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FROM CONCEPTION TO BOOKSHELF: DEVELOPING AND PUBLISHING AN EDITED SCHOLARLY BOOK

This article explains the process of proposing and editing a multi-authored scholarly book and dealing with academic and university publishers. It begins with the conception of the idea. It then addresses soliciting authors to write chapters; identifying suitable academic publishers; organizing and submitting proposals; the peer review process; timely completion of the manuscript; and marketing. It draws from the author's experience as the lead editor of two volumes on international journalism – *After the Czars and Commissars: Journalism in Authoritarian Post-Soviet Central Asia* (Michigan State University Press) and *Critical Perspectives on Journalistic Beliefs and Actions: Global Experiences* (Routledge) – and two volumes on international environmental issues: *Environmental Crises in Central Asia: From Steppes to Seas, from Deserts to Glaciers* (Routledge) and *Biodiversity, Conservation and Environmental Management in the Great Lakes Basin* (Routledge).

Key words: editing, scientific book, marketing, university publishing houses.

Эрик Фридман

Мичиган мемлекеттік университетінің профессоры,
«Кнайт экологиялық журналистика орталығының директоры, АҚШ, Мичиган қ.

Тұжырымдамадан бастап кітап сөресіне дейін: редакцияланған ғылыми кітапты дайындау және басып шығару

Бұл мақалада ғылыми басылымдардың барлық түрлерін редакциялау жолдары және оларды академиялық немесе университеттік баспаларға ұсынудың әдістемелік жолдарын баяндайды. Барлық жұмыс негізінен идеяның тұжырымдамасынан басталады. Одан әрі авторларға тарауларды жазуға өтініш жасайды; лайықты академиялық баспагерлерді анықтайды; аңдатпаларды ұйымдастырады және сарапшының пікірін жазуды; қолжазбаның уақтылы аяқталуын қадағалау және маркетинг жұмысын бақылау жұмыстары жүргізіледі. Бұл мақала автордың *After the Czars and Commissars: Journalism in Authoritarian Post-Soviet Central Asia* (Michigan State University Press) және *Critical Perspectives on Journalistic Beliefs and Actions: Global Experiences* (Routledge) және халықаралық экологиялық мәселелер бойынша екі томдық: *Environmental Crises in Central Asia: From Steppes to Seas, from Deserts to Glaciers* (Routledge) және *Biodiversity, Conservation and Environmental Management in the Great Lakes Basin* (Routledge) еңбектері негізінде жазылған.

Түйін сөздер: редакциялау, ғылыми кітап, маркетинг, университет баспасы.

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От концепции к книжной полке: разработка и публикация редактируемой научной книги

В этой статье описывается процесс предложения и редактирования всех разновидностей научной книги, а также методика работы с академическими и университетскими издателями. Все начинается с концепции идеи. Затем редактор работает с авторами, пишущими конкретные разделы и главы; определяет подходящих академических издателей; контролирует организацию и представление предложений; процесс экспертной оценки; своевременное завершение руко-

писи; маркетинг. Этот опыт основан на следующих трудах автора: *After the Czars and Commissars: Journalism in Authoritarian Post-Soviet Central Asia* (Michigan State University Press) и *Critical Perspectives on Journalistic Beliefs and Actions: Global Experiences* (Routledge) – и два тома по международным экологическим вопросам: *Environmental Crises in Central Asia: From Steppes to Seas, from Deserts to Glaciers* (Routledge) и *Biodiversity, Conservation and Environmental Management in the Great Lakes Basin* (Routledge).

Ключевые слова: редактирование, научная книга, маркетинг, университетские издательства.

Introduction

One of a scholar's most challenging tasks is developing an edited book that draws on the experiences and research of a wide range of scholars and practitioners. It is a lengthy process that starts with conceiving of the book's theme and focus, and it ends with promotion and marketing of the finished book. In between are extensive coordination of the work of the many chapter authors and multiple revisions. From my experience as an editor of four such volumes, these projects always requires more time, energy, and work than expected. However, there is deep professional and personal satisfaction once the book is published.

The idea

Regardless of their discipline, scholars have an ocean of ideas to study and write about. However, it requires more than a general idea to support a viable book that will attract readers and advance knowledge. Therefore, as editor you must identify a specific focus for your book that will not duplicate what has already been published. You should be able to summarize that idea in one sentence.

Identifying chapter authors

There are several principal strategies to identify and recruit chapter authors for your book. One strategy is to invite experts you know personally or by reputation to submit abstracts and CVs. A second strategy is to distribute a "call for chapters" to members of your professional associations. For my books, those have included journalism, mass communication, and Central Asian studies associations. The call for chapters should briefly describe your project, tell scholars how long chapters should be, request abstracts and CVs, and set a deadline for submissions. A third strategy is to read recent conference papers and journal articles, then ask their authors if they are willing to revise and update their work into a chapter format.

With any of these strategies, you must carefully consider each submission and preliminarily decide which ones to include in the full proposal to publishers. Factors that go into that decision

include: Does the chapter closely fits the theme of the book? Will it be relevant and interesting to readers? Is the chapter timely and does it contain the latest research? What are the chapter authors' reputation and credentials? What is the quality of both the research and the writing? Are the chapter authors able to meet all deadlines?

As the editor, you will determine what is essential to be in the book. If you did not receive an acceptable submission on an essential topic, contact other scholars who may be able to fill that need. As a matter of courtesy, promptly notify authors whom you reject.

Identifying suitable publishers

To identify appropriate scholarly publishers, first examine their catalogues to ensure they publish books in your discipline. Then look at their websites to see if there is a specific staff member who handles your discipline. If so, free to email or telephone the appropriate staff member if you have any questions.

