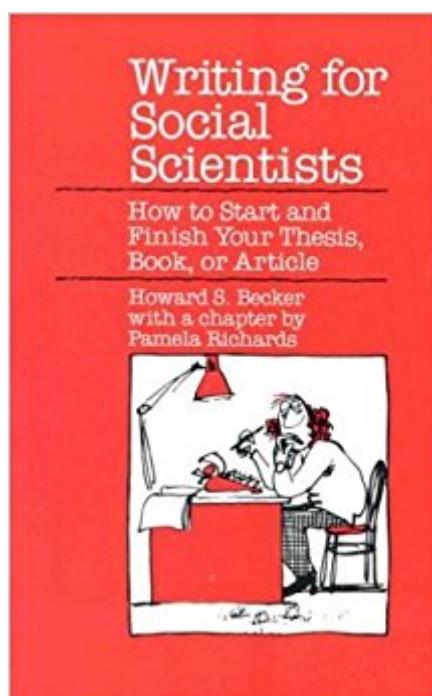


The book was found

Writing For Social Scientists: How To Start And Finish Your Thesis, Book, Or Article (Chicago Guides To Writing, Editing, And Publishing)



Synopsis

Social scientists, whether earnest graduate students or tenured faculty members, clearly know the rules that govern good writing. But for some reason they choose to ignore those guidelines and churn out turgid, pompous, and obscure prose. Distinguished sociologist Howard S. Becker, true to his calling, looks for an explanation for this bizarre behavior not in the psyches of his colleagues but in the structure of his profession. In this highly personal and inspirational volume he considers academic writing as a social activity. Both the means and the reasons for writing a thesis or article or book are socially structured by the organization of graduate study, the requirements for publication, and the conditions for promotion, and the pressures arising from these situations create the writing style so often lampooned and lamented. Drawing on his thirty-five years' experience as a researcher, writer, and teacher, Becker exposes the foibles of the academic profession to the light of sociological analysis and gentle humor. He also offers eminently useful suggestions for ways to make social scientists better and more productive writers. Among the topics discussed are how to overcome the paralyzing fears of chaos and ridicule that lead to writer's block; how to rewrite and revise, again and again; how to adopt a persona compatible with lucid prose; how to deal with that academic bugaboo, "the literature." There is also a chapter by Pamela Richards on the personal and professional risks involved in scholarly writing. In recounting his own trials and errors Becker offers his readers not a model to be slavishly imitated but an example to inspire. Throughout, his focus is on the elusive work habits that contribute to good writing, not the more easily learned rules of grammar and punctuation. Although his examples are drawn from sociological literature, his conclusions apply to all fields of social science, and indeed to all areas of scholarly endeavor. The message is clear: you don't have to write like a social scientist to be one.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Howard S. Becker has made major contributions to the sociology of deviance, sociology of art, and sociology of music. He has also written extensively on the practice of sociology. He received a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, where he was also an instructor in sociology and social sciences. He became professor of sociology at Northwestern University, where he taught for twenty-five years. When he retired from active teaching he was a professor of sociology and an adjunct professor of music at the University of Washington. He lives and works in San Francisco and Paris.

Not worth the paper its printed on. Tells you nothing and provide no guidance. It might as well be fiction.

This book probably changed my life. I read it in graduate school twenty years ago, and I still read it. Everytime I do I reflect and learn something new. This is the best writing book for scholars or writers in the past 25 years -- I've read most of them, if not all.

Every social scientist should read this book.

This was the best \$10 I've ever invested. The book is wonderful; clear and concise. It's made a big difference with my papers through understanding that writing is a process that mostly begins with angst, that there are a few quick tricks that can make any paper much better and that big words in scientific papers don't make the paper scientific (or readable). BUY THE BOOK!!!

Great book, entertaining and informative. I am using this as a tool for writing articles and a dissertation in grad school, so thank you!

Simple easy jargon that brings comfort to the reader about writing. I recommend this text for all students who have to write a lot and may have a fear of writing

An excellent book!! Really like it! !!! I would recommend to anyone !!! :)

The author provided a guide to assist the social scientist in writing clear, concise articles, books, etc. Tips for revising/editing were helpful, as were the suggestions for overcoming procrastination, and finding critical colleagues to assist in the process. The tips, I think, were helpful; however, as the author points out, many scientific journals are not interested in articles that are clear and concise.

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