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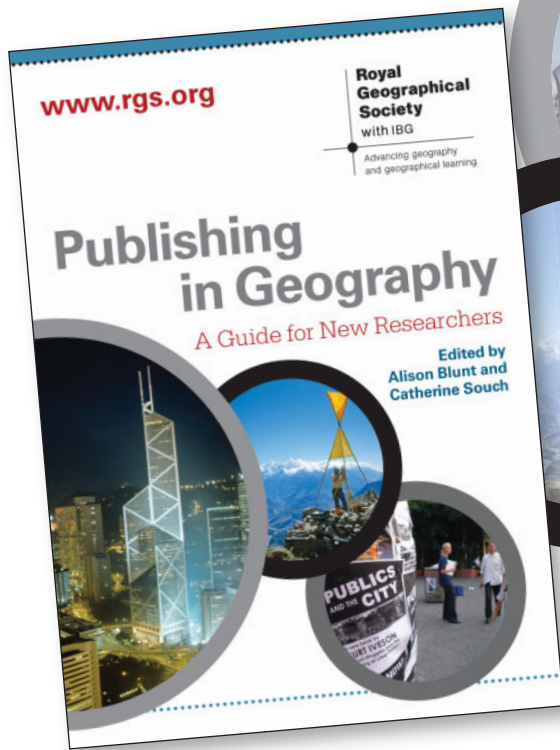
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Publishing in Geography

A Guide for New Researchers

Edited by
**Alison Blunt and
Catherine Souch**





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In addition to the Guide, we will continue to develop the webpage to bring you further publishing advice and support

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- See what your colleagues think
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1 Introduction

Alison Blunt and Catherine Souch

Publishing is a crucial, but often daunting and unexplained, part of academic life. All academic geographers are supposed to do it, but there are few formal guidelines about how best it should be done. Many of us discover how to do it by trial and error or through the mentoring and support of colleagues.

This guide has two main aims: first, to provide clear, practical and constructive advice about how to publish research in a wide range of forms; and, second, to encourage you to publish your research.

So why publish? First, publishing your research is the best way of disseminating your research findings. As the contributors in this guide explain, thinking about *who* you want to read your research is an important starting point in deciding *where* to submit your work. This might mean submitting articles to specialist or more generic journals, both within and/or beyond geography, and/or developing a book proposal. It might also mean publishing your research in other forms too, including more collaborative accounts produced with research participants, or writing policy reports or press releases for the media. Often the best publication strategy encompasses different types of output, aimed at different readerships. The aims, nature and findings of your research should be the main starting point in identifying your publication goals and strategy.

The second reason for publishing your research is academic career development, whether in terms of securing a postdoctoral position or a lectureship, or applying for research grants, tenure and promotion. A strong publication record – and clear future publication plans – are vital parts of an academic CV. Beyond individual career development, academic publishing is also central in a variety of different schemes of research assessment (including, in the UK, the Research Assessment Exercise). Not only is the quality of the published work crucial in both individual career development and national schemes of research assessment, but where and in what form your work is published also matters. But this should not discourage you from seeking to publish your work in a variety of other ways too, particularly in terms of seeking to communicate your research findings beyond the academy, whether to policy-makers or a wider public readership, and/or in collaboration with research participants. As Anthony Bebbington notes in Section 4.1, research relevance, ‘user engagement’ and ‘knowledge transfer’ are all increasingly valued in terms of forging closer links between academic research, policy and practice. And, as Mrs C. Kinpaisby-Hill writes in Section 4.3, producing participatory research – whether in written or a wide range of other forms – can affect change in much more immediate and creative ways than more conventional forms of academic publishing.

This guide is aimed at both human and physical geographers, and has been published by the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) and Wiley-Blackwell. The RGS-IBG and Wiley-Blackwell publish three academic geography journals – *Area*, *The Geographical Journal* and *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* – as well as the *RGS-IBG Book Series*, which publishes both human and physical geography books. Details about each of these journals and the Book Series appear at the end of the guide. Emma Smith, Journal Publishing Manager at Wiley-Blackwell, has written Section 2.7 on publisher perspectives about the production and marketing of journal articles. We are very grateful to Emma Smith and Rhiannon Rees at Wiley-Blackwell for all of their help in producing this guide, and to Amy Swann of the RGS-IBG Journals Office. The guide has been launched alongside a panel discussion on publishing for new researchers at the Annual Conference of the RGS-IBG in London in 2008. The online version of the guide (www.rgs.org/GettingPublished) includes additional materials from this panel discussion, and will be updated on a regular basis. If you have suggestions for revising or developing this online material further (e.g. additional questions for the FAQ section), please email journals@rgs.org.

The different sections of the guide have been written by human and physical geographers who work as editors and editorial board members, and who have considerable experience of publishing their own research in a variety of forms and for a wide range of readerships. In addition, the guide includes eight boxes about personal experiences of publishing, written by postgraduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and more senior academics. We are very grateful to all of the contributors for writing such full and informative pieces for the guide, and for their enthusiasm in contributing to it. We would also like to thank the participants at a session convened by the RGS-IBG on publishing in geography at the Postgraduate Forum Conference in Liverpool in March 2008 for contributing an excellent range of questions for Section 5.

On behalf of all of the contributors to the guide, we hope that you will find it useful and encouraging, and that it makes the prospect of submitting your work for publication far less daunting than it might at first appear. Good luck with publishing your research.

2 Publishing in Journals

2.1 Research articles

Louise J Bracken and Alastair Bonnett

Publishing in journals has several advantages. Because of the refereeing process journal articles are considered to have been vetted for quality; journal articles are more readily turned up by search engines such as Google Scholar giving them greater visibility over book chapters and books; articles tend to be easily accessible due to online versions and early view publication once accepted; they are easy to digest because they are shorter than book chapters and monographs. The advice given in this section is based on our experiences as editors, authors and referees (also see Peat, *et al.*, 2002; Joseph, *et al.*, 2006; Hames, 2007; Hall, 2008).

Choosing a journal

It is important to submit your article to an appropriate journal. This decision is based on a range of factors including (in no particular order): the prestige of the journal (often measured by the impact factor); the subject covered in the journal; the type and length of article published in the journal; readership of the journal (or who you wish to engage with); and the turnaround time between submission and publication.

Some journals are very specialist and others more general in remit. An article in a general geography journal will need to engage with broader debates in the discipline and include more background information compared with an article published in a more specialist journal. Articles published in disciplinary or even sub-disciplinary journals often focus on a more narrow set of debates and take more background information for granted. Publishing in a general geography journal can raise your profile widely and demonstrate your ability to engage with wide ranging debates. However, articles in more specialist journals may be more helpful in establishing your expertise and research credentials.

