

An Author's Guide To Writing For
ACADEMICBYTES

Robert Parkes
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**An Author's Guide to Writing for
ACADEMIC BYTES**

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Academic Bytes
Mayfield NSW Australia

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Introduction

We are an independent publisher of short introductory guides to complex topics in social theory. We insist our authors avoid esoteric jargon and write in ways that make their topic accessible to college and university students and those new to the field in question. Our eBooks bridge the gap between 'Wikipedia' and traditional forms of academic textbook publishing. Our pedagogical publishing mission is to *make theory make sense, one byte at a time.*

Feel free to distribute this eBook guide to anyone who you think may be interested in publishing with us, or encourage them to download their own FREE copy from the Academic Bytes website:

<http://academicbytes.com/authors-guide-to-writing-for-academic-bytes/>

What are the benefits of publishing with Academic Bytes?

This guide explains many of the features and benefits of publishing with Academic Bytes. However, there are a number of specific benefits for our authors that we should mention right upfront:

- Writing an Academic Bytes eBook offers an opportunity to write in a challenging and exciting new genre, where you will be a *contributor at the cutting-edge of a new era of academic eBook publishing.*
- You will have the opportunity to articulate theory in a way that will *make sense to a non-expert audience*, while not sacrificing the rigour or complexity of your selected topic, *assisting undergraduate and postgraduate students around the globe.*
- While the eBooks you publish with Academic Bytes are unlikely to be your magnum opus, they will have the potential to *attract a much wider readership for your work*, drawing on the resources of Amazon Kindle's vast marketing machine to reach new audiences (often drawing attention to the work you have published through traditional academic outlets).
- You'll be participating fully in the eBook world, gaining its many benefits, but without experiencing issues associated with self-publishing, and you'll *waste none of your precious time formatting and marketing.*
- The *royalty percentage offered by Academic Bytes is much higher* than is typical in traditional academic publishing, due to Academic Bytes' focus on eBook publishing (and POD services for anthologies), rather than the distribution of large and costly print volumes.
- Because of the flexibility of the eBook medium, you'll be able to *update your texts and re-release new versions* of your eBooks whenever you feel there is a need. What's more, your readers will be able to *download any updates for free.* This will keep your

work current and in front of readers.

- You'll have the opportunity to *build your own edited anthologies, publishing each chapter as an eBook along the way*. This lets you work at your own pace, while avoiding any delay in having your ideas in circulation.
- Academic Bytes eBooks are short and to the point. They are relatively *quick to write and produce, and will be released rapidly into online circulation*. From start to finish the process could take weeks, rather than the months or years typical of other forms of traditional academic publishing.
- You'll be *participating in a form of collaborative intellectual entrepreneurship*, where the publisher seeks to fairly distribute any financial benefits accrued from sales to all parties involved in the publication process, from writers to editors, compilers to translators.

What sort of books are we seeking?

Each of our eBooks focuses on a single topic in social theory. The writing must remain sharp and to the point, providing clarity on a topic that tertiary educators have found hard to teach, or a common area of misunderstanding.

We are particularly seeking proposals that promise to do one or more of the following: (1) make a complex social theory make sense to novices; (2) assist readers to discriminate between two commonly confused ideas; (3) provide new academics with tips and tools for performing the various aspects of academic work; (4) explain and demonstrate how to apply a complex theory or methodology to the analysis of a specific form of data; (5) assist readers to understand or navigate a contemporary issue using social theory. However, we are always open to new and exciting ideas that sit outside these areas.

We do not publish journal articles or book-length 'original' research. We encourage you, like ourselves, to continue using traditional and open source academic publishing outlets for such texts.

What is the ideal length of an Academic Bytes text?

You won't have to slave over your computer for months to have an eBook available in the Kindle Store. Or we hope not! We expect the standard eBook to be somewhere around 6,000 words, the length of a standard academic journal article in the Social Sciences. The idea is to *keep your text short and to the point*, as our range is designed with busy and discerning readers in mind.

Why does Academic Bytes publish in the eBook format?

The publishing industry is undergoing an eBook revolution. Sales of both eBooks and eBook Readers are on the rise. We think this is an exciting moment to enter into the eBook publishing arena.

Making your eBook available through the Kindle Store gets it to the *widest possible readership*, and makes it *instantly available for download*. By distributing through the eBook form in this way there are no costly print runs, so *your book never needs to go out of print*.

Your eBook will also form part of a thematic series that will help it to be discovered in the Kindle Store, and we use *marketing strategies that ensure your eBook is cycled through the public eye*, not just promoted once and then dropped to gain (virtual) dust.

