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Miroslava Chávez-García

Journal of Scholarly Publishing, Volume 48, Number 4, July 2017, pp. 199-220
(Article)

Published by University of Toronto Press



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Strategies for Publishing in the Humanities

A SENIOR PROFESSOR ADVISES JUNIOR SCHOLARS

MIROSLAVA CHÁVEZ-GARCÍA

This essay provides an introduction to publishing in the humanities for junior scholars at the start of their careers and beyond. It reflects on how our relationships to publishing change along our career paths. Indeed, while the focus on publications is significant during our junior years and continues after tenure, the pressure feels more intense and the possibility of publishing for promotion to full professor seems more elusive at the same time. The author confesses her own struggle in writing a second book. Transcending that hurdle—from associate to full—is, arguably, the most difficult challenge for most academics, particularly for women of colour, whose numbers remain abysmal at the rank of full professor. The essay provides a number of insights and strategies, taken from the author’s experiences, discussions with other academics, and research, for successful publishing and promotion in the academy.

Keywords: publishing, writing, promotion, women faculty of colour

Participating in a recent workshop on publishing in the humanities made me realize the real need for insight into the process of publication, particularly among academics early in their careers. For graduate students and recently minted PhDs, turning an article or book manuscript into a publication is often mysterious and disconcerting. As a graduate student, I thought I knew something about the process, mainly because I published an essay in an anthology. Today, two books later, two more on the way, and twenty articles under my belt, I realize how little I understood then and how much I still have to learn given the rapidly changing world of publishing and readers’ demands.

Our relationships to publishing change along our career paths. While perhaps this is obvious to senior scholars, mid-level and junior academics lack the experience and hindsight to see the shifting expectations, as I can attest from experience. Indeed, the pressure to publish is significant

during our junior years, and, while it continues after tenure, the stress feels more intense and the possibility of publishing for promotion to full professor seems more elusive at the same time. My own struggle at that stage may be instructive for others. Transcending that hurdle—from associate to full—is, arguably, the most difficult challenge for most academics, particularly for women of colour, whose numbers remain abysmal at the rank of full professor.¹ For the fortunate (or lonely, undervalued, and underpaid) ones among us who have had the financial, professional, personal, and moral support to overcome the many challenges entailed in obtaining promotion to full professor, we have new privileges and freedoms, as I like to call them, as well as responsibilities when it comes to what we produce, how we do it, and what it means. We are no longer limited to university presses and scholarly journals but can publish in alternative venues and formats. Doing so not only provides us the opportunity to expand our creativity and readership but also allows us to shape broader understandings of our subjects and the worlds we inhabit.

Using insights gained from personal experiences, conversations with colleagues and editors at major presses, and research into academic publishing and the academy more generally, I offer tips for scholars at all stages of their careers. Because the idea for this essay began after a workshop I led with another colleague, I address readers as *you* to preserve some of the personal immediacy and mentoring quality of that exchange. My advice is informed by the field most familiar to me, history, yet I believe it applies more generally to others areas of study. Always, of course, consult with experts in your field or related fields and go to them with specific questions about the process at the given stage in your career, not forgetting, of course, to thank them when you have published your work. Do not be shy about doing this throughout your career. As Kerry Ann Rockquemore reminds us, the demands of the academy as well as our disciplines change as we transition from junior to mid-level and then to senior academics.² We must not forget that, if we want to be successful public intellectuals and to advance in the academy, we must publish at every stage of our career and do so in a variety of contexts to show breadth and depth as well as creativity and productivity. Though that seems a daunting task, I am confident that we can continue to develop projects and find subjects that fuel our passion and purpose to produce in the academy.

PUBLISHING FOR THE JOB MARKET: APPLYING FOR A FIRST
PROFESSORIAL POSITION OR THE RANKS ABOVE

When thinking about publishing, particularly as a graduate student or recent PhD, you need to consider a laundry list of issues about the nature and role of publications on your CV. No single approach will work for everyone, as publishing varies by field, professional rank, and institutional context. In the job market, a hiring committee looks primarily at a candidate's fit with the teaching, research, and/or service needs of the department or unit. If your work aligns well with their criteria, productivity is secondary regardless of a candidate's rank or the call for applications.

For tenure-track positions at the assistant level, which often include a range of candidates including graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and assistant professors at other institutions, a hiring committee will expect a publication or, *at least*, a forthcoming or in-press publication. No one can deny that having one or two published pieces strengthens your case and makes you stand out among your peers, giving you an edge in the competitive job market. Encyclopedia entries and book reviews are not considered research publications, but they do provide evidence of your intellectual pursuits in the world of academia. A peer-reviewed article published in a journal or in an edited collection is your best bet. Edited collections are more difficult for readers to access through academic libraries than are most journals, and the peer review of a journal may be deemed superior to the judgment of a collection's editor, unless the editor is a distinguished scholar. An applicant who has been longer out of graduate school may have a close-to-finished book manuscript to show to a hiring committee. Ultimately, I believe that committees make decisions to hire junior candidates based on their research and promise as researchers. If your ultimate goal is to become a professor, past publications and the evidence of more to come will go a long way in communicating your passion and energy for the academy.

For mid- and senior-level candidates, hiring committees consider a broad range of criteria, including the significance and impact of the candidates' research in their primary and related fields, experience with leadership and administrative skills, fit with the institution and department's larger mission, and, increasingly, grants and fellowships as well as significant privately or publicly funded projects. Know too that, at all

levels of appointment, the committee must like you as a person and as a colleague with whom they will spend a lot of time, share common space, and make decisions about departmental policies and practices.