There are a troubling number of companies that pretend to be scholarly and peer-reviewed but are not. You can usually identify these so-called "predatory publishers" because they demand substantial fees and promise quick publication. Some of them have names that closely resemble the names of reputable publishers. In reality, academic libraries and other scholars will not purchase such books because they lack credibility and respect. Nor will other researchers cite them.

The proposal

The proposal is your sales pitch, your best effort to convince a publisher to accept your book. A short cover letter should briefly describe the project and your qualifications to do it. Some publishers demand a full, completed manuscript but most require only a detailed outline, table of contents, information on the credentials of the chapter authors, and one or two sample chapters. Each legitimate scholarly publisher has its own set of guidelines and requirements. Follow those guidelines or your proposal may be rejected without careful consideration by the publishers' staff and by outside reviewers. All legitimate publishers will ask

for the editors' CVs, a list of similar and competing titles, a list of potential markets for your book, and the estimated number of words, tables and figures in the manuscript. Publishers may also ask what types of courses might use the book.

For the outline and table of contents, include the authors' abstracts after you revise them for clarity and consistent style. Place the authors' brief credentials after each abstract – for example, Eric Freedman is a professor of Journalism and expert in environmental journalism at Michigan State University.

Some publishers quickly notify the editors if they feel the proposed book is not appropriate for that company. Otherwise, the proposal usually undergoes an initial review by the publisher's staff. If that review finds the idea to be promising, the publisher may send the proposal to external peer reviewers for independent assessments before making a final decision. I have always found the reviewers' suggestions and critiques to be helpful, whether my proposal is accepted or rejected.

There are several common reasons for rejection. For example: your book may not fall into one of the publisher's disciplinary focuses; the publisher may already have enough closely related books; the publisher may be unable to afford to put out your book; or the publisher may believe there is not a large enough market to sell enough copies to break even or to make a profit.

When the proposal is accepted

Once the publisher accepts your proposal, you will be offered a contract that details your obligations and the publisher's obligations. It will include financial terms such as royalty rates and responsibility for expenses such as preparing an index and obtaining permission to reproduce or quote copyrighted material. It is usually the editors' responsibility to obtain permissions to use copyrighted material. The contract will include deadlines and specify the number of free print or e-book copies that you and your chapter authors will receive, as well as allowing the editors and chapter authors to buy additional copies at a discount.

When the contract is signed, immediately notify the chapter authors of the good news and tell them exactly what you want from each of them. That includes the chapter length, their deadline, and the format of any tables and figures. I require that chapters in my edited books follow a common organizational structure.

The publisher should provide its style guide and/or tell you what style to use. Tell them what style guide to use, such as the Modern Language

Association or Chicago Manual of Style, and give them any style-related material from the publisher.

For efficiency, I edit each chapter draft as it arrives rather than letting them pile up. The most difficult part of editing a multi-authored volume is working with authors who are not native speakers of the language of publication. For example, authors in my book about Central Asian environmental problems came from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Switzerland, Tajikistan, and Germany, among other countries. The book about global journalism has authors from Turkmenistan, Russia, Bulgaria, Kyrgyzstan, Samoa, Taiwan, China, Bangladesh, Kenya, India, Mexico, South Africa, Turkey, and India, among other countries.

Editors must be able to understand the content of every chapter, technical terminology, and the authors' choice of words. To illustrate, I and the co-editor of the Great Lakes environmental book are trained in the social sciences and mass communications research but we worked on chapters by scholars in such diverse fields as fisheries and wildlife, chemistry, biology, geography, environmental science, and entomology. The editors must revise the chapter without distorting the content.

Finally, strictly enforce deadlines. Scholars are busy with teaching, research, looking for grants, and carrying out other journalistic responsibilities. However, if chapter authors are late, the manuscript and publication process will fall behind schedule.

There is also the possibility that an author will fail to deliver his or her chapter at all, as occurred with my books on Central Asian journalism and Central Asian environmental issues. When that happened, my co-editor and I had to find substitute authors who could deliver a chapter on short notice.

The introduction and conclusion

Think of the introduction and conclusions as bookends to the book, neatly holding the rest of the chapters together. The editors usually write the introduction and conclusion. The introduction should set the stage and provide a broad context for the rest of the book. It often weaves in some of the editors' own relevant research and includes a brief preview of what each chapter is about. The conclusion should synthesize what's in the book without repeating in detail what each chapter was about. It may also suggest areas for future research.

Production of the book

After you submit the manuscript, the publishing staff will read through it, make comments, and ask questions. You may be asked to make suggestions

about the cover design. In the following months, you will receive the staff-edited chapters and page proofs that you should share with the chapter authors. These provide the opportunity to make any corrections, fix typographical errors, and update data and citations.

Some publishers expect the editors to compile the index, which is a labor-intensive task. Other publishers handle that with their own staff or outside professional indexers. The publisher may charge you the cost of indexing if you don't do it yourself, however.

Marketing and promotion

Publishers advertise and market the books in their catalogues and on their websites. You will be asked to suggest appropriate conferences where your book may be sold and scholarly journals that might review it. However, it will be primarily up

to you to promote the book. Ask the publisher for flyers and press releases that you and the chapter authors can distribute. You and the chapter authors should inform your university's public relations office when the book is published and ask them to publicize it with the media. The editors and chapter authors can promote the book in guest lectures and conference presentations. Also, let your university librarian know when it is available.

Conclusion

The multi-authored scholarly book is a valuable opportunity to contribute to knowledge in your discipline, to build your own academic reputation, and to work with distinguished experts. It may also provide you with ideas for your own future research and serve as a gateway to other collaborative projects with the chapter authors.