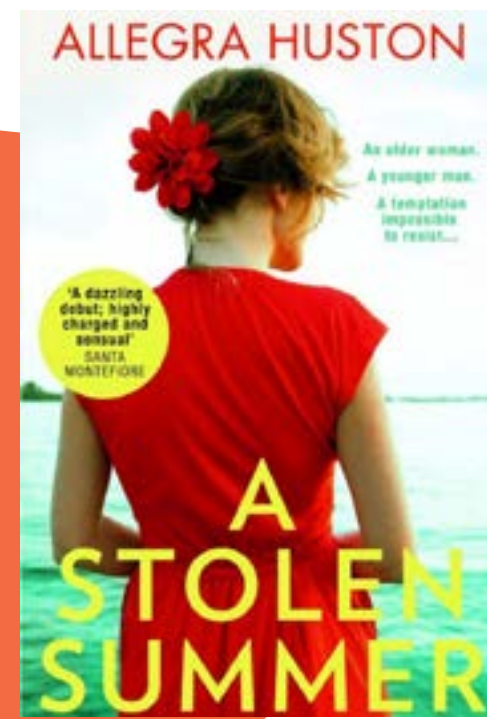
My books:



Write What You Don't Know
The result of a lifetime writing, teaching, and learning



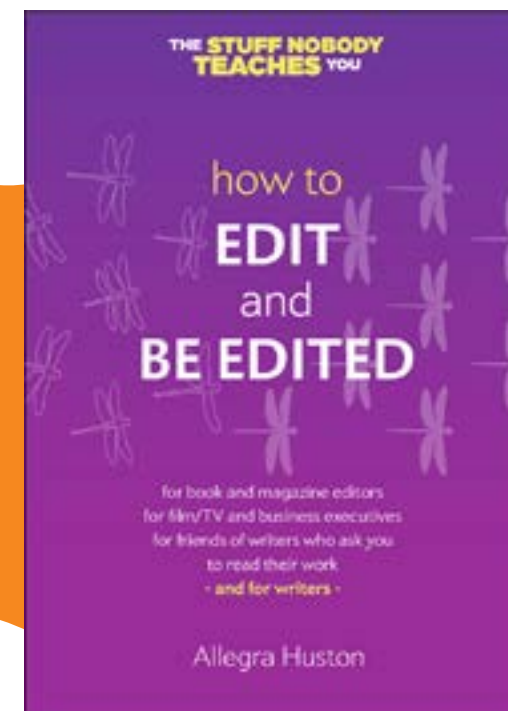
Love Child
Also available in audiobook read by me



A Stolen Summer
I wanted to write the thinking woman's sexy novel read by me



One Last Lunch
In this anthology is the best short piece I've written



How to Edit and Be Edited
An author I was working with insisted I write this



How to Read for an Audience
Reduce anxiety, create emotional connection!

And a short film:



Good Luck, Mr. Gorski
Crowdfunded – including bake sales and illegal raffles
[View on Vimeo](#)

Media appearances

Broadcast

- Local television talk shows on book tour for *Love Child*
- Radio interviews, including Leonard Lopate's book discussion program on NPR affiliate WNYC and BBC Radio 4's "Today" program

In person

- Presentations of up to 45 minutes in length at Hay Festival of Literature & Arts (the big tent), LEAF Festival, and to groups including the Huntington Beach Library Association
- Interviewed on-stage at the Port Eliot Festival and the Charleston Literary Festival
- Panel at LA Times Festival of Books
- Panel at Hay Festival of Literature & Arts
- Pecha Kucha about writing my novel ([viewable here](#))



With my father, John Julius Norwich, signing our books at the Hay Festival

Bio



In addition to the books, I have written for publications including *Newsweek*, *People*, and *Condé Nast Traveler*, and in the UK for *Perspective*, *Harper's Bazaar*, the *Mail on Sunday* magazine, and *The Times*. My article on midwifery, "Catching Babies in New Mexico," which appeared in *Mothering*, is on the website of the New Mexico State Historian.

As well as nine years in London publishing, at Chatto & Windus and then Weidenfeld & Nicolson (Editorial Director 1990–94), I spent five years on the editorial team of the international art and culture magazine *Garage*. For two years I was Acquisition and Development consultant for Pathé Films in London, and I've taught both screenwriting and memoir for the UK's prestigious Arvon Foundation.

I've also taught workshops for educational institutions including the University of Oklahoma and the National University of Ireland, Galway. As well as Imaginative Storm Writer Training (10 sessions live online), I teach an annual 5-day memoir intensive.



I grew up as the daughter of the legendary film director John Huston, surrounded by the highest levels of creativity. When I was 11, I learned that my biological father was in fact the British historian and media personality John Julius Norwich. It took some adjusting, but I now know how lucky I am to have had two such wonderful fathers.

I've lived in the eclectic and highly creative community of Taos, New Mexico, for the last 24 years, and raised a son whose father, Cisco Guevara, is the founder of New Mexico's oldest whitewater rafting company.



I would love to discuss:

- How writing can enrich your life by expanding your awareness and your understanding of yourself and other people
- My own journey from stiff, self-conscious, angst-ridden writer to free-flowing, playful, highly acclaimed writer
- The importance of creative expression for happiness, without the need to make it public
- How to write an intriguing memoir
- How to ask for and receive editorial feedback on your writing (and what's wrong with most creative writing classes)
- My life as a motherless daughter and "love child" who learned to embrace the unconventional shape of my family
- Self-publishing: why I believe it's the future for most writers

Contact me directly:

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