At all stages of your academic career, you need to be strategic in what you seek to publish and how you approach publishing. As a junior candidate, it makes sense to publish a piece that reflects a core finding of your research—that is, a piece on a key struggle, milestone, or person that reflects the themes of your work. For instance, when I was working on my second book project on the role of race and science in California's juvenile justice system, I published an essay on a leading figure of a state reformatory and the policies and practices at his institution. Such a writing experience not only allows you to refine your thinking about your larger project's significance but also places your work and presence squarely in the public domain of the academy. You can certainly polish a less prominent but no less significant aspect of your work as well. A 'how-to' essay, for instance, on carrying out feminist ethnography or feminist oral history would, in my field, be welcomed by many journals and useful to aspiring scholars. Such a methodological piece also communicates that you have something to say about the research process, and it diversifies your CV.

At the associate rank, you can follow a similar trajectory as you did as an assistant professor, but be warned that the expectations are greater. You will be expected to have a second book or significant set of published peer-reviewed journal essays as well as pieces that show your breadth across your field and related ones. As a full professor, you have a lot more freedom to publish with trade or commercial presses and to write textbooks or interpretive histories, that is, broader narratives relying primarily on secondary research. They are usually evaluated differently, as service or teaching instead of research, although you can certainly make the case for their significance in the academy. If your interpretive history, for instance, sells more than 5000 copies, a feat not easily accomplished by most scholars in the academy (we tend to sell somewhere from 250 to 800 copies, most of those to libraries and family and friends), such sales allow you to make an argument about your intellectual influence in shaping public understanding and consumption of the humanities.³

PUBLISHING ON THE JOB: MEETING THE EXPECTATIONS
FOR PROMOTION

If you are fortunate enough to land a tenure-track position, speak to the chair of the department and find out the expectations for faculty publishing right away, preferably even as early as the on-campus job interview. ‘Find out [too] what your colleagues think you need to get tenure,’ a mentor once told me early in my career. As I soon learned, most requirements are discipline specific and driven, in part, by departmental and institutional cultures. In the field of history, a published monograph or evidence of its publication (such as the page proofs or galleys) with a university press is expected and highly valued at research institutions.⁴ Exactly which university press is ‘acceptable,’ again, depends on the culture of the unit. In the social sciences, four to five or more articles are expected in a mix of top-tier and mid-tier journals in your field. If you are unclear about a good place to publish for your work, look at your colleagues’ CVs to see where they have published, noting any trends or patterns in the publishing houses or journals, and ask senior colleagues about their experiences publishing there.

In many private and state teaching schools, books are not required. Instead, they ask for three or four articles that include one or two peer-reviewed, research-based essays. The other pieces can focus on broader discussions in academic circles such as the finer points of public humanities, civic engagement, and pedagogy. Having a chapter in an edited collection might work as well. Again, query your colleagues about what makes for an ideal tenure portfolio in your institutional setting.

At the associate rank, when seeking promotion to full professor, the second book or set of peer-reviewed essays is usually expected to come from a well-known or field-specific scholarly press or journals, respectively, although I have seen exceptions, which usually have more to do with the faculty and departmental culture than with scholarly standards. Your latest project will also be expected to show intellectual growth from your previous study. External reviewers who will evaluate your case for full professor (i.e., senior faculty in your field at peer institutions) can and often do comment on the significance of your recent scholarship as well as gains, or lack thereof, as compared to your earlier work. Remember that they often contrast your scholarship and productivity with that of your peers. Be ready to demonstrate—using specific language—how your latest research departs from older investigations and what

impact it has on your field and academia more broadly. Other publications will enrich your portfolio as a candidate. Producing an edited collection of others' research shows your renown in your discipline and your ability to bring together a diverse set of individuals and ideas in one volume. Editing and annotating an anthology of primary sources or archival writings is also viewed as significant work, particularly for its utility in classrooms. But edited volumes are not treated the same as single-author publications. When at all possible, prioritize your research, as demonstrated in the monograph, because generally, in humanistic fields, books are held in higher esteem than essays, even when articles go through nearly as rigorous a review process and make critical interventions in current scholarship.⁵ Again, check with knowing colleagues, as criteria change.

In some departments and institutions, where you publish your book manuscript is as important as what you publish. While most university presses are held in high regard, publications from prestigious presses, that is, those that are nationally known, highly selective, and rigorous, are sometimes given more weight and respect than those from regional presses.⁶ Certainly the reputation of a university press's affiliated institution is important, but so is the fit of your study with the press's output. University presses specialize, sometimes in ways independent of their home institution. Most presses also have established series of books that they publish across a variety of subjects (such as prison studies or gender studies), and they appoint specialists, usually faculty members around the country or beyond, to serve on the board of editors for each series. A series allows expert peers to have some say in the direction of the field and what makes for strong scholarship. Having series allows a press to specialize in a set of lists that may attract more studies and, in turn, grow the fields. Publishing your book in an established series also works to enhance marketing, as it identifies your work with a specialty and aligns it with a series editor and an established list of related titles.⁷ Publishing in a series is not required for tenure, but do pay attention to the possibility of doing so, as it might put you in good company with well-known scholars. If in doubt, talk with those who have been through a similar process or, ideally, with someone who has published in the series of interest. Ebooks, though popular for their innovative digital platform and cost-cutting approach, are generally discouraged for junior faculty and first books, as standards for scholarly evaluation remain in flux.⁸

Academic trade presses, such as Routledge or Norton, have also been questioned as avenues for early scholars, though increasingly academics of all ranks are finding much success disseminating their work to a broader audience and in a for-profit context.⁹ Reach out to those who have pursued such routes. A cold email or an introductory email (from a mentor or colleague) will help initiate those conversations.

