What if we thought of our writing as content instead of form, not as a container for thoughts we are presenting, but as part of the thinking itself? When we think about what and how we would like to write (as opposed to what and how we are supposed to write), would we write differently?

These are questions that we ask ourselves as scholars in fields where writing is both a form of inquiry and a means of presenting our work. While there is no recipe for good or effective writing, some ways are better than others. It is important to ensure that your writing is generative, that it allows the intellectual and creative potential of your work to unfold. Such writing will not only be effective, it will be sustainable. The following are some ways to proceed:

• **Realize that your writing is consequential.** It is material, it has effects. Writing does things, and you are able to do things with it. What do you want your writing to do?

• **Imagine writing fearlessly, without the anxiety of getting it wrong.** How would you write if you weren’t afraid to experiment, to try things out, to buck convention when the convention needs bucking (or uphold it, when you value what it holds)? How would you write if you dared to say the unpalatable, to tell the truth as you see and think it?

• **Writing is a craft: take it seriously.** Work with language and explore its possibilities; see how you can make it work for you. When you craft something, it’s not about you: it’s about what you’re making. If you are lazy, cut corners, take the easy way out (like using clichés instead of thinking things through for yourself or saying what’s popular so that you will be popular), the quality of your work will be lessened.

• **No matter what you are writing about, it is you who stands behind the writing.** Take responsibility for that fact and the corresponding fact that others will be affected by it. To return to where we began: writing is consequential. It has effects. Consider what they are. What will your writing do for you and what will it do for others?

And finally, before the intellectual demands of scholarship take all the fun away, remember that writing is also an art. So while you are busy producing knowledge, conveying ideas and forging arguments, don’t forget the poetry of it. Or the music of it. The joy and beauty of it. Think about what a reader hears as they read your words, writing that asks: are you there, are you listening, I have things to say and I want to know how you will respond.

For more information please visit [www.palgrave.com](http://www.palgrave.com)
After completing and defending my PhD thesis, the question very quickly turned to the need to publish. Much of the advice I received advocated publishing the thesis as soon as possible, mainly to catch the REF and thereby enhance the prospect of finding a job. A monograph is, however, a very different body of work to a thesis. So, rather than sending out a proposal at once, and simply rewriting a chapter of the thesis to go with it, I ignored the advice and decided to think of the book as a new project. This involved taking key concepts from the thesis, but significantly reworking and developing them. This approach took a long time (three years, post-viva) because the work was undertaken alongside HPL teaching and summer work, which slowed the project down considerably. However, the proposal I eventually submitted to Palgrave was a book proposal, rather than a modified thesis proposal. As such, the submission process was significantly easier; the project was accepted, a contract issued, and the completed manuscript took just three months to finish and submit. The book appeared in print just eight months later (less than a year after I first submitted the proposal.) I have no doubt that this was because I took that time to develop the project.

I understand that this might be difficult to hear when you’ve recently completed a PhD, and find that you are competing in a job market that is saturated, and often quite unstable. The temptation is to try a short cut, and publish the thesis quickly. However, in taking the time to develop my project beyond the thesis, I found the process of getting my doctoral research published much easier in the long run. I found that I had a better sense of what an academic book is (in contrast to a PhD thesis); I had a much more rounded understanding not only of my subject area, but also of the field into which my research would be received; and, finally, I gained confidence through liaising with the editorial staff at Palgrave, who supported me at every turn.

Two months after publishing my monograph with Palgrave, I successfully applied for a lectureship at the University of Winchester, and am now a full-time permanent member of staff. I wish the very best of luck to any and all of you on getting your theses published!

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ADVICE FROM

OLGA ONUCH

FOR EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS

Olga Onuch is the author of *Mapping Mass Mobilization*.

“To write and publish a book, it takes a village!” This is how I begin my book presentations and launches. It is certainly true of most early career academics who are trying to adapt their past doctoral work for a book monograph, as they need to rely on the help and advice of several mentors, colleagues and a good copy editor, along the way. Also crucial to this process – the dissertation to monograph metamorphosis - is a helpful, professional and knowledgeable editorial team. I certainly benefitted from both.

I asked many questions along the way, which helped me maintain control over the publication process and also allowed me to learn a great deal. But it is also equally important to remember that this is ‘your’ project and that you need to stay true to yourself.

Publishing *Mapping Mass Mobilization* was clearly very important for my career development. Not only did it help my receiving permanent Assistant Professor job offers but also allowed me to showcase my ability to complete a large research project from research design to monograph. Publishing the book has led to greater professional exposure in my field and has resulted in several invitations to give academic talks in Canada, the USA, the UK, and across Europe. *Mapping Mass Mobilization* is now my academic calling card.

The main advice I have for scholars just starting this journey is to make sure they have the right ‘village’ to support them along the publication process and to ask many questions along the way. An author’s first book is special in so very many ways, but it is also an incredibly important learning experience.

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I think that publishing a book with a renowned publisher early on is fundamental to a successful career. A book increases your international visibility, attracts attention of leading scholars in your field and boosts your publication list. And the best of it, publishing your thesis is not that difficult, just give it a try and submit your book proposal.

Your PhD thesis is worth much more than you might think, and, certainly, you would like your thesis to be read and appreciated by more than just the few professors in your PhD committee. That’s why you put so much of your time and passion into it!

Of course, you will be required to change your original thesis (the structure, language style, chapters, etc.) into a more publishable format. However, this was the process I enjoyed most as I could be more flexible in the language used, avoiding the all too often extremely dry and technical style which is preferable in a PhD thesis. So, turning your thesis into a book actually opens up a whole new horizon on how to present your ideas and arguments, and on how to communicate with a wider (worldwide) audience. All these skills, which you will learn in transforming your thesis into a book, are essential for a successful academic career and will help you become a better scholar.

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