When dealing with more specialist journals it is important to check that your material maps on to the advertised remit of the journal. If your piece does not fit, save yourself time and energy and submit it somewhere else. If you are unsure, most editors are happy to advise about suitability on receipt of an abstract. If you are not in a rush to have an article accepted you might try submitting to a more prestigious and selective journal. If the article is rejected it can then be submitted elsewhere – although you must ensure that you don't submit the same article to two journals simultaneously (see section on ethics on page 9). However, if you would like your work published as soon as possible, it is safer to submit to a journal you think is likely to accept it. Turnaround times from submission to publication can vary dramatically. Turnaround information is usually available on the journal website or from the editors (but remember that this information does not guarantee your paper will be dealt with within the average specified period).

Writing the article

A journal article needs to be a discrete entity, capable of standing alone. This is especially important when writing up pieces from a thesis or a large research project. Most articles follow a clear structure which sets out a well defined contribution to a body of literature such as an ongoing debate or methodological development. Published papers need to demonstrate that they are making a substantive and original intervention or argument: mere summaries of previous work, no matter how well written, are usually of little interest to editors (see Section 2.3 on review essays).

The literature and/or debate you choose to engage with should be relevant to the journal to which you are submitting. The article should then discuss its approach/methods and data sources. The way in which this is done depends on the type of research and data involved, but it is important to link your methodology to the results and discussion that follow. Geography is a very broad discipline: in some sub-fields, results and interpretations should be clearly separated (this is often the case in physical geography), whilst in others (notably some of the more cultural areas of human geography) a more essay-based style is favoured. Remember that referees/readers need to understand the approach/methods used to be able to assess the quality of the overall contribution made by the article. In the conclusions, the significance and implications of findings should be discussed, rather than simply repeating and summarising outcomes. It is always a good idea to study previously published articles in the journal selected to find out whether there is a preferred structure around which to base your own article. Always keep articles within the specified word limit of the journal.

Many essay prizes or other awards linked to a particular society or journal are specifically aimed at early career researchers (including the *Area Prize for New Research in Geography*). In addition to any useful cash or free books that may be on offer, many prizes have the big incentive that the winners are likely to be published in the society's journal, and the recognition gained is very helpful for career development.

Giving a paper at a conference is a useful way to gain feedback from your peers before submitting it to a journal. Listen to their comments and make your work part of the wider debate. The skills of précis and concise argument that are needed to present a conference paper are not that far removed from those needed to prepare a good journal article. Receiving immediate comments from some of the target audience for your eventual article is equally valuable.

Remember that if you don't have enough material for a full paper then you may wish to consider writing a short Comment or Observation piece. A number of journals, for example short interventions in *Area* (about 1500 words), accept these. They are not refereed but can be useful in starting a debate and raising your profile as an author. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* has a section called 'Boundary crossings', which includes essays or dialogues that are 2-3000 words long, and also publishes occasional commentaries on articles.

Abstract and key words

All articles will need an abstract, which should succinctly establish the issue, the approach, key findings and important implications of the research (see <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/bauthor/se0.asp> for more on optimising abstracts for search engines). It can be difficult to write a good abstract, but it is important to spend time and effort on doing so since this is the section of your article that will be most widely read, and will inspire people to read the complete article. Keywords are what will enable people to find your article when using search engines and so it is important to think carefully about these, and to follow author guidelines about the type and number of keywords to include (e.g. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* asks for six keywords: one for locality, one for topic, one for method and three others). You want keywords to reflect the key topics covered in the paper, but also to map on to any key trends and widely used terms in research to enable your article to be found by as many people as possible. These details are becoming ever more important with the online dissemination of journal content. Abstracts and keywords, along with your name and article title, are often the only data that are supplied to the abstracting and indexing databases, and to the inter-linked citation systems, such as CrossRef, with which most journal publishers collaborate.

Following author guidelines

It is important to follow the published guidelines for authors. These are usually provided on the inside cover of hard copies of the journal and on journal websites (examples for the RGS-IBG journals are provided on page 58). These details will inform you of topics covered by the journal, word lengths, the journal's house style and formats (e.g. for headings and references), and how to submit your article. It is important to adhere to the published guidelines since papers can be rejected on first screening if they are too long or do not follow the house style.

Author guidelines also specify details of how figures should be drawn. This includes the resolution of photos, size of artwork and acceptable software packages. It is important to follow these since most submissions are now electronic and the software only allows 'correct' versions to be uploaded. It will also save a lot of time in the submission of your final article following acceptance. Also note that the author is responsible for securing permission to reproduce copyright images both in print and online, and for paying any necessary fees for permissions.

Submitting the article

Details of how to submit your article are also provided on the inside cover of hard copies of the journal and on journal websites. Many journals now use electronic/online submission systems and it is advisable to make yourself familiar with this software once you have decided on the journal to which you want to submit. This will let you establish the suitable file formats and information other than your article, which needs

to be submitted alongside the text and diagrams (e.g. copyright agreements and permission requests for using previously published figures). It can be frustrating if you are not aware of these when you try to submit your article, but cannot proceed until you have the extra information in place.

The refereeing process

There are four stages in the decision making process: pre-screening, refereeing, editorial decision making and, after any necessary revisions, final acceptance or rejection of the article. Pre-screening is conducted by editors and involves assessing whether the article's substance, approach, length, quality and style are suitable for the journal. This is done to make the refereeing process more efficient and to not try the patience of referees. You are unlikely to receive extensive comments if your article is rejected at this stage.

If your article passes pre-screening it will then be refereed. Referees are selected by the editors and, for some journals, can be guided by suggestions from authors. It is common for editors to seek three referee reports, although editors' decisions may be based on fewer, or sometimes more. Referees advise the editors about the quality of the article and whether it should be accepted or not. It is their job to be critical and this can be tough on authors, especially when you feel they have missed the point. However, comments from the more conscientious and constructive referees can really help improve and refine arguments and presentation of data and ideas, making the finished article much stronger. Referees often disagree and it is normal to receive different comments and recommendations. The refereeing process is time consuming because there are generally no inducements to do it apart from a sense of professional responsibility (although several publishers offer discounts on books to referees). This is the stage that is likely to hold up the publication of an article. It can take time for editors to find willing referees, it then takes time for referees to read the article and write a report, and there are often constant reminders being sent from journal managers to referees encouraging them to submit the decisions (for more information on acting as a referee, see Box 1 and question 5.1 in the FAQ section).

There are three principal recommendations open to referees: i) accept as stands; ii) accept subject to either minor or major revisions; or iii) reject. Once the editor feels that they have received sufficient feedback they will make a decision on your article and communicate it to you. You will be sent the decision, an explanation of the decision, the reports and, if relevant, a list of suggested changes. Where referee reports vary the editor will usually ask you to follow the direction of one particular referee.

Revised papers may be sent back to one or more of the original referees for further review and recommendations. There is no guarantee that a revised paper will be accepted for publication. Sometimes editors ask authors to complete a further round of revisions before coming to a final decision about whether to accept an article or not.

Final acceptance of an article only occurs once the editor (often after seeking further advice from one or more of the original referees) decides that the revisions have been satisfactorily completed. You will then receive an acknowledgement from the journal and the article will move into the production stage.

