Braving the Publishing Wilderness
12 Tips to Publish Your First Academic Book

Joe Ng
Acquisitions Editor (Social Sciences)
Cambridge University Press
1. Why publish?
   - Research grant
   - Thesis/dissertation
   - Fame/"Scholar-celeb"

2. Which press?
   - A university press (UK/US)
   - A commercial publisher

3. Who to contact?
   - Seek “right” editor (one at a time)
   - Submit non-exclusively (if not, ask!)

4. What’s needed?
   - Cover letter/email
   - Proposal (6-12 pages)
   - Sample chapters (two)
   - Draft manuscript (80,000 – 160,000 words)
5. When do I start?
- After examiners’ report or viva/oral defense
- Have a few sample chapters ready (or a revision plan)

6. Revise my thesis?
- Sharpen focus of lit. review
- Expand jurisdictions studied
- ↑ analytical vs ↓ descriptive
- Reduce # of footnotes

7. Peer review/approval?
- Single-blind
- 2-3 external reviewers
- Deadline: 8-12 weeks
- Syndicate approval + 4 weeks

8. How long it takes?
- 3-4 mths – editorial
- 6-24 mths – writing
- 7-8 mths – production
10. Show me the £¥?
- No publication charge (unless Gold OA)
- Wide range of royalties earned (not a trade title or textbook)

9. Syndicate approval?
- Rigorous research
- Significant contribution (theory, conceptual, methodology, etc.)
- Academic impact (awards, cited by judges)
- Topical, current, historical
- Original (<20% published)
- Global or Regional
- Comparative is good

11. “Sell” yourself?
- Create personal website
- Attend conferences; meet editors; network
- Offer to review for journals

12. Persevere!