In thinking about a press, do not simply consider what it means for tenure (though that is certainly important) but also who will read and have access to your work, that is, your intended audience. Do you want your book to sit in a library or on your colleague's (or mother's or father's) shelf gathering dust? Or do you want young people, undergraduate and graduate students, as well as armchair historians and literary critics alike poring over your work? As you research the press, find out about its submission requirements, readership, and marketing strategies. Do not expect the press to publish a 500-page book or to promote your work for a year or even six months. Today, most authors have to market their own books and often do so through a variety of approaches, including social media, personal and professional websites, blogs, readings at local libraries or institutions, interviews, and postcard mailings. Generating visibility for your work should not break the bank, but certainly it will take effort, time, and creativity.

Other questions to keep in mind when working with presses include the nature and length of time of the review process, acceptable book lengths, ebook options, conflicts of interest (if any), production of the index, and rules on photographs, illustrations, permissions, and cover designs. Whether these are or are not primary considerations, it is important to be aware of them before they appear without warning. You may, in fact, have little to no say over the cover design or have to secure all rights, including print, online, and otherwise, and pay for all permissions to reproduce photographs, which can run you into the hundreds of dollars or more. Know what is expected of you.

Publishing a book manuscript is not your only task for promotion to associate or full professor. You also need a small yet significant batch of essays complementing and supplementing but not overlapping with your work. Again, the criteria are discipline specific, but tenure committees at research institutions generally like to see a monograph and a variety of articles, rarely all derived from the book. If you decide to publish essays from your dissertation or book manuscript, limit yourself, ideally, to one

or two—but no more. Publishing more than that weakens the ‘splash’ of your work and might also whittle away at the significance of your findings, or even turn off a press who views too many prior derivative publications as pre-emptive redundancy. Your colleagues and review committees will and do take notice of how many pieces are derived from your book as well as the sophistication, intended audience, and length of your essays. Your peers like to see breadth and depth, including book reviews, which show engagement with and service to the profession, as well as writings focused on subjects such as publishing and grant development.

Another relatively successful scholarly venture is to conduct and publish interviews with well-known scholars, scholar-activists, or public figures directly linked to academia. Depending on your field, an interview with Henry Louis Gates Jr., Sandra Cisneros, or Robin D. G. Kelly would likely bring you some desirable attention, as would interviews with grassroots activists.¹⁰ You would be responsible, of course, for setting out the significance of the interviewee’s work in a narrative of some kind. Ideally such pieces should appear in peer-reviewed venues, including journals or anthologies in a related area of research. Many departments are also willing to consider peer-reviewed online essays equivalent to the more common route of hard-copy publications, but double-check with your chair or senior colleagues about their acceptability. Do not discount, as well, writings in national or regional newsletters or national or international conference proceedings, which are generally not peer reviewed but are seen as evidence of your productivity and public presence. Long review essays in which multiple recent works are evaluated in a broader context are often given more weight than short reviews of single works.¹¹ Review essays published in reputable journals, especially those with insightful analyses, are held in high esteem.

Scour online sites with calls for papers in your field, and do this repeatedly. Humanities and Social Sciences Online-Net (H-Net) is my go-to resource and has yielded at least two opportunities for publishing essays that originated as thought pieces.¹² In one case I produced a piece on the mentorship of my dissertation adviser, who passed away in his early retirement, and used that piece (which I read at one of his memorials) as the basis of a larger essay that I co-authored with a colleague. Another approach is to use workshops to develop essays on professional development. I used a session with graduate students of colour to co-author an

essay on navigating academia as a student and faculty person of colour.¹³ The current essay likewise grew out of a similar experience. In short, in seeking tenure and other promotions, do not put all your eggs in the proverbial basket of a single book. Diversify and do so early in your career. Most important, focus on research-based pieces primarily and on book reviews and other service-oriented essays secondarily.

SUBMITTING YOUR FIRST ESSAY TO A PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL

Where you publish your first essay, like your first book, says a lot about your influence as a scholar. Unlike in the social sciences, humanities journals pay less attention to the ‘impact factor,’ which is a numerical value given to that periodical based on ‘the number of cited articles in a publication as a percentage of that journal’s content over the past two years and within a specific subject area.’¹⁴ We all know, however, that publishing an essay in a leading humanities journal, or the flagship periodical in your field, is a real coup. Take the time to search for appropriate journals. Again, as with presses, go to the journal’s website and study all the features, especially the submission process or ‘for authors’ page. If you have not published in any journals, particularly prestigious ones, such as the *American Historical Review* or the *American Quarterly* for American history, do not fret. You are not alone. Rejections are certainly, by far, the norm in those venues. Acceptance rates, though difficult to determine as few journals post them, are generally very low. In a somewhat twisted logic, at least from the perspective of the author, the lower the acceptance rate, the more selective the journal and, by industry standards, the more prestigious. For most junior scholars who want and need to publish in journals, it makes more sense to begin with regional or local journals squarely in your area of interest. I would not discourage you to aim high, however, especially if you have a stellar essay that you and your writing mentor believe is a strong competitor at the national level. By all means, submit your article to the top journal. Be aware that the process takes months to make its way through the review cycle. If you want to know how long it might take, review the website or ask the editors. You can also go online and find wikis and other online sources where journals and presses are reviewed by your peers.¹⁵ Be strategic about where you place your original research. Use presentations or workshops as opportunities to shape your work and prepare it for publication.