Revising a paper

If you are asked to revise a paper you should consider all of the comments made by the editor and referees seriously. Difficulties arise when you feel that the referee has misunderstood something in your article or even missed the point completely and hence disagree with some of the suggestions for revision. Often when this situation occurs it shows that you haven't been clear enough in your explanations and some revision is necessary, even if it is not along the lines suggested by the referee. It is a good idea to try to incorporate, or at least address, all of the revisions suggested. However, if you disagree then you can make a case for resisting a referee's suggestion to the editor. Always remember that your paper can be rejected at this point if the editor is not happy with the revisions undertaken.

Covering letters

A covering letter is desirable on first submission but essential on submission of a revised version of an article. The initial covering letter only needs to be brief, stating that you have an article you'd like to submit and possibly suggesting some suitable referees (although you may also have to enter these again during electronic submission). There is no need to write a lengthy covering letter at this point (indeed, they are often unwelcome). The covering letter when you submit a revised version is much more important, likely to be much longer, and should be written carefully. In this letter you should describe the changes you have made in response to the referees'/editor's comments. If you have not chosen to take on board particular comments, this is the place to say what you have not done and why. It is important to state your case clearly and concisely so that the editor (who is not necessarily an expert in your area of research) can assess the implications for the overall quality of the article.

Production

Once the revised article has been accepted it will pass on to production. This tends to be managed by the publishers rather than editors and any contact about your article is likely to come from them (see Section 2.7). There may be requests from the publishers about figures, particularly the format and resolution, but more often than not there is no contact until you receive the proofs of your article. Proofs are the final version of your paper, as it will appear in the hardcopy of the journal (but without the volume and page numbers). You will be asked to check the proofs and answer a list of queries raised by the production editor. The proofs should be checked and queries answered as soon as possible. No publisher likes lengthy changes at this point and these should be avoided if possible. Beware that some journals charge you for any major changes, for instance if

alterations are more than correcting the odd date, word or reference. Sometime after proofs have been returned you will receive a pdf of your article and, if supported by the journal, your article will appear online in the 'EarlyView' or 'articles in press' section of the journal web page.

Dealing with rejection

The key to successful publishing in journals is dealing constructively with rejection. Nearly all academics have had papers rejected (often very many papers). If your article is rejected do not argue with the editor's decision. Editors are not open to letters of appeal. Their decisions are final. You are entitled to an explanation but pestering editors is a waste of time. It is important to move on. Try to understand why the article was rejected and explore whether it is worth submitting the article to a different journal. In many cases, a rejected article can be used as the building-block for a much better paper. Do not let a rejection prevent you submitting to the same journal again in the future: decisions are made on articles and not authors.

Ethics

There are a few golden rules to remember about publishing articles:

- it is not acceptable to submit the same article to more than one journal at a time. If you are caught (and there is a good chance this will happen through the refereeing process) the article is unlikely to be published and you will gain a bad reputation as an author
- it is unethical to publish the same article in more than one place (academic journals always stipulate that they only publish previously unpublished work). It is acceptable to submit more than one article on the same research, but each should have a distinctive take on the material and present different data
- be careful of publishing too many similar articles. This can lead to people not wanting to read your work because it is too repetitive, and can undermine the impact of your work. This can be a problem when you are trying to establish a reputation as an excellent and innovative scholar
- all those who contributed to the writing of the paper should be acknowledged in the list of authors. It is conventional to list authors alphabetically if they all contributed equally to the paper or, where this is not the case, to place the lead author first. Other acknowledgements (to funding bodies for example) should be included at the end of the paper. Failure to do so may not only harm your reputation with others but also compromise your ability to secure future grants for example.

Box 1: Writing journal articles*Rosemary L Sherriff*

I imagine most people have a similar, yet slightly different approach to writing a manuscript for publication based on experience, personal style and subject matter. In an optimal world, continuous time would exist to work on a manuscript from start to finish, but of course that is rarely possible. I find that if I write notes to myself on where my thought process is headed, I can pick-up where I left off rather quickly when I only have short periods of time to write. If I leave a manuscript as an empty plate without leads to follow, I can rarely step forward before spending a great deal of time moving backwards over aspects already developed. The writing itself is not a linear process for me. As I develop a draft, I examine ideas from new perspectives, try new analyses, revise graphics, and continually refine the interpretations of findings.

As one who is relatively new to publishing, I have found three personal interactions particularly useful: refining drafts by informal reviews, reviewing other manuscripts, and discussing peer-review comments with colleagues after the formal review process. For me, it has been essential to have feedback from one or two people prior to submitting a manuscript. This often involves comments from collaborators or colleagues in the same field who provide feedback on drafts and presentations prior to submission. I have also found reviewing other manuscripts extremely useful. I can only imagine that if I had more experience reviewing manuscripts prior to submitting my first manuscript, the review process would have been smoother. Reading both excellent and less-than stellar manuscripts provides insight on what to include, what to leave out, how to address the main point and broader picture, and the structural form for submission. Although it's recommended, I have rarely identified a single journal until a draft is developed. Once the draft begins to take shape, I can begin to visualise where the manuscript should be submitted. This involves examining how my work contributes to the broader fields of biogeography and disturbance ecology, where related articles were published, and how my manuscript varies in scale with other articles published from a variety of journals. Most of my research to date has focused on determining variation in past disturbance regimes (fire and insect outbreaks) and vegetation patterns in relation to biophysical factors, climate variation and land-use changes.

My experiences with manuscript reviews have been relatively positive, not because I have not received rejection or harsh criticism at times, but because each time I have been able to revise the manuscript into a much better paper based on constructive comments. Almost all reviews have been helpful, except for a few stinging comments that were less about the research itself and more about

contention between different perspectives. One issue that I have found frustrating is the length of time it takes for some review processes, which can be a problem when you have a set of manuscripts planned for publication in a particular order and when you are judged on your productivity for professional evaluation. For example, after revising a manuscript as suggested by the subject editor for resubmission an article of mine was then rejected outright, which was an extremely frustrating experience and a waste of almost a year's time. As someone relatively new to publishing I have found it extremely helpful to review comments with co-authors and colleagues before addressing review comments or submitting elsewhere. These conversations have always led to minimizing my uncertainty or lack of confidence in interpretation, and led in fact, to more confidence, a prioritization for revision, and an emphasis on the overall contribution to the broader field.

Box 2: Articles, reports and co-authorship*James Rothwell*

I am a postdoctoral researcher with research interests in wetland hydrochemistry, sediment-associated contaminants and modelling surface water quality. During the course of my PhD and postdoctoral research I have had 15 papers published, together with a variety of reports.