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Robert used a combination of PlainText and Scrivener to set up and write our first eBook publication: *What is Poststructuralism?* We strongly encourage our writers to take a look at these applications. We are confident, particularly if you working with longer documents, or a manuscript that has multiple chapters, that you will find the combination of Scrivener and one of Hog Bay's iPad writing apps a superb way to create a productive work flow. It should be noted that while Scrivener is currently available for a Windows environment, it does not support syncing in the same way that the Mac version does. If working in Windows, you might like to consider the [WritingOutliner](#) plugin for Microsoft Word that provides much the same functionality as Scrivener, but may make syncing via DropBox a little easier.

More recently we have also come across Tiger Ng's [Creative Book Builder](#) iPad app, which is awesome for writing and producing ePubs for the iPad's native iBooks

platform. The ePub it outputs can also be submitted to Academic Bytes as a final draft of your eBook. We then run it through our own processes to adjust styles and correct any formatting discrepancies.

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What is the typical recommended retail price of an Academic Bytes eBook?

The typical Academic Bytes eBook will retail for \$2.99 in the Amazon Kindle store. Your eBook will provide *great value for readers by being made available at affordable prices*. The cost of the standard academic text published through traditional publishing outlets is prohibitive for many readers. We believe that by making your eBook available at a fraction of the cost of even a download on demand journal article, you are likely to see *a wider readership for your work*. Undoubtedly, the low price tag will be attractive to readers who are otherwise undecided about buying an eBook.

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Does Academic Bytes publish longer non-fiction works?

Generally speaking, Academic Bytes focuses on publishing quality, concise eBooks. However, from time to time Academic Bytes will bring out an anthology that combines several of our eBooks into one single volume. This type of anthology is likely to be thematic, author, or series focused. The exact focus will depend on the availability of suitable content in our eBook range.

Unlike our regular eBooks, *each anthology will be available in both an electronic and a POD (Print On Demand) version.* Each of our anthologies will be allocated appropriate ISBN numbers. This means that there is a possibility that the anthology will be available for institutional audit purposes (it is best to check with your institution's librarian on this).

What this means for our authors is that they can build an anthology piece by piece, with *each 'chapter' or 'section' of the final anthology being available as an eBook along the way.* This provides much greater flexibility for textbook authors than traditional print publishing.

How do I submit an eBook proposal to Academic Bytes?

Go to the Academic Bytes website, and navigate to the Author's page:

<http://academicbytes.com/authors/>

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- Author Name/s
- Proposed Title of eBook
- Series you think your eBook will be best suited for
- Short Synopsis of your proposed eBook
- Identification of target audience for the eBook
- List of two or three competing titles already in Amazon Kindle Store
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Yes! As each Academic Bytes eBook undergoes a peer-appraisal and editorial review process, it can certainly be added to a list of 'textbook' or 'other' publications in your CV.

What royalties can I expect?

Most traditional publishers will provide academics with 2-4% royalties on the first 150 books sold. While royalties after that may reach 10%, it is rare for a traditional academic text to sell more than 150 books, so a 10% royalty may never be attained. Operating out of an evolving form of collaborative intellectual entrepreneurship, Academic Bytes *equitably distributes the profits generated by our intellectual efforts between all those involved in the production and distribution of our eBooks*, including: authors, editors, artists, reviewers, translators, and publishers.

For each Kindle eBook sold at full retail price, a publisher will receive a royalty of either 35% or 70% (depending on whether the eBook was purchased through Amazon.com or one of its international subsidiaries). When royalties accumulate to \$100 or more per Amazon outlet, Kindle Direct Publishing will release the funds to the publisher (this may take several months depending on the volume of sales). Each month authors will be emailed their unaltered and unabridged Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) sales report, so they can keep track of the number of sales. Royalties will be paid whenever Amazon releases funds to the publisher.

Once Amazon KDP has released the royalties to Academic Bytes, we then take a 30% commission (more in the tradition of an agent rather than a publisher) on all payments received, and pay the balance as a royalty to authors. This provides authors with a much better deal on royalties than is typically possible in the academic publishing industry.

It is our view that translating a text is a much more complex affair than simple word substitution, as anyone who has used an online translation service knows. We believe a translator effectively re-authors the text. If the work is translated and sold in a language other than English, a commission is also paid to the translator, resulting in a lower royalty for authors. However, this broadens the distribution of the work, providing the possibility of sales the author would not have had otherwise, and fairly rewards the work of the translator.