After submitting your work to a journal, you will most often receive rejections with no opportunity to revise and resubmit, especially when you are first starting out. Sometimes those rejections come as a first cut from the editor's desk. In a better scenario, an editor decides to send out your manuscript for external review. Some manuscripts so reviewed will receive a revise-and-resubmit decision, which means the editor likes your ideas, approach, or findings but needs you to specify and refine your argument, contribution to the literature, or presentation of findings. A revise-and-resubmit decision is often a blessing for a young scholar who is willing to make an honest effort in taking up the offer. According to Randy Bergstrom, former editor of *The Public Historian*, if you receive a revise and resubmit, drop everything and focus on getting that piece published. Do not be discouraged, however, with all the questions and sometimes mean comments from reviewers. It happens to a lot of us. Do not take it personally. The anonymous review process is not perfect. But do pay attention to most of their comments, suggestions, and queries. Address as many as humanly possible. If you find yourself staunchly opposed to a critique or suggestion to change your interpretation, you have a right to stand by your original idea. You must, however, explain why you chose to do so in your response letter to the editor (which you will usually be asked to submit along with your revisions). Do not ignore or discount the comments, for the editor will have read them too and will weigh them in her or his decision. If your submission is rejected after review without the chance to revise, resist the urge to send out the same paper unchanged to another journal, expecting that another set of 'unbiased' eyes will see the merits of your work that others have missed. If you are not convinced of its merits, share your submission and reader reports with a trusted writing mentor or allies to get their insights. It might be that your article was rejected because the editor felt it was not the right fit for the journal. In such a case, you may not need make many revisions and instead should focus on finding a more receptive outlet for your scholarship.

PREPARING A FIRST BOOK TO PROPOSE TO A PUBLISHER

As hard as it is for most of us, especially in our junior-scholar years, if you cannot communicate your ideas well in writing, you will suffer in academia. If your writing needs attention, find ways to improve it. Identify colleagues or peers who are willing to provide useful, specific

feedback on what works, what doesn't, and how you can sharpen or enliven it. Read books on how to improve your writing. There are tons. I have turned to that literature throughout my career and, at one point, subscribed to *Writer's Digest*. I have described my own approach to writing for future academics of colour.¹⁶ In the appendix to this essay, headed 'Resources on Writing,' I list a number of instructive guides on academic writing and on writing in general.

You might also consider, as do many, hiring a professional editor. To do that, you might ask peers, colleagues, or journal or book editors to recommend professional editors who can help you with your specific needs. Whether it is unpacking ideas and clarifying your arguments or composing well-organized paragraphs and chapters, you can certainly find what you need, as there are many freelancers out there looking for work. If you can learn how to sharpen your writing from that process and not grow to rely on someone else to develop or organize your ideas, then I think it is a smart choice. But be careful in thinking you have someone to count on when in a writing bind. Remember that we academics are asked to write nearly every day and must prove our writing ability repeatedly and on demand.

I recall that, as a junior scholar, one of the most challenging issues to consider when preparing a book or article manuscript was to know when it was ready for review. When working with a dissertation that you want to turn into a book, most will tell you that a warm, or recently completed, thesis is far from ready to send to a press 'as is' (unless you are one of the few who crafted a study ready or near-ready for review and, if so, terrific!). To increase your chances of publishing it, you must first think about what your study needs to transform it into a book. Consider what elements are normally found in academic books you admire most in your field and how your work measures up. Focus on the argument, scope, and structure of the work as well as the voice, tone, and accessibility of your language. Some of these issues speak to the intended audience of your work (more on that below).

Another way you can transform the dissertation into a book manuscript is to trim your literature review, especially if it is long. If so, swap it for a concise discussion of how your work builds, enhances, and shifts understandings of your subject. The most significant points to bring across are how your work is *new* and *different* from what's already been done, what readers are going to learn from it that they don't already know, and

why your work matters. Consider, too, the breadth of your coverage. Many successful academic books cover a broad swath of themes and topics. If the work seems narrow—to academics as well as non-academics—find ways to increase the scope. Push back the chronology or incorporate new issues, debates, or questions. This will force you to add, expand, or jettison chapters, which is beneficial because a tenure committee and external reviewers will appreciate signs of growth and maturity from the thesis to the eventually published book.

Above all, contemplate your audience, a task few advisers seem to mention to us when we settle on a topic in graduate school. Who will *want* to read it or maybe even *assign* your book to students, and what will they gain by doing so? Identify the appeal of the project, and if there is none that stands out to you, develop it. Stimulate interest and cultivate the allure of your research. If the study is writer-centred, as most dissertations are, work to make it reader-centred, as British scholar Alaric Hall reminds us to do.¹⁷ Find ways to engage your audience and make your work accessible to an educated readership. Add personal narratives or oral histories. They can help breathe life into the research. Remember that you, like the publisher, want people to read (and purchase) the book.