When I act as lead author on a paper I usually decide where to submit before writing it. This focuses my writing style, but also helps me to use my time efficiently. I have a list of journals where I like to submit my work. After choosing the most appropriate home for the paper and after writing the first draft I send the paper to my co-authors. Some reply swiftly with their comments, others can take longer. This is when some gentle encouragement is needed. My international collaborators can be quicker in responding than a co-author down the corridor! Often the paper passes between myself and the co-authors several times before submission and usually goes through numerous iterations. For papers where I am a co-author, I try to get my comments back to the lead author as soon as possible as I know waiting around for comments can be quite frustrating. Writing the covering letter to the editor justifying the importance and appropriateness of the work is sometimes easier said than done. Crafting the cover letter often involves stepping back from the research and thinking about the broader implications of the work and why people would want to read the paper.

Many of my papers have come back from review within a few months, but occasionally a paper can be stuck in review for almost a year. In this situation I

found that a polite email to the editor speeded up the process. Many of the reviews that I have received have been anonymous. In most cases the reviewers have provided constructive criticism. However, I feel that a very small minority of the reviewers have used the anonymity of the peer-review process as a way of giving unjustified and misplaced criticisms of the work.

I find responding to reviewers' comments varies considerably depending on the nature of authorship. If I am the lead author and the reviewers' comments are only minor ones, I usually make the changes myself, inform the co-authors of the changes, and re-submit. Most co-authors are happy with this. It can be a more lengthy process for those papers requiring more substantial revision. Under these circumstances this will involve all co-authors. Addressing the reviewers' comments and incorporating each of the co-authors' suggestions for the revised paper can be tricky. This is especially true for papers where the reviewers' comments are contradictory. Inevitably, a paper will be rejected. Luckily this has only happened once to me. Initially, a rejection is a blow, but after re-reading the reviewers' comments, I select the helpful suggestions, strengthen the paper, and then promptly re-submit it elsewhere.

During my time as a researcher, I have worked on a variety of reports, usually for non-academic organisations, such as consultancies and societies. When writing these reports I have to remind myself not to be too technical and write in a style appropriate for the audience. This is sometimes difficult when switching between writing papers and writing reports. I always provide a summary of the work at the beginning of the report, and have tended to keep text short, often using bullet points, tables or even flow diagrams. I also think it is useful to be explicit about the problems encountered during the work and to even provide a list of recommendations at the end of the report. As with papers, report writing often involves co-authors, all of whom have varying degrees of input. In my experience though, the lead author of the report does the lion's share of the work. I have often found that when a report is posted off or emailed that's the last I hear about it. This leaves you wondering whether it was useful and if it is being used to inform new work or policy.

2.2 Themed or special issues

Alison Blunt

Many (but not all) journals publish themed or special issues or sections, which bring together a range of papers on a particular subject and are edited by one or more guest editors (see, for example, recent special issues and sections on '(Re)thinking the scales of lived experience' in *Area* (2007, 39: 3) and on 'Critical Perspectives on Integrated Water Management' in *The Geographical Journal* (2007, 173: 4). *Transactions* doesn't publish themed issues. Some journals have policies about publishing one themed issue or section each year, whilst others might publish them more or less often than this. Editing and/or contributing to a themed issue is an excellent way to publish your research and potentially make a significant contribution to a particular field of work.

Conference sessions often provide the starting point for developing a proposal for a themed issue. If you and/or colleagues have identified an original, timely and incisive theme, you should identify the most suitable journal for publication and write to the editor(s) with a proposal. The proposal should include a title, outline, and list of potential authors, paper titles and abstracts. If the editor(s) agree that the proposed issue is one that fits the remit of the journal, and that there is potentially space for an issue or section on this particular theme, the papers are submitted and sent out for review in the normal way (see Section 2.1). The guest editor(s) usually write an introduction to the issue or section, setting it in a wider context as well as introducing the specific papers.

For a journal editor to accept the *proposal* for a themed issue does not guarantee that all, or any, of the *papers* within it will be accepted for publication. The turnaround time for publishing a themed issue can be considerably longer than for a single article, because of the different lengths of time that it takes referees to write reports on each paper, the different requirements for revision, and because not all contributing authors are likely to meet deadlines. As a guest editor, your role is to liaise with authors and the journal editor about deadlines, completing revisions and the final production process. As an author, you should be realistic about meeting deadlines and responding promptly to required revisions before you agree to write a paper for a themed issue.

Whilst the journal editor retains overall editorial control, the guest editor(s) have considerable input into developing each of the papers and the coherence of the issue or section as a whole. In many ways, themed issues are similar to edited books, but you will often find that authors are more enthusiastic about writing an article for a journal rather than a chapter for a book as these are peer-reviewed and generally seen to have a greater impact (see Section 3 for more on edited books).

2.3 Review essays

Michael J Bradshaw and Rochelle Lieber

Writing a good review essay is just as challenging and rewarding as writing a research article. Anyone completing a thesis or writing a research grant application finds themselves writing a literature review that places their research in the context of previous works and identifies a research gap that is worthy of further research.

However, just as chapters from a PhD seldom make publishable research papers as they stand, so your literature review chapter needs further work before it becomes a good review essay. Undoubtedly, you have the knowledge, the raw materials, to write a review essay. This section provides you with some pointers as where to submit and how to produce successful review essays.

Where to publish

The first thing to be aware of is that many journals do not publish review articles. Many major research journals have an explicit policy of only publishing articles based on original research. Therefore, before you start to write your essay, identify a target journal and make sure that the editors are open to review essays. Most journals now publish a clear statement of aims and scope alongside more detailed notes for contributors on their web site and you can also look through recent issues to see if they have review sections. There are some journals that specialise in publishing review articles. The most well known to geographers are: *Progress in Human Geography*, *Progress in Physical Geography*, (and *Progress in Development Studies*) and *Geography Compass*. However, some sections of these journals are populated by commissioned reviews where an individual is asked to provide a series of reviews over a number of years. This is the case with the *Progress in Human Geography* Progress Reports. In the case of *Geography Compass*, contact the appropriate section editor, because although the journal does commission reviews, it is also open to unsolicited submissions. In general, if you are unsure contact the editors before you waste your time writing an essay that won't be considered by your target journal. There are also journals that have review sections. For example, *Cultural Geographies* has a review essay section that publishes essays based around the assessment of a number of key publications in a particular field. Like *Geography Compass*, some of these are commissioned essays, but the review editors of the journal also welcome proposals for essays.

Getting the level right

Having identified an outlet for your review essay, you need to think about the purpose of your review and its potential readership. Is your essay aimed at other specialists in your field or is it aimed at non-specialists as an introduction to the field? We would argue that this is a key distinction between the *Progress* journals and *Geography Compass*, for example. *Progress* papers are aimed at other researchers, who have a good deal of prior knowledge; whilst *Geography Compass* is aimed at the novice

reader, a senior level undergraduate or Masters student, as well as academic staff, from geography and other disciplines, looking to familiarise themselves with a particular field or issue. The different audiences require you to think carefully about the purpose and structure of your review essay.

Purpose and structure

Your review essay must have a clear purpose and structure to be successful. Simply using it as a vehicle to demonstrate how much you have read is not a recipe for success! Essays should be pitched at the appropriate level for your potential readership, which will be clearly specified in the journal's aims and scope. A good review essay should give a reader the foundation to go out and read the current scholarly literature with the appropriate background and context.

