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AUTHOR HANDBOOK

Dissertations

Publishing your (revised) dissertation as a book with an Academic Press:

- 1 Find presses that publish in your field of study. Check their lists.
- 2 Find presses that follow a rigorous peer review process. Peer review, despite its flaws, remains the gold standard for trust in the quality of a publication.
- 3 Utilize the author proposal form on a press's website and prepare it carefully.
- 4 Find presses that utilize copy editors, and include notes, bibliographies and indexes in their books.
- 5 Find presses that have international distributors, market their books to libraries and bookstores, and send books out for review to both academic journals and quality newspapers with book sections.
- 6 Be prepared to obtain grants—known as subventions—to cover some of the costs of producing the book, such as copy editing, reproductions, permissions, and indexing.
- 7 Understand the differences between a dissertation and a book, and take the time needed to revise, that is, to rethink and rewrite. See Germano, 2013, Checklist 1.

Signs that your thesis is becoming a book manuscript:

- 1 The Table of Contents is no more than two pages long.
- 2 Subheadings have been replaced by well-written transitions between sections.
- 3 The Introduction offers a portal into the main topics of the book—it is no longer a shopping list of “in Chapter 1...; in chapter 2...” Rather, the reader is offered an appetizer of the kinds of questions that will be raised in the book so as to entice their interest in reading your book.
- 4 You keep asking while revising: Why does it matter? What necessitated turning this into a book rather than leaving it as a thesis or publishing as articles?
- 5 At the end of each chapter, you pave the way for the next chapter and lead the reader into the discussion. You don’t need to say “in the next chapter...” (this is thesis stuff) but instead lead the reader forward through the book by beginning to raise some of the questions you will explore next. Or you offer a catch that will make the reader want to explore the next chapter, such as by turning the end of a chapter into a cliff-hanger.
- 6 Previously published sections of the thesis have been reconceived to make sense within the broader picture of your book.
- 7 The Conclusion no longer takes the reader back into the arguments and summarizes what you have done. Instead, it now leads readers out of the book. The strands of your arguments are woven together in a way that leads readers to consider new options or possibilities, or points to future avenues for exploration that develop from your discussion.
- 8 On the whole, notes contain only source material; additional material is either deleted or integrated in the text or as a sidebar.

Books and articles that offer good advice on the topic:

William Germano, *From Dissertation to Book*. 2nd ed. (U of Chicago Press, 2013).

William Germano, *Getting it Published*. 2nd ed. (University of Chicago Press, 2008).

Eleanor Harman, et al., *The Thesis and the Book*. (U of T Press, 2003).

Beth Luey, *Handbook for Academic Authors*. 4th ed. (Cambridge U Press, 2002). [See chapter on thesis and book]

James Mulholland, "What I've Learned about Publishing a Book," *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 45 (April 2014), 211–236.

James Mulholland, "What I've Learned about Revising a Dissertation," *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 43 (October 2011), 39–51.

Jacob L. Wright, "What Enhanced E-Books Can Do for Scholarly Authors," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 21 April 2014.

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