Even when you feel your work is ready to share with a publisher, do not send out your book manuscript without having first communicated with, or far better met with, an editor. To save you time and heartache, do not send out unsolicited manuscripts to unsuspecting editors. Ideally, plan to attend a conference where you know a specific editor will make a showing at the booth representing her or his press. Ask a trusted colleague or mentor to introduce you (via email) or contact the editor yourself at least one month ahead of time to secure a face-to-face meeting at the conference. Editors appreciate and welcome this approach.¹⁸ This is where your homework will come into play. Before you meet, organize your pitch around the merits of your work. Consider how your study fits with the publisher's list (an established area of acquisition in which the press has already published other titles) and how your argument engages with the arguments of those other publications. Remember, this is an intellectual courtship of sorts. An editor is looking for author partners who can produce solid, cutting-edge scholarship that contributes to a list the editor wants to build. If your idea appeals to the editor, then

both of you will negotiate how and when to submit your book proposal or completed manuscript.

If you are unclear what goes into a proposal, find successful proposals online or through trusted contacts and infer the elements that made them successful. In many instances, presses prefer to see one or two chapters along with a formal proposal outlining your work plan. If you and an editor agree to it, you may send your proposal to another press at the same time, but check to see that the other press accepts proposals simultaneously submitted elsewhere. In my experience and from reading editors' posts online, I have learned that presses would rather have the exclusive right to review the entire polished manuscript, especially from junior scholars or first-time authors. Though it might give you pause to trust all your effort to one press, it indicates you are serious about the publishing house. If it passes muster with the editor in terms of fit and promise as a significant contribution to the press, the editor then sends it out for external review. If the reviewers, in turn, find your work compelling and convince the editor that your work makes a significant contribution to the field, you will (probably) eventually be offered a book contract, but not before being asked to make revisions in response to the reviews. Authors do, however, sometimes receive advance contracts before the changes are completed and usually in the case when the modifications are minor.

Be sure to pay careful attention to the contract. Many presses ask that you give them right of first refusal on a subsequent book manuscript you produce. This means you must give them priority to consider publishing your next work. Most, if not all, presses also include language on royalties, your earnings from book sales. Pay attention to the royalty amounts for hardbound and paperback (they are different), usually expressed as a percentage, often starting at 5 per cent for first-time authors and first batch of books sold, although it can vary. As you sell and produce more books, the percentage will normally increase, but not all presses or contracts are the same. Do not expect any earnings from the author's discounted copies, which are usually made available to you at a significant savings, somewhere around 40 per cent below the market price. Ask, as well, if the press provides any funds to offset costs related to acquiring rights to or reproducing photographs. Many university campuses provide faculty, particularly first-time authors, subventions for publishing their works. My previous institution provided sums up to \$3000 to

help offset the costs of publication. Check with your dean's office or the office of research on your campus. While some institutions require authors to repay that amount from royalties or other funds, others treat it as an award.

PUBLISHING A SECOND BOOK

For many of us, publishing the first book manuscript was challenging even while we leaned heavily on the dissertation and on the shoulders of mentors and colleagues alike. Unlike many recent PhDs, I had the fortune of having my former adviser guide the transformation of my doctoral thesis into a book-length manuscript. Also, I had the benefit of receiving a fellowship that allowed me to focus squarely on getting it published. For many authors, publishing a book the second time around and doing so from scratch with little sustained support is, I would argue, even more difficult than the first. A 2011 survey by the American Historical Association suggests the same.¹⁹ While you can find excellent advice on publishing the first book, you find a dearth on publishing the second one. The assumption seems to be that, as a veteran, you are more efficient and skilled in this trade. I am not so sure.²⁰

Developing a well-thought-out, well-researched, and well-written study requires time not only to immerse yourself in the archive or in fieldwork but also to analyse your findings and flesh out your ideas, which usually happens through writing, revising, and reflecting on the larger project.²¹ To do so you need freedom from the onerous time demands of teaching and service obligations, which usually necessitates obtaining an external fellowship or internal grant relieving you temporarily of your duties. Summer breaks are not enough, as they are often filled with many other responsibilities such as teaching classes or shuttling children or elderly parents to and from their destinations. A semester or six-month or, ideally, nine-month time frame is essential to launching a new project, which also involves establishing a routine of working consistently on the manuscript. As I recall, that alone took a few weeks to master. Doubtless, finding significant amounts of uninterrupted time is a difficult prospect, especially for faculty at small colleges and large state schools with minuscule research budgets. But having a supportive chair and dean who understand the competing pressures of academia can go a long way.

If you are fortunate enough to secure time away from your regular duties, you will need to devote a number of hours every day to the project.

Among the most significant tasks are analysing, organizing, and writing your main findings in five or six chapters that make sense thematically, logically, and sequentially and that deliver the convincing argument you proposed in the introduction or book proposal. Plus, you will have the onus of producing a manuscript that not only makes a significant contribution to the literature but also stands out from your previous book. These demands can weigh heavily on your need to produce in a limited time frame with limited resources, making for a frustrating and, sometimes, debilitating experience.