A review essay can have a number of purposes. They can be surveys of:

- recent debates
- areas where there has been a recent surge of interest, or substantial new developments
- areas where developments in one corner of the field might speak to (or lead to) developments in another corner of the field
- areas that have been neglected, but need to be revived (and the reasons for that)
- areas where there has been recent interest from the popular media and that might serve as the basis of debate in the classroom
- comparisons of topics across different schools of thought
- developments in other disciplines on a particular topic that is of interest to geographers.

A clear sense of purpose will help you to define the scope of your essay. In other words, how broad or narrow should a topic be? Cast the net too wide and you will struggle to deal with the key issues in sufficient depth, cast it too narrowly and you will not attract sufficient readership to merit publication. That said, topics can be fairly specialised, as long as they are presented with appropriate background and attention to different positions on the topic.

To succeed, a good review essay needs a clear structure. There is no single way of structuring your essay. Each of the purposes identified above demands a different structure. A good review is organised around themes and not individual publications (unless it is an extended book review). Review essays that demand attention are those that build on an authoritative review of the existing literature to present a new argument. In other words, they add value beyond a summary of the literature. The author need not be utterly neutral, but should be sure to do justice to the different approaches to the problem. An article that dismisses one or more current approaches

to a problem or issue in a sentence or two and concentrates on a single approach is less valuable to the reader than one that gives reasonable attention to a wide range of alternatives, even if the author ultimately draws the conclusion that one alternative is the most promising, and gives more weight to that approach.

The bibliography

For the reader, the purpose of a review essay is to survey a particular issue, gain understanding and identify the key authors and outputs to pursue if they want to find out more. Thus, the bibliography is a critical component of any review essay and also a measure of how comprehensive and up-to-date it is. How wide-ranging should the bibliography be? Here, it's safe to say that more is better. The more you can include, the easier it will be for your reader to enter the debate or to figure out where to go next.

A review essay is a good way for new researchers to get published for the first time. A successful review essay can be widely cited, often more so than a research article, and will get you associated with your area of research specialisation. But knowing the literature is the start of the process, not the end.

2.4 Book reviews

Helen Jarvis

Writing a good book review and having it published in an academic journal can be richly rewarding in several respects. Right at the heart of scholarly career development are the skills of close, critical reading and clear, engaging writing – skills which are perhaps best honed by writing a book review. Further, by specifying a fairly precise area of expertise you can receive a new book ‘hot off the press’ (which you get to keep), which you will enjoy reading and benefit from intellectually through the challenge of writing a succinct exegesis. Finally, writing a successful book review can be a good career move. It is a relatively quick and sure way to make yourself known to established scholars internationally in a particular subject area, as a new name to watch out for in the future.

In a hierarchy of publication genre spanning online and hard copy books, essays and journal articles it is tempting to dismiss the humble book review as something of little consequence. This would be a mistake. A key characteristic of the academic book review is that it is *not* peer-reviewed but instead thoughtfully steered through the process of revision and publication by a book review editor. This makes it a gentle entrée to the rigours of getting your work published. At the same time, the book review section in most journals is *highly valued* in feedback from readers. In short, publishing one or more book review, while completing a thesis or undertaking new research, provides a suitable ‘apprenticeship’ for your future academic writing career. This section offers some pointers on this process.

Where to publish

Most academic journals publish a book review section. The contents of each are implicitly specified to reflect the scope and audience of the particular journal. If someone wants to keep up-to-date with books published in a particular field, they are likely to reach for the book review section of a specialist journal. So the question of where to publish usually comes down to which journals you read to reflect your own sub-discipline. Once you have identified the journal(s) you would ideally like to write for it is worthwhile making yourself known to the book review editor. A short email is sufficient to identify yourself (also naming your supervisor perhaps), alongside your stage of career and the topic(s) on which you could meaningfully write. It is worth noting that editors rarely accept unsolicited book reviews. Some journals also specify the type of book they will review; how recently it was published; whether it is a monograph or edited collection; perhaps limiting textbook reviews to first editions. Contact details for the book review editor are printed inside the cover of the journal and listed on the publication web-page.

What to expect from the editorial process

It is much quicker to publish a book review than a peer-reviewed article. Once you have been formally invited to write a review of a particular book (and a copy of the book has been dispatched) you will be given a set of guidelines on review content and format and a time frame within which to write your review, usually about 6 weeks. The time frame has to be quite strict to ensure that new books are reviewed in a timely fashion. You should write your review to the prescribed format and submit it to the book review editor (or managing editor, as directed), and expect a minimal degree of editorial fine-tuning to suit house style (and to correct any minor grammatical errors). If more substantial revisions or a cut in length are required the editor will return the review with suggested changes until the review is ready for type-setting. At this stage you are likely to be asked to sign copyright permission. You may not get to see the electronic proofs as the editor will usually proofread all reviews together to a tight schedule. Although getting a book review published is relatively quick you should still expect a delay of at least six months between the editorial process and final publication.

How to write

There is much more to writing a book review than meets the eye. Because the word length is usually quite short (in the range of 400 – 1200 words) this piece of writing has to be succinct, not dense, and needs to be critically engaging in a constructive rather than polemic way. The following points will be useful to bear in mind:

- the fundamentals are an accurate resume plus analysis and appraisal
- your commentary should locate the work within the current debates of its respective sub-discipline

- avoid lengthy chapter-by-chapter descriptions of the content; simply introduce the outline structure and then focus in on key contributions and innovations.

Variations on the single author book review

The 'standard' book review can get a little stale and it is worth considering that some journals (notably *Area* and *The Geographical Journal*) welcome suggestions for book review panels and collective engagement with one or more text in a colloquia or conference session. This format may involve several reviewers writing together in collaboration to produce a series of critical dialogues on a single book. There are opportunities here for research groups or reading groups to play an instrumental role in shaping a debate. Again, the best advice is to pitch your idea directly to the book review editor of your preferred journal.

2.5 Electronic publishing

Michael J Bradshaw

The era of electronic publishing has clearly arrived. All of the major geography journals are now available online in electronic format, books are now available as e-books and it is possible to create special e-textbooks by selecting chapters from a variety of books published by a particular publisher. However, all of the above are essentially the publication of paper publications in electronic formats, as html or pdf files. The majority of electronic journals are offshoots of long established paper journals and offer little more than the opportunity to download electronic versions of their articles. But things are changing rapidly. Features such as Crossref enable readers to access material from the reference list of papers, while 'EarlyView' means that authors no longer have to wait for the paper version of their paper to be published before it is available electronically. Some journals publish virtual issues, which bring together classic alongside more recent articles on key conceptual and substantive themes (see, for example, recent virtual issues of *Area*: 'Methods in Geography: New Perspectives' (2008; www.rgs.org/AreaVirtual) and *Transactions*: 'Women and Geography' (2008; www.rgs.org/TIBGVirtual). Equally, journals are now more willing to publish photographs and figures in colour in the electronic version, though this often remains too expensive in print format. Some journals are also able to publish additional supplementary material online, including sound files, video, data simulations and other electronic resources (see Section 2.7 for further discussion). In addition to these electronic developments for long established paper journals, there is also a new genre of academic journals that are only available in electronic format; they have never appeared in paper format (see Table 1 for examples of different types of electronic journal in geography).

