

# **The First One's Free**

## **Editing, Encouragement**

### **Help for Stories, Books, and Journals**

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this is part of my  
Broken Stories Unfinished Dreams  
series

This is an old come-on.  
But if you find it compelling, feel free to send me an email.  
[Brett@Paufler.net](mailto:Brett@Paufler.net)

[www.Paufler.net](http://www.Paufler.net)

[Brett@Paufler.net](mailto:Brett@Paufler.net)  
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I have been writing seriously for two years. What this means is that in the last two years I've written 500,000 odd words (or 2000 double spaced pages), and in the process put together quite the library of novels, rants, how to books, travel logs, reviews, articles, and short stories (all unpublished). Most of what I've written is crap. The rest... well, like I said, no one has paid me for anything that I've written yet, but I have gotten some very nice rejection letters. In short, I am an amateur, trying very hard to turn professional. Perhaps I can help you, and/or perhaps you can help me.

The purpose of this posting is to connect with like minded writers to form a community and/or to get some money flowing into my pocket. To this end, I am open to all sorts of scenarios. Please consider the enclosed as proposed starting points. From my point of view, everything and/or anything is negotiable.

[Email Me for Random Advice](#): Got a quick writing question? Send me an email. Maybe I know the answer... maybe I don't.

Either way, I am interested to know what concerns my fellow writers.

Community: If you are a writer in the greater ----- area, I would like to meet with you over pizza (Dutch treat) at the ----- or some similar venue and discuss our writing. If you would like to bring along your own writing samples, etc. for me to critique, provide feedback, or edit on the fly, I would be happy to comply, but then I would expect you to buy the pizza. This is not a come on, my girlfriend may or not accompany me, and likewise, whoever you invite on your side is fine by me.

Editing: The standard rate for editing appears to be around \$50/hr. I would love to get in on that kind of money. Want to pay someone \$50/hr, then I'm your man. If interested, send me an email with a one page writing sample and let's (both) see what I can do with it. That first page will, of course, be done gratis.

Ghost Writing: Want to write that autobiography, but need help? Know the ultimate story, but are finding it hard to put it down on paper. Ghostwriting and collaborate services run anywhere from \$1-\$100/hr depending. \$1 means it's my ideas and you do all the work (split authorship with you being the workhorse). \$100 means it's your ideas and I do all the work (you own the copyright, while I laugh all the way to the bank with my weekly paycheck). Like everything else, this would need to be discussed, negotiated, and formalized with some sort of written contract (until something is signed by both of us and I've cashed a check, we do not have an agreement -- please also notice in which direction the money is flowing, mine). Furthermore, as much as I'd like the money, not every story is mine to write, and quite honestly, I have found that most partnerships hinder me far more than they help (something that you just might want to keep in mind before you start forking over any money for an editing/writing service, even this one).

Vaguely interested? Send me an email letting me know what aspect of this spiel you are interested in, your question, a one page writing sample, or how you would like to proceed. Please keep in mind, the average response to a Craigslist ad is generated from a spambot, so if you want me to respond, either spend a moment or two writing your email (I mean, you are a writer, after all correct?), or play it safe and state right at the beginning that, "I am not a spambot." Those ever helpful replies that consist entirely of the words, "Tell me more," or, "Sounds interesting," will be ignored.

Not that you asked for it, but here's some random advice. It might help you better understand where I am coming from, and the bias inherent in any help or advice that I might give.

1) Ideas are worthless. The only thing that has value in the writing world are hyper-polished creative works. Want to buy a story idea? Give me a \$100 and I'll set you up.

2) Even once you've polished up that creative work till it glows in the dark, it's still pretty much worthless. An unpublished novel length manuscript (100,000 words) by an unknown, uncredentialed author (someone like me for instance) is worth about \$250. First off, the odds say that it will never get published. If it does, most books only last 8 weeks on the store shelf before they are consigned to the dustbin of obscurity netting their authors a few thousand (at best). Successful (fiction) books pull in about \$5-10,000 for the author, while a typical best seller nets \$50,000. (Let's leave Harry Potter and The Da Vinci Code out of this). Like everything, I could be wrong. If you've got stats that say otherwise, I'd love to know your source, but to back up my claim, I would point out that pretty much every author out there is willing to do consulting work for \$50/hr. Why? Because \$50/hr pays about \$50/hr better than most writing does.

3) Let me put the hourly return on writing into perspective. I can write at a speed upwards of 1000 words/hour. That's a mere 100 hours for a 100,000 word novel, but at that point the novel is

crap. It's really nothing more than an outline of a complex idea. To reduce that idea into a rough draft will take another 250-500 hours, and then to edit that rough draft into a (hopefully) sellable product takes another 100-200 hours. That's a grand total of 500-1000 hours, which means that the typical fiction writer is writing for something less than \$1/hr. I know I am.

4) One final thought, and then you'll have to email me if you want to continue the discussion. I rewrite everything I do at least seven times (even this ad). After I've rewritten something seven times, I call it my rough draft. If you haven't rewritten something at least a half dozen times (if not more), then you don't need an editing service, you need to sit down and rewrite that sucker. And bottom line, if you can't be bothered to rewrite your own manuscript a dozen times (or don't find it compelling enough to draw you -- the writer -- in for countless rereads), then don't expect anyone else to feel the need to read whatever you have written either... for free, I mean. At \$50/hr I can read, edit, or talk about pretty much anything. Of course, if what you've got is interesting or I think that I might learn from you, I might charge considerable less, so let's talk... or rather, that is, let's write.