From my experience, the most significant challenges of writing the second book were the isolation and psychological stresses that came from (and come from) being alone for long stretches, which is a necessary part of writing. Admittedly, I had a fellowship year, but I put myself through a rigorous daily writing schedule, using every possible moment to produce. I was determined to finish in nine months or less to ensure that I had my ticket to full professor and the possibility of obtaining a job offer elsewhere, as I wanted at that time. Yet, in my prized solitude, I revisited many of the same demons I did when I wrote the dissertation, namely, the impostor syndrome and related thoughts of feeling like an academic fraud.²² My limited social interactions with students, colleagues, and other humans beings, apart from my family and two young children, were also particularly hard, as I found that thinking about my work and what it needed to become a piece of full-fledged academic literature, day in and day out for six days a week, was a nerve-racking process, leading me down a vicious cycle of anxiety that was difficult to escape. I could not, I repeated to myself, take extended breaks or else the fellowship clock (and my son's and daughter's pricey day care and preschool clocks, respectively) would expire. Eventually, I lost perspective on my work and life. Even now, nearly six years later, it is difficult to explain what transpired other than to say that I developed a temporary phobia of doing any kind of activity that put me or my children at physical risk or danger. When doctors diagnosed my daughter with a 'rare' condition afflicting girls of colour—rare only because few families of colour bring the symptoms to the attention of mostly white medical professionals—my world crumbled, making me realize I needed help. (Fortunately, my daughter turned out fine.)

To overcome these stressors and still produce the second book, I found a therapist who provided some relief to my anxieties, and I indulged

in my daily running and exercise routine. I also continued to attend the monthly academic sessions and social interactions related to my fellowship and made the most of the two-hour train ride from home to the host institution, using the time to write and revise. I read ‘how-to’ books and articles on improving writing and making it accessible to larger audiences and allowed myself the treat of reading historical fiction for pointers on creativity. In addition, I sought out trusted colleagues for advice on the structure of the book and early drafts of chapters, selections of which I eventually published as journal articles. Given that the project was in a completely new area of research, yet related to my commitment to recovering some histories of the most marginalized members of society—women and youths of colour—I cold-contacted well-established scholars for their insights and found them generous. One read my work and shared advice and primary documents, while the other provided an interview for an article on the ‘state of the field,’ enabling me to become familiar with the new area of scholarship in a brief period.

By the time I had nearly completed the research and writing and had secured a book contract with a more prestigious university press than the previous one, I realized I had put myself through an extreme regimen but reminded myself that finishing was well worth the sacrifices. Years later, reflecting on those thoughts, I am not completely convinced, as I have not yet fully recovered from the effects of that experience. I did learn, however, that producing the second book takes a lot of support, determination, and willingness to subject yourself to your doubts about your academic prowess and to find ways to overcome them. It is not an easy process, but it is possible and begins with knowing what works best for you in maintaining a healthy perspective on life, family, and work.

Now, as I complete my third book, I face some of the same challenges with isolation I had confronted years earlier, but the process has been much smoother as I have learned from my mistakes. This time around, the writing has been more joyful and relaxed and interspersed with therapeutic sessions of cycling with my spouse along California’s majestic Central Coast (my relatively new home base made possible with the second book). My focus on a family history and my status as a full professor have allowed me the flexibility of crafting a study that relies on subjectivity and a more fluid prose than in my previous books, which were geared to academic audiences. While I faced resistance from colleagues who noted that early drafts read too much like ‘journalism’ or suffered

from ‘too little distance’ from the sources, I have revised, rewritten, and strengthened the analysis and gained many supporters along the way, including series editors at another equally prestigious university press. In honouring my previous contract, I reached out to the publishing house that produced my second book, but I found the editor unresponsive to reading the full manuscript and moved quickly to the press that expressed enthusiasm for the project. I now have an advance book contract, which I secured by following the steps I outlined above, and am nearing the completion of the revisions. By spring 2018, I expect to have produced a third book for a series ideally suited to the study.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Be proactive in your approach to publishing. Speak to colleagues, advisers, and mentors. Make appointments with editors and talk with them at conferences. Read the many excellent online columns, journal articles, and books on publishing in your field. All these steps will help dispel the mysteries of publishing and lead you to discover how publishing varies throughout our careers. Equally important, carve out daily writing time to move your work forward. Remember, you cannot write articles or books overnight. Develop productive and healthy writing habits. Take up Kerry Ann Rockquemore’s ‘thirty minutes a day’ philosophy and you’ll see results. Sitting down to the computer and opening the file is half the battle. You need to find ways to get yourself to that point where you’re ready and willing to take on that challenge of confronting your weaknesses, imagined or real, while still producing work that speaks to your talents, passions, and commitments inside and outside academia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author thanks Lorena Márquez, Chuck Grench, and Nelson Lichtenstein for their insights on this essay. Thanks, too, to the University of California, Office of the President, Postdoctoral Fellowship Program for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts on publishing in the humanities. Finally, an *abrazo* and *gracias* to all the mentors and colleagues who guided me along the way.

MIROSLAVA CHÁVEZ-GARCÍA is Professor in the Department of History at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and holds affiliations in the Departments of Chicana and Chicano Studies and Feminist Studies. She can be contacted at mchavezgarcia@history.ucsb.edu.