Some electronic journals (e.g. *The Open Geography Journal* and *Climate of the Past*; see Table 2) are Open Access (OA) journals. The Open Access model of publishing ensures

free web access to research findings and maximum access to published papers. There are various types of OA. 'Gold' OA requires the author or funder to pay for the costs of production, including the costs of the review process, typesetting, web publication and long-term archiving. In addition to sponsored OA and delayed / embargoed OA, 'green' OA means that author archives become widely available through institutional repositories (see Section 2.7 for further discussion). The various OA approaches have been applied both to new and existing journals, but there has not been a significant uptake as yet for geography.

The submission and refereeing process for electronic journals is the same as for printed journals (see Section 2.1). As for printed journals, all submissions must be original work that hasn't been submitted or published elsewhere. Publication is often quicker than in printed journals, and such journals make full use of an electronic platform, including reference-linked bibliographies, colour illustrations and computer visualisations. *Geography Compass*, for example, accepted a video article, with a supporting transcript (which has been hosted on YouTube) and is also exploring the use of podcasts to support articles. It is also introducing 'Teaching and Learning Guides' to support the use of *Compass* articles in the classroom, and provides an interface with virtual learning environments such as webCT and Blackboard. Electronic publishing has removed physical obstacles to global research communication, but language barriers often remain.

Table 1: Examples of electronic geographical journals

Acme (www.acme-journal.org) is 'An International e-Journal for Critical Geographers'. It is not backed by a learned society or by a major publisher, and subscription is free. It has an international editorial board, a rigorous peer review process, publishes in five languages, and encourages 'submission of alternative presentation formats'.

Geography Compass (www.geography-compass.com) is one of eight *Compass* publications produced by Wiley-Blackwell that are published electronically and available on subscription to institutional libraries. It publishes peer-reviewed surveys across the entire field of geography (see Section 2.3 on review essays). More than 100 papers are published continuously throughout the year. It represents a new form of publishing, between textbook and research journal, that utilises the opportunities provided by electronic publishing in its broadest sense to provide new resources for students, teachers, researchers and non-specialist scholars.

AGU Virtual Journals (www.agu.org/pubs/agu_jour_member.html#virtual) span the journals published by the American Geophysical Union. 'Virtual Choice' is a collection of online- only virtual journals from across the AGU journals since 2002 without the cost of multiple subscriptions. These virtual issues can be accessed via identified topics (atmospheric and space electricity; cryosphere; surface processes) or by searching via an index term.

Earth Interactions (<http://earthinteractions.org/>) is published by the AGU, the American Meteorological Society and the Association of American Geographers and publishes papers on the interactions among the biological, physical, and human components of the Earth system. It can be accessed by individual or institutional subscriptions, and publishes different types of paper.

Table 2: Examples of Open Access Journals

The Open Geography Journal (www.bentham.org/open/togeogj/index.htm) is an Open Access, peer-reviewed, online journal intended to publish original research articles, reviews and short articles across all areas of geography¹. Publication fees currently range from \$600 for letters and mini-review articles to \$800 for research articles and \$900 for review articles. Authors are invoiced electronically after their paper has been accepted for publication

Climate of the Past (www.climate-of-the-past.net) is published by Copernicus Publications on behalf of the European Geosciences Union. It is an Open Access journal with a two-stage publication process. Publications first appear in a discussion forum, and service charges are levied at this stage (currently ranging from €15-38 per page). If papers are then accepted, they are published in *Climate of the Past* with no further charge.

Journal of Maps (www.journalofmaps.com) is an inter-disciplinary, online, electronic journal that provides a forum for researchers to publish their maps. Using full peer review and a reverse publishing method (where the author pays for the review process), all published maps are freely distributed to anyone wishing to view them. Processing charges are currently £30 per article, and do not guarantee publication.

¹ at the time of writing this guide this is a new venture, no papers have been published as yet.

2.6 Writing a PhD as (published) papers

Katherine Gough

Having no choice in the UK in the late 1980s, I wrote my PhD as a monograph. I found it quite disheartening, and time consuming, to subsequently carve the thesis up into a number of papers for publication having gone to such an effort in the first place to weave the disparate data into a single narrative. At the time, I bemoaned the fact that it had not been possible to write the PhD as papers in the first place. Today, PhD students in some geography departments have the choice of either writing their thesis as a monograph or presenting it as a series of papers. Having supervised and examined a number of theses written in both styles, I can now see their relative pros and cons and for PhD students with the option it is far from an easy choice.

In the UK, it is rare for geographers, unless they are an established member of academic staff, to be allowed to submit a PhD as a series of papers. In other countries, such as Denmark, PhD students are not only permitted but are actively encouraged to write their PhD as papers rather than a monograph. There are a number of reasons for electing to write a PhD as papers. At the end of the process, you will have a series of published papers which will strengthen your CV when subsequently applying for research grants or academic posts. The experience gained through publishing in journals will also stand you in good stead for future research. Furthermore, your work will reach a far wider audience than a monograph sitting on a university library shelf gathering dust. However, as Thilde Langevang and Sofia Thorsson reveal in Boxes 3 and 4, opting to write a PhD as papers is far from an easy option. Carving up a major piece of research, which a PhD is, into a series of short papers is difficult and the vagaries of the journal world can give you a rough ride. Despite the trend in geography in Denmark to write a PhD as papers, there are still some who choose to write a monograph; especially those who have conducted ethnographic type research find that their material is more suited to a monograph than a series of articles.

Once a PhD student has decided to write their thesis as a series of papers, there are a number of issues that have to be addressed. One decision is the number and content of the papers. To some extent this will be dictated by university regulations. For example, the current requirement for geographers at the University of Copenhagen is that the thesis should consist of 3-6 papers of which the candidate must be the lead author on at least 3. While some PhD students opt to outline the papers which will make up their thesis from the start, it is important to remain flexible and allow new ideas for papers to arise as the thesis progresses. Sometimes unexpected findings make the most interesting papers.

The question of authorship of the papers is an issue that has to be addressed by both PhD student and supervisor. A supervisor naturally contributes to a PhD thesis as it evolves through ongoing discussions with the PhD candidate. But how much does a supervisor have to contribute to merit his/her name appearing as co-author? Here a

difference emerges between the traditions in the differing parts of the discipline with a tendency for physical geographers to be named as co-authors more frequently than human geographers. To avoid misunderstandings, it is important to raise the issue of authorship with a supervisor at an early stage and be prepared to constantly review it as the papers develop (also see question 5.8 in Section 5 FAQ).

