

How to publish a book that you have no time to write...

Xiao-Li Meng writes: If you are amused or annoyed by the title, then it has served its purpose. It is, however, not a (completely) false advertisement. Other than perhaps a few natural-born writers, most of us never feel we are *ready*—time and energy wise—to write a book, despite our longing for a fan club. Whatever its topic, level, or length, a book requires a “love of labor” far deeper and more enduring than almost any other kind of writing. Rarely, however, can we find that magic chunk of time needed to satisfy our inner desire to display our expertise in the most elaborated form. There are always competing tasks, demanding less time or giving more instant gratification, or simply deadlines that do not budge.

Nevertheless, some of us have better time management skills, or greater writing facility. If you are one of those, let me put on my co-editor’s hat right away: the editorial board of the two new IMS-CUP (Cambridge University Press) series will be very pleased to hear from you—see the sidebar for contact information. Yes, I know the last thing you need is to feature on another Most Wanted list. But even (or perhaps especially?) seasoned authors can take advantage of new platforms for disseminating their labors of love to new readerships.

On the other hand, if you are like me, having suffered multiple miscarriages and still book-less, then the IMS-CUP series of monographs and compact textbooks might just be the progesterone you have been seeking. The series descriptions are chosen to reflect the “easier and easing” nature of these series. “Monograph” implies that we are not looking for “All of Probability” or “All of Statistics,” but rather your “monologue” in a cutting-edge area, your exploration of an interdisciplinary topic, or your formulation of a theoretical foundation. Similarly, “compact” signals that we don’t

seek textbooks with comprehensive coverage or elaborate presentations (e.g., hundreds of rote exercises, multi-media add-ons). Rather, we desire concisely-written lecture notes with suitably chosen exercises, in relatively advanced areas of probability or statistics, including statistical computation.

The intellectual aim is clear, we hope. Our discipline is the main driver of quantitative scientific enquiry. To meet this responsibility, and for our own health, we want to deepen our foundations even as we expand our horizons, to consolidate our achievements and fight the fragmentation that can come with growth. Given its mission, history, and membership, IMS is in a unique position to lead this endeavor, and these new series are designed as the society’s ambassadors on the research and pedagogical fronts. Ideal monographs and textbooks for these new series provide general pictures, lay initial foundations, pose challenging questions, inspire others to think deep, or encourage new perspectives. The first Monograph, Bradley Efron’s *Large Scale Inference*, and the first Textbook, Geoffrey Grimmett’s *Probability on Graphs*, embody these ideals.

The two new series replace and enhance the discontinued *IMS Lecture Notes–Monograph Series*, with more emphasis on the mutually-nurturing relationship between theory and applications, and with a new focus on the interplay and cohesiveness of algorithms, probability, and statistics—hence the three editorial streams, algorithms, probability and statistics. Furthermore, IMS chose to partner with CUP because of CUP’s mission of dissemination and extensive experience in interdisciplinary marketing, providing both series authors and our profession the greatest exposure beyond our traditional readership. The entire IMS-CUP editorial board therefore encourages you to take advantage

of the unique marketing power offered by CUP to maximize the impact of your labor of love on general scientific advancement.

I, of course, will practice what I preach: I will deliver one myself. Since the compact nature of these series does not permit me to invite you to bet that “my book is longer than yours,” how about, “my book is faster than yours”? If you publish in the IMS-CUP series before I do, I will buy you the glass of wine of your lifetime (or juice if you’re under 21) the first time I see you after publication. (So, I’d better hurry as otherwise I’ll have to go to work for Renaissance Technologies!)

So cheers, to all the books in gestation, with the new IMS-CUPs! (But don’t drink until you deliver, despite the new UK study on drinking during pregnancy!)



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IMS Monographs and *IMS Textbooks* have the same editorial board:

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Don't be shy! If you are interested in discussing a book idea for either of these series, please contact a member of the editorial board, or Diana Gillooly • dgillooly@cambridge.org or Lauren Cowles • lcowles@cambridge.org at Cambridge University Press.

<http://imstat.org/cup/>