NOTES

1. According to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, in 2013, professors of colour made up 20 per cent of the professoriate—6.5 per cent Asian, 6.7 per cent Black, 5.3 per cent Hispanic, 0.5 per cent American Indian, and 0.3 per cent Pacific Islander—and 16 per cent were full professors—9.1 per cent Asian, 3.3 per cent Black, 2.9 per cent Hispanic, 0.3 per cent American Indian, and 0.1 per cent Pacific Islander (see ‘Gender, Race, and Ethnicity of College Administrators, Faculty, and Staff, Fall 2013,’ *Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 19, 2016, 16). For women of colour full professors, those figures are even more paltry. Though the *Chronicle* did not collect those figures for 2013, Caroline Viernes Sotello Turner and colleagues found that, in 2005, women of colour full professors made up less than 3 per cent of full professors, with 1 per cent Black, 1 per cent Asian, 0.6 per cent Hispanic, and 0.1 per cent American Indian (see Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner, Juan Carlos González, and J. Luke Wood, ‘Faculty of Color in Academe: What 20 Years of Literature Tells Us,’ *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* 1, no. 3 [2008]: 40). Equally as dismal news as what the *Chronicle* reported for 2013 is that female full professors earn 87 per cent of what their male counterparts earn, a disparity likely to be even bigger for women of colour full professors. For some answers as to why so few institutions hire women and men of colour, see Marybeth Gasman, ‘An Ivy League Professor on Why Colleges Don’t Hire More Faculty of Color: “We Don’t Want Them,”’ *Washington Post*, September 26, 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2016/09/26/an-ivy-league-professor-on-why-colleges-dont-hire-more-faculty-of-color-we-dont-want-them/>.
2. For Kerry Ann Rockquemore’s insights on mentoring, see, for instance, ‘Essay on How to Be a Good Faculty Mentor to Junior Professors,’ *Inside Higher Ed*, August 12, 2013, <https://www.insidehighered.com/career-advice/how-be-great-mentor>; and ‘Essay Calling for Senior Faculty to Embrace New Style of Mentoring,’ *Inside Higher Ed*, July 22, 2013, <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2013/07/22/essay-calling-senior-faculty-embrace-new-style-mentoring>. For more resources on mentoring, writing, publishing, and navigating academia generally, see Rockquemore’s National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, <http://www.facultydiversity.org/>.
3. For quantities of academics books sold, see Noah Berlatsky, ‘What Is the Point of Academic Books?,’ *Pacific Standard*, December 16, 2014, <https://psmag.com/social-justice/point-academic-books-publishing-writing-literature-96610#.y01faexq7>. According to Steven Piersanti, president of Berrett-Koehler Publishers, books sales have declined around 37 per cent since 2007, which saw the peak of the book-selling industry in recent years. ‘The average U.S. nonfiction book is now

selling less than 250 copies per year and less than 2,000 copies over its lifetime,' writes Steven Piersanti in 'The 10 Awful Truths about Book Publishing,' *Berrett-Koehler Publishers*, accessed May 13, 2017, <https://www.bkconnection.com/the-10-awful-truths-about-book-publishing?redirected=true>. For more excellent advice on publishing from the mouths of editors and authors, see 'Answers from Academic Publishers,' *Daily Nous: News for and about the Philosophy Profession* (blog), May 28, 2015, <http://dailynous.com/2015/05/28/answers-from-academic-publishers/>; and '10 Point Guide to Dodging Publishing Pitfalls: Veteran Academic Authors Share Their Hard-Won Tips,' *Times Higher Education*, March 6, 2014, <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/10-point-guide-to-dodging-publishing-pitfalls/2011808>.

4. On the value of monographs, see Robert B. Townsend, 'What Makes a Successful Academic Career in History? A Field Report from the Higher Ranks,' *Perspectives on History: The Newsmagazine of the American Historical Association*, December 2012, <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/december-2012/what-makes-a-successful-academic-career-in-history>.
5. *Ibid.*
6. For more on the ranking of presses and the significance of publishing with prestigious presses, see Karen Kelsky, 'The Status of the Press Matters, Still!,' *The Professor Is In* (blog), November 28, 2014, <http://theprofessorisin.com/2014/11/28/evaluating-palgrave-and-other-non-university-presses/>. Kelsky argues that the rigorous review process of these presses is what sets them apart from other publishers.
7. Insights on series in publishing houses come from discussions with colleagues as well as from Elaine Maisner, 'Getting Published by a University Press,' *Perspectives on History: The Newsmagazine of the American Historical Association*, May 2002, <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/may-2002/getting-published-by-a-university-press>.
8. For more on ebooks and their role in tenure, see, for instance, Kristine M. Bartanen, 'Digital Scholarship and the Tenure and Promotion Process,' *The Academic Commons* (online platform hosted by the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education), July 24, 2014, <http://www.academiccommons.org/2014/07/24/digital-scholarship-and-the-tenure-and-promotion-process/>; and Townsend, 'What Makes a Successful Academic Career in History?.'
9. For historians who have published academic trade books successfully, see, for example, Daniel McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance: A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power* (New York: Knopf, 2010); and Susan Lee Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: W. W. Norton