Royalty Calculation Formulae

The royalty calculation looks like this (no matter how many you sell):

Sale Price x Nos. of Units Sold x Amazon Royalty (either 35% or 70%)

minus Amazon Fees = Publisher's Royalty

* * *

For eBooks in English

Publisher's Royalty x 30% = Publisher's Commission

Publisher's Royalty *minus* Publisher's Commission

= Standard Author's Royalty

For eBooks in Translation

Publisher's Royalty x 30% = Publisher's Commission

Publisher's Royalty x 40% = Translator's Commission

Publisher's Royalty *minus* Combined Commissions = Non-Standard Author's Royalty

Example 1: Standard Author Royalty Calculation for Sales in English

Sale Price \$2.99 x 100 Units Sold

= Sales Figure of \$299

Sales Figure of \$299 x Amazon Royalty (70%)

minus any Amazon Fees (none in this example)

= Publisher's Royalty of \$209.30

Publisher's Royalty of \$209.30 x 30%

= Publisher's Commission of \$62.79

Publisher's Royalty of \$209.30

minus Publisher's Commission of \$62.79

= Standard Author's Royalty of \$146.51

Note: Amazon publisher's royalties vary (either 35% or 70%) depending on the store in which the eBook was sold. For this example we have used the higher royalty of 70% to show maximum Standard Author Royalty likely to result from the sale of 100 units at full retail price. Actual royalties are likely to be a mix of both 35% and 70% and Amazon fees with vary, but will typically be very small. While Amazon pays the Publisher's Royalty in US Dollars, Academic Bytes will pay the Author Royalty in Australian Dollars at the current conversion rate of our bank.

Example 2: Non-Standard Author Royalty Calculation for Sales in Translation

Sale Price EURO 2.68 x 100 Units Sold = Sales Figure of EURO 268

Sales Figure of EURO 268 x Amazon Royalty (70%)
minus any Amazon Fees (none in this example)
= Publisher's Royalty of EURO 187.60

Publisher's Royalty of EURO 187.60 x 30%
= Publisher's Commission of EURO 56.28

Publisher's Royalty of EURO 187.60 x 40%
= Translator's Commission of EURO 75.04

Publisher's Royalty of EURO 187.60
minus Commissions of EURO 131.32 (56.28 + 75.04)
= Non-Standard Author's Royalty of EURO 56.28

Note: Amazon publisher's royalties vary (either 35% or 70%) depending on the store in which the eBook was sold. For this example we have used the higher royalty of 70% to show maximum Non-Standard Author Royalty likely to result from the sale of 100 units at full retail price. Actual royalties are likely to be a mix of both 35% and 70% and Amazon fees will vary, but will typically be very small. While Amazon pays the Publisher's Royalty in the above example in EURO, Academic Bytes will pay the Author Royalty in Australian Dollars at the current conversion rate of our bank.

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What happens after a manuscript is accepted?

If your manuscript is accepted, you will receive a contract via email that you must sign and return. You then start work on your manuscript. Once it is complete you submit it for review. Depending on the results of the review, you may be asked to make changes to the manuscript. Once we have a manuscript that we are satisfied is of the required quality, we commence the process of turning your manuscript into an eBook.

There are a number of steps involved in this process. Listed below are some of the steps we must move through. We have listed the resources we use at each step as a way of saying thank you to the producers of these resources, as they have been indispensable to our publishing efforts. As an author *you need not worry about any of this process*, as this is handled by the Academic Bytes editorial team.

eBook Design and Coding

We used the [eBook Design and Development Guide](#) by Paul Salvette, available through the Amazon Kindle Store, as a guide to creating clean, great looking EPUBs by manipulating html and css code. This really does result in much better formatted books than trying to convert files directly into html from Microsoft Word, for example.

eBook Compiling and Editing

We use an application called [Sigil](#) on the Mac to edit and compile our ePub files, based on the coding instructions from Paul Salvette's book (described above). Sigil 0.5.3 was excellent for doing final edits on the electronic manuscript, checking its formatting, and producing a perfect EPUB file. Robert couldn't get the latest version to work on his Mac Book Pro (running 10.6.8), but 0.5.3 worked a charm.

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What should I do if I have further questions I'd like answered?

If you have a burning question that has remained unanswered after reading through this guide, then please send an email to: academic.bytes@gmail.com

Alternatively, if you were sent this guide by one of our editors or directors, then please feel free to correspond with them directly.

We also recommend that you visit our website and explore the range of eBooks we have already published or have flagged as in production. Our website is located at: <http://academicbytes.com>

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