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WRITING SUCCESSFUL ACADEMIC BOOKS

‘Publish or perish’ is a well-established adage in academia. Never has the pressure on academics to publish been greater. Yet the prospect of writing a book can seem daunting, while the business of getting it published may be mystifying. Written by an expert in academic publishing, *Writing Successful Academic Books* provides a practical guide to both writing and getting published. It covers all stages of academic authorship from developing the initial idea for a book through to post-publication issues, showing how to avoid the common pitfalls and achieve academic and professional success through publication. Full of real-life examples, including a sample book proposal, the book covers everything you need to know to build up an authorial career. This is an invaluable guide for academic authors – prospective or established – in all disciplines.

ANTHONY HAYNES is Director of The Professional and Higher Partnership Ltd, where he specialises in academic publishing. He is Visiting Professor at Beijing Normal University, China, teaches academic authorship online at the University of Tartu, Estonia, and mentors numerous academic authors in the UK. He holds qualifications from Cambridge University, the Open University, and the University of Malta. His previous books include *Writing Successful Textbooks*.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
 São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo

Cambridge University Press
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521730747

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First published 2010

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Haynes, Anthony.

Writing successful academic books / Anthony Haynes.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-521-51498-9 (hardback)

1. Authorship. 2. Academic writing. 3. Scholarly publishing. I. Title.

PN146.H375 2010

808'.02—dc22

2009053429

ISBN 978-0-521-51498-9 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-73074-7 Paperback

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To Karen, Frances, Jonty, and Simon

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Foreword

Experienced editor and Visiting Professor at Beijing Normal University Anthony Haynes has provided a highly useful guide for authors of academic books. Authors are very competent in their specialism; however, they may encounter problems in negotiations with the publisher, in presenting their material in book form, etc. Anthony Haynes shares his broad competence on all the stages of writing and editing academic books.

Often academicians have trouble answering the question ‘Should I write a book?’ Professor Haynes erases all doubt, indicating that writing a book is a part of self-realisation, it raises one’s self-esteem, and fosters career development. Thereafter he leads the author through the process of writing.

Anthony Haynes explains how to evoke an editor’s interest in asking you to write a book. He writes in lively detail on how to compose a book proposal and gives an example, which includes an interesting analysis of competing titles. In the proposal, one has to indicate who will buy the book and why, as well as make decisions about the style of presenting content.

The writing process begins with the incubation of ideas and planning. Professor Haynes explains the pros and cons of linear and non-linear planning, gives hints for the division of chapters into subsections, using questions in plans, and composing a word budget. He stresses the idea that you should not do too much self-editing while first drafting your book. The process of redrafting is also very important, and effective ways for redrafting are depicted. Interesting ideas about the opening sentence of a paragraph and the tone of writing are presented. The most important problems with tables and figures are indicated and solutions proposed. Useful recommendations on

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Foreword

writing dissertations, time management while writing a book, and working with editors are then covered.

Professor Haynes has provided a complete treatment of what an author needs to know to write an academic book. His work is a practical guide that enables authors to achieve their aims more efficiently. It differs from other analogous titles in having good examples, lively style, and practice-related content.

JAAN MIKK

*Professor Emeritus
University of Tartu, Estonia*

Preface

Two motivations lie behind this book. I would like to pass on what I have learnt from working with a number of successful academic authors; and I'd like to help authors to avoid the problems that recur, often all too predictably, in academic writing and publishing. In attempting to do so, I draw on my professional experience as editor and publisher, as author, and as a trainer or mentor of authors in a number of universities. In a sense, then, this book is a work of reportage.

The word 'successful' in the title of this book is deliberately ambiguous. The text is concerned with success both in writing books – in getting them written as well as possible – and in having them published as well as possible. By focusing on both types of success, the book seeks to build a bridge between the worlds of publishing and academia. In its attempt to make sense of one world on behalf of the other, this book is also a work of interpretation.

The chapters are grouped, loosely, into three parts. The first part ('Becoming an Author') provides a launchpad. It examines such questions as: Why write? What to write? Where to publish? With what reward? The focus is on success in publishing. The second part, 'Writing the Text', is most concerned with 'how' questions: how to generate ideas, work with language, shape the text, and so on. The focus is on success in writing. In the third part, 'Managing the Project', the main concern is again with 'how' questions – how to manage time, work with other people involved with your book, and manage your authorial career. There the focus is fairly evenly divided between success in writing and success in publication.

I should say a word about the notes. I dislike poky superscript numbers and the requirement they inflict on readers to flick to and

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fro between main text and endnotes, so I have decided to spare my readers. Whenever the title of a book is cited in the text, you will find the work listed in the references towards the back of this book. Details of the other sources mentioned in the text are given in the endnotes. The notes also include some recommendations for further reading. In return for trying to make the notes readable and keep them concise, I hereby challenge my publishers to print them in the same size font as the main text.

I am grateful to Frances Haynes for reading the text and providing perceptive comments. I am also grateful to Robert Yarwood (Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society), James Willis (Association of Authors' Agents) and Paul Machen (Society of Indexers) for responding to queries.

Given the subject matter of this book, I should perhaps add, for the avoidance of doubt, that the views expressed in these pages are my own and not necessarily those of my publisher.