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Four Shades of Gray

The Amazon Kindle Platform

By: Simon Peter Rowberry

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A Note on Spelling

Ebook: The term “ebook” has three primary spellings: ebook, e-book, eBook. Just as email lost its hyphen, I use “ebook” to reflect the naturalization process that has occurred over the last decade. The only exception will be when referencing brands that have used variant spellings (e.g., Franklin eBookMan, Open eBook).

Amazon: While the full company name is Amazon.com Inc., for the sake of readability, I use “Amazon” to refer to Amazon.com Inc. and denote regional variants (e.g., Amazon.co.uk) where appropriate. “Amazon” will also incorporate subsidiaries such as Amazon Technology.

Reading system: When talking about the combination of hardware and software and its influence on the appearance of ebook texts, I use “reading system,” a term coined for the EPUB specification that is roughly equivalent to the web browser terminology “user agent.”

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