The selection of which journals to publish in is another important process (see Section 2.1). As well as being aware of the subject area and prestige of journals, it can also be a good idea to find out about the publication time lag. The time delays of the peer-review process can be especially frustrating for a PhD student whose money and time is quickly running out. To prevent this being a major obstacle in Copenhagen, however, there is no requirement that papers are published but they must be of the standard required for submission. The word limit imposed by journals, which can be frustrating for PhD students brimming with ideas and data, is another important factor in selecting where to publish with many students searching out journals which have slightly higher word limits.

When submitting a PhD thesis as papers, it is usual to have to write a synopsis, which pulls together the various strands of the work which have appeared in the papers. This can be a challenging task especially when the papers have been pulled in different directions by the reviewers' comments. The synopsis provides the space to develop some methodological and conceptual/theoretical issues, which it was not possible to expand upon in the papers. There is the unavoidable issue, though, of keeping to a minimum repetition in the synopsis of the content of the papers.

So, whilst those who have the option of writing a PhD as either a monograph or a series of papers are in some ways privileged, there are many issues which have to be addressed along the way. It is far from an easy option and maybe I'm glad after all I didn't face the choice.

Box 3: Writing a PhD in human geography by publication

Thilde Langevang

I completed my PhD at the University of Copenhagen in 2007. My thesis was a collection of papers focusing on young people's life strategies in Accra, Ghana. The decision to write my PhD thesis as a collection of papers was not an easy one. At first I had planned to write what I considered to be a 'real' PhD thesis, i.e. a monograph. But after considering writing a paper collection instead, and having weighed the pros and cons of the two different forms, I opted for the paper collection form. The choice was first and foremost motivated by a desire to make my research available to a wider range of readers. I assessed that my chances of actually publishing a monograph style PhD as a book afterwards, or alternatively

rewriting it into publishable papers, were rather slim. Instead of writing a monograph, which would most likely be hidden away in the departmental library in Copenhagen, the prospects of publishing articles in journals and thereby getting the research 'out there' right away appealed to me. This choice was also strongly encouraged by my department.

The most obvious implication of my choice was that instead of writing one long narrative, the work was split into five pieces: four individual papers and a synopsis. This meant that I worked with relatively smaller and more manageable pieces compared with a long monograph. It was a struggle, however, to make sure that there were sufficient connections between the different papers and not too many overlaps so that the thesis would also appear as a whole. The synopsis helped to make these connections explicit as it tied the individual papers together in terms of context, methodology, theory and overall conclusions.

Although it is not a requirement at my department to actually publish the papers, this was an ambition of mine. Initially I had hoped to submit all the papers to journals before submitting the thesis but I came to realise that writing publishable papers is a very time consuming affair. At the time of submitting the thesis, only two papers were accepted for publication in international peer-reviewed journals. Both of these papers had been through long and time-consuming review processes, with many delays beyond my control, which was rather discouraging. It also proved to be a challenge to keep an eye on journal requirements, referee criticism and thesis expectations simultaneously. At times I felt that I was spending too much time pushing my material into article formats, cutting the material down to suit word limits, and responding to referee and editor comments at the expense of developing the theoretical lines of the thesis and providing empirical depth and detail. This ethnographic character of my work perhaps exacerbated this issue, and might have been better suited to a monograph. In many places I felt that I did not do justice to my material because of the limited space to unfold it within the word limit of a journal article.

Throughout the writing process I have been careful not to fall into the trap of thinking that 'if only I had chosen the other form it would have been much easier', which I am sure would not have been the case. I am pleased that I already have some papers published. However, it is important to recognise that writing a PhD in a paper collection form poses particular challenges and the choice has a major impact on both the working process and the product.

Box 4: Writing a PhD in physical geography by publication*Sofia Thorsson*

Today, writing a PhD by publications is the currency of physical geography in Sweden. In general a thesis by publications comprises a series of papers and a preface, which should include a review of the literature, place the papers in context and present and discuss the results in a broader perspective.

The first physical geography PhD by publication at the University of Göteborg, Sweden was presented in 1990. Since then more than 30 theses have been presented in this way. Typically these include a preface of about 40 pages and five or six papers. About three papers are accepted or published in different peer-reviewed journals at the time of the defence whereas others are submitted or manuscripts. Two years after the defence about 80% of the papers have been published. The PhD student is usually the single author of one paper and the first author of three or four papers in the thesis. The number of co-authors varies greatly between the papers, but the number has increased throughout the years. In the early 1990s the average number of co-authors was less than one. Today it averages about two and can sometimes be as many as eight in large research projects. During the last decade, papers with national and international collaboration have become common, and today a thesis usually includes one or two papers with co-authors outside the student's department.

I received my PhD by publications in physical geography – urban climatology – in 2003. My thesis included five papers, of which four were accepted or published in different peer-reviewed journals at the time of the defence. The review process took between four and nine months for each paper and two to seven months later the papers were published online. My experience is that it is important to select journals carefully and that several factors need to be taken into account in this choice. First, the paper should fit the scope of journal, since choosing the wrong journal may cost you several months. Further, the journal should have the right readership and a good status in the intellectual field in question.

Today, publication in peer-reviewed journals is the currency of science. A thesis by publication thus has some major advantages over the traditional thesis (monograph/book). For example the work is much more likely to be read by others and the work is quickly and widely disseminated through electronic journals. Furthermore, the structure of a paper is well defined, established and universal, which makes the work easy to plan and in turn increases the chances of finishing the thesis in time. However, a PhD by publications may require more and continuous supervision. One problem with this form of thesis is that the student might be tempted to publish parts of their work prematurely, before the whole picture is clear since the review process can be rather slow.

During the last decades research, particularly in physical geography, has developed from primarily individual into teamwork often involving researchers from different departments and disciplines. Large research groups often mean enhanced support and possibilities for the PhD student. A thesis should primarily include the student's contribution to his/hers research field and discipline. However, it might be difficult for a student within large research projects/teams to develop and advance their own ideas. Further, the student's contribution could be difficult to separate from the contributions of others.

In some institutions it is a requirement for students, particularly those within large research groups/teams, to be the single author of at least one paper that will be included in the thesis. Doing so enables the student to gain experience of the whole publication process, i.e. planning the study, measuring/modelling, analysing the research findings and writing the paper. This paper is usually completed during the later stages of the PhD. Despite different challenges that students face in writing a PhD by publication, completing their thesis in this way will make the candidate well-prepared and competitive for postdoctoral fellowships and lectureships at the time of graduation.

2.7 Publisher perspectives: the role of the publisher in supporting the life of a research article*Emma Smith*

Publishers support the peer-review process through people, infrastructure, support, training and funding. A critical element is the application of an online, digital submission and peer-review system (EEO) such as Manuscript Central™ from ScholarOne. These systems improve the efficiency of the process and the level of communication with authors, reviewers, and editors.

