# Anthony Good on careers in writing

Megan Baffoe: What advice would you have for those wishing for a career in writing?

Anthony Good: Career is a good question. It depends what you want, and I think really, if you want a career in the sort of world of letters and publishing, then you probably do want to be in, you know, in the office of a publisher rather than trying to sell books, because I certainly wouldn't describe my—whatever I've achieved in terms of writing, it doesn't amount really to a career and it wouldn't afford me a lifestyle where I could actually write, which is the worst irony. You spend years and years and years and then you sell a book and—they paid me, I think, £10,000 as an advance, which obviously you can't live on if you spread that across all the years that you've been writing,

And so if you want to write, I'd say just get started right now. You know, don't wait. And my ethos has always been to try and get, you know, make my lifestyle fit around writing. I've not always been successful, but I've always tried to make sure I have enough time so that I can keep writing even if my writing is never successful, even if I never get a penny from writing, since that's important to me. Rather than, you know, if I relied on my income from writing. First of all, I'd be broke. But I think it would just deform the process because I'd be so much stressed out and it would change what I was writing.

But yeah, it's a difficult one. You can make a career of it, but I think all the people with careers are, like, agents and editors and stuff, and everyone else is poor, apart from like the 1% towards which all the wealth goes. Of course, in all fields and writing is no different in that sense.

But yeah, the good thing is that—the great thing about writing is that you have no dependencies on anyone else or anything else. It's not like if you want to make a film and you have to sort of be a social butterfly or get favours in or you know, have enough money to afford XY&Z you know. Anyone can write, it's just the selling it that's difficult!