- & Co., 2000). Both scholars have received prestigious academic prizes for their work. For more specific advice on publishing with university presses versus academic trade presses and trade presses generally, see Tonya Golash-Boza, 'How to Publish an Academic Book—Why Choosing a Publisher Is Important and How to Choose One,' *Get a Life, PhD: Succeed in Academia and Have a Life Too* (blog), April 21, 2012, <http://getalifephd.blogspot.com/2012/04/how-to-publish-academic-book-why.html>.
10. See, for instance, Irene Lara, 'Daughter of Coatlicue: An Interview with Gloria Anzaldúa,' in *Entre Mundos/Between Worlds: New Perspectives on Gloria Anzaldúa*, ed. AnaLouise Keating (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 41–56; Stephanie Decker and Liz Legerski, 'Interview with Kathleen Blee,' *Social Thought & Research* 28 (2007): 23–33; and Miroslava Chávez-García, 'Interview with Yolanda Cruz,' *Boom: A Journal of California* 1, no. 3 (2011): 57–61.
 11. For a lengthy review with a deep and broad scope (she reviews multiple books), see, for instance, Christina Greene, 'What's Sex Got to Do with It: Gender and the New Black Freedom Movement Scholarship,' *Feminist Studies* 32, no. 1 (2006): 163–83.
 12. Humanities and Social Sciences Online (H-Net), <https://networks.h-net.org/>.
 13. For more insights on the challenges faced by women of colour in academia, see Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs, Yolanda Flores Niemann, Carmen G. González, and Angela P. Harris, eds., *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2012); Patricia Matthew, ed., *Written/Unwritten: Diversity and The Hidden Truths of Tenure* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016); Saba Fatima, 'Am I Being Paranoid? Women of Color in Academia,' *SIUE Women's Studies Program*, April 20, 2015, <https://siuewmst.wordpress.com/2015/04/20/am-i-being-paranoid-being-a-woman-of-color-in-academia/>; and Marion B. Sewer, 'Advancing Women of Color in Academia,' *ASBMB Today*, August 2012, <http://www.asbmb.org/asbmbtoday/201208/minorityaffairs/WomenOfColor/>.
 14. Carol Morton, 'Submission to Print: Submitting a Paper for Publication and the Publication Process,' in *Writing for Scholarly Journals: Publishing in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, ed. Daniel P. J. Soule, Lucy Whiteley, and Shona McIntosh, (Glasgow: eSharp, 2007), 34–35.
 15. For an excellent start on this process, see Reviews of Peer-Reviewed Journals in the Humanities and Social Sciences, <https://journalreviews.princeton.edu/ranking-peer-reviewed-journals/>. See, also, the Humanities Journals Wiki page, http://humanitiesjournals.wikia.com/wiki/Comparative_Literature,_Cultural_Studies_and_Theory_Journals, which provides personal insights on experiences with journals mostly in the humanities.

16. Miroslava Chávez-García, Mayra Avitia, and Jorge N. Leal, 'Future Academics of Color in Dialogue: A Candid Q&A on Adjusting to the Cultural, Social, and Professional Rigor of Academia,' in *Beginning a Career in Academia: A Guide for Graduate Students of Color*, ed. Dwayne Mack et al. (New York: Routledge/Taylor and Francis Group, 2014), 128–45.
17. Alaric Hall, 'Turning Your Coursework into Articles,' in *Writing for Scholarly Journals: Publishing in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, ed. Daniel P. J. Soule, Lucy Whiteley, and Shona McIntosh (Glasgow: eSharp, 2007), 10–24, 15.
18. See 'Answers from Academic Publishers.'
19. Townsend, 'What Makes a Successful Academic Career in History?.'
20. One source with useful information similar to what I provide is Karen Kelsky, 'The Professor Is In: When to Publish Your Book, and When to Hold Off,' *The Professor Is In* (blog), June 9, 2014, <https://chroniclevitae.com/news/537-the-professor-is-in-when-to-publish-your-book-and-when-to-hold-off>. Other than Kelsky's piece, I have not seen much attention given to this topic.
21. Some of my greatest 'aha' moments of analytical discovery have happened while running, cycling, or showering.
22. The impostor syndrome is a well-known condition and was first named by psychologists Pauline Clance and Suzanne Imes in 1978. It refers to a feeling of 'phoniness in people who believe that they are not intelligent, capable or creative despite evidence of high achievement.' While these people 'are highly motivated to achieve,' they also 'live in fear of being "found out" or exposed as frauds.' Quoted in Carl Richards, 'Learning to Live with Impostor Syndrome,' *New York Times*, October 26, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/26/your-money/learning-to-deal-with-the-impostor-syndrome.html?_r=0.

APPENDIX: RESOURCES ON WRITING

On Academic Writing in Particular

- Association of American University Presses. 'It's Not Scary: The Art of Getting Published with a Scholarly Press.' YouTube video, 1:00:21. November 13, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wapV6EmkyWo>.
- Belcher, Wendy Laura. *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing Success*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009.
- Caro, Sarah. *How to Publish your PhD: A Practical Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009.
- Germano, William. *Getting It Published: A Guide for Scholars and Anyone Else Serious about Serious Books*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226288420.001.0001>.

- Hartley, James. *Academic Writing and Publishing: A Practical Handbook*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Haynes, Anthony. *Writing Successful Academic Books*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511712081>.
- Henson, Kenneth T. *Writing for Publications: Road to Academic Advancement*. New York: Open University Press, 2004.
- Morton, Clare. 'From Submission to Print: Submitting a Paper for Publication and the Publishing Process.' In *Writing for Scholarly Journals: Publishing in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, ed. Daniel P.J. Soule, Lucy Whiteley, and Shona McIntosh, 34–42. Glasgow: eSharp, 2007.
- Murray, Rowena. *Writing for Academic Journals*. 3rd ed. New York: Open University Press, 2013.
- Silvia, Paul. *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2007.
- Silvia, Paul. *Write It Up: Practical Strategies for Writing and Publishing Journal Articles*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2014.
- Soule, Daniel P.J., Lucy Whiteley, and Shona McIntosh, eds. *Writing for Scholarly Journals: Publishing in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*. Glasgow: eSharp, 2007.

On Writing Habits in General

- Bradbury, Ray. *Zen in the Art of Writing: Essays on Creativity*. Santa Barbara, CA: Joshua Odell Editions, 1994.
- King, Stephen. *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*. New York: Pocketbook Press, 2001.
- Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Life and Writing*. New York: Anchor Books, 1995.
- Strunk, William, Jr., and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York: Longman, 1999.