

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-44448-4 — Digital Authorship  
R. Lyle Skains  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---

# Cambridge Elements<sup>≡</sup>

Elements in Publishing and Book Culture

edited by

Samantha Rayner

*University College London*

and

Rebecca Lyons

*University of Bristol*

---

## THE DIGITAL AUTHOR

*Publishing in the Attention Economy*

R. Lyle Skains

*Bangor University*

---



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-44448-4 — Digital Authorship  
R. Lyle Skains  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
New Delhi – 110025, India  
79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.  
It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of  
education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108444484](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108444484)  
DOI: 10.1017/9781108649537

© R. Lyle Skains 2019

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception  
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,  
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written  
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2019

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

ISBN 978-1-108-44448-4 Paperback  
ISSN 2514-8524 (online)  
ISSN 2514-8516 (print)

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of  
URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication  
and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain,  
accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-44448-4 — Digital Authorship  
R. Lyle Skains  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

Cambridge Elements

The Digital Author  
Publishing in the Attention Economy

Elements in Publishing and Book Culture

DOI: 10.1017/9781108649537  
First published online: January 2019

---

R. Lyle Skains  
*Bangor University*

Author for correspondence: [r.l.skains@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:r.l.skains@bangor.ac.uk)

**ABSTRACT:** This Element looks at contemporary authorship via three key authorial roles: indie publisher, hybrid author, and fanfiction writer. The twenty-first century's digital and networked media allows writers to disintermediate the established structures of royalty publishing and to distribute their work directly to – and often in collaboration with – their readers. This demotic author, one who is “of the people,” often works in genres considered “popular” or “derivative.” The demotic author eschews the top-down communication flow of author > text > reader, in favor of publishing platforms that generate attention capital, such as blogs, fanfiction communities, and social media.

**KEYWORDS:** indie publishing, demotic author, fanfiction authorship, hybrid authorship, self-publishing

© R. Lyle Skains 2019  
ISBNs: 9781108444484 (PB), 9781108649537 (OC)  
ISSNs: 2514-8524 (online), 2514-8516 (print)

# Contents

Introduction	1
1 The New Digital Author	11
2 The Power of the Demotic Author	42
3 The Rising Underclass of the Fanfic Author	61
Discussion and Conclusions	83
References	95