Post-Acceptance – Production and distribution

Once your paper has been through the peer review process as detailed in Section 2.1, and been accepted by the editor, it is passed to a dedicated production editor at the publishers who will use a digital tracking system to manage the article through the publication process. A Digital Object Identifier (DOI) is assigned to the article. This is a unique and persistent name for an entity e.g. a research article, on digital networks.

The paper is copyedited and XML coding is introduced. This is an international standard providing immediate benefits through versatility, particularly for linking in but also for long term archiving potential.

Proofs (usually supplied as PDF files) are then checked by the publisher (or a freelance proofreader), supplier, author and sometimes the editor.

Most mainstream journals are now available in digital and print formats, and a large proportion of readers are using online versions of journals to access articles. There are many advantages to this. It enables the publishers to add a large amount of value to your paper (see section below regarding online developments), and allows your article to be seen by a huge number of readers in a way not possible with the print version.

In most cases publishers aim to release the online issue ahead of the print issue. If the journal is part of a scheme such as Wiley-Blackwell's 'EarlyView', your article will be published online and available to readers typically within four to six weeks of acceptance, meaning that you do not have to wait for your article to be compiled into an issue to be available. Crucially, this means that the window in which your paper can receive citations is increased, as it will be citable via its DOI as soon as it is published online.

If readers sign-up for email table of contents alerts (e-alerts) they are sent an email when new papers are available online early as well as when the issue is compiled and available online. This leads to greater dissemination and readership for your article and ensures that the right people in the field read it as soon as it is published.

Author services

Using Author Services, you will be able to track the progress of your manuscript, and receive alerts from receipt at Wiley-Blackwell through the production process including typesetting, proofing, and publication (both online and in print).

You can also find further guidance on artwork, supplementary material, optimization for search engines and further FAQs. In the future we hope to be able to provide you with data on downloads and citations to your article.

See: <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/bauthor/> for more information.

Post-publication

Publishers strive for the widest possible dissemination of the articles they publish. As well as traditional sales channels and new approaches such as OnlineOpen this includes: links with indexing and abstracting services; retrievability by search engines such as Google, Academic Search; publicity of individual articles; usage data to authors, librarians and editors.

Publishers also work with national agencies to provide archival copies of articles. This traditionally relates to print copies, but various initiatives are underway to provide sustainable digital solutions. Publishers provide protection against misuse of authors' work through their rights and permissions team.

Recent developments in the online environment also include:

- Amazon-style user-generated recommended articles i.e. "readers of this article also read..."

- personalised recommendations for registered users based on their article access history
- virtual Issues (see Section 2.1 for examples)
- colour online
- supplementary material
- teaching and learning guides
- discussion around the article, including blogs, editor/reviewer commentaries.

Alternative publishing models – Open Access (also see Section 2.5 on electronic publishing)

The emphasis has switched from author-side funded access (sometimes called the 'gold road') to the 'green road' whereby research funders encourage or even insist on grant-holders posting the article in an Institutional or Subject Repository. As yet, relatively few researchers are posting which is holding back the development of repositories. This may well lead to more pressure on researchers (and sometimes on publishers) from funders and some institutions to post articles. Many publishers are resisting this, arguing that widespread posting of the accepted version of an article could undermine the subscription base and the formal published record through different versions. A major research proposal (known as PEER) has been submitted to the European Commission with the aim of establishing some evidence over three or more years on which archiving policy might be based. In the meantime the gold road – the author-funded model – climbs slowly. The Wiley-Blackwell OnlineOpen service is picking up less than 1% of the articles published by the journals offering this, a level of take-up similar to that reported by other publishers.

3 Publishing Books

Kevin Ward and Jo Bullard

This section seeks to unpack the 'black-box' that is the publishing of books. It provides some guidance on different stages in producing a book, from why bother to write one to ways of ensuring you reach your target audience.

Why write a book?

Writing a book, whether on your own or with a colleague, is not easy! There will be plenty of times when you ask yourself 'why am I doing this?' The intellectual and organisational effort required is immense. If you are writing a monograph (an authored rather than an edited, research-based book) there is a need to sustain an argument over approximately 90,000 words. If you are editing a book this throws up its own challenges. Introductions and conclusions need to pull together the contributions of individual chapters. Awkward contributors have to be managed. Let no one tell you writing and/or editing a book is straightforward (Kitchen and Fuller 2005). It is not! So, given this, why write a monograph or edit a book?

There are a number of reasons for producing a monograph. Some are specific to writing a book while others are more general reasons for publishing academic work. First, writing a monograph remains a highly valued activity. Whilst some have argued that in the UK the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) has devalued the worth of academic books (Harvey 2006), the intellectual effort involved, from having the original idea to the final delivery of the manuscript, means that monographs continue to be benchmark publications, although this does differ from one country to another. They are good for your career (Kitchen and Fuller 2005). Second, and in contrast to journal articles, they allow authors to produce a sustained argument. There is greater capacity to construct a serious theoretical argument and to give empirical findings a real airing. You are not constrained in the way you are when writing journal articles and may also have the freedom to be both provocative and creative. Third, monographs travel across disciplines. If you want to appeal to publics beyond geography then writing a monograph might be a good way of going about it. They also last – disciplines are known for the books they produce, less so for their articles.

For edited collections many of these arguments also hold true. While you won't write the whole book, you will have the initial idea. You will be the intellectual spark, and it will be you – perhaps with colleagues – who will put your imprint on the collection through the volume's introduction and the conclusion. These chapters are important. They set the scene and pull together the points made in the individual contributions. Edited collections can be an effective way of uniting a group of authors working on similar subjects but from different perspectives, or of collating the uses of, or approaches to, new theoretical frameworks or specialist techniques forming a benchmark volume. Specialist conference sessions or workshops can be good starting points for such a book.

Choosing a publisher for your book

When considering writing a book it is worth looking at the profiles of different academic publishers. Think about the sort of book you want to write. Who is its intended public? Many academic publishers are now focused on textbooks and unlikely to be interested in publishing a research monograph, but some do still specialise in this area. It is also worth checking the activities of the learned societies relevant to your field – for example the British Geological Society publish a range of different types of academic books themselves. While these societies have more restricted marketing and distribution systems than large multi-discipline publishers, for a specialist book with a specific audience they may be ideal. There are also examples of partnerships between learned societies and mainstream academic publishers where the society sets the agenda for the series but gains expertise and facilities from the publishing partner – one example being the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) Book Series published by Wiley-Blackwell. Speak to academic colleagues about their experiences, visit publishers' stands at geography conferences and check publisher and society websites. You should be looking for answers to the following questions:

- does the publisher publish in your research field?
- does the publisher produce the type of book that you want to write? (e.g. textbook, research monograph, edited book, conference proceedings, reference book)
- are hardback and paperback versions of the book published simultaneously? If not, how many hardbacks does your book have to sell before the publisher will commission a paperback run?
- does the publisher have a good reputation amongst the intended readers of your book?
- what marketing and distribution system does the publisher have? For books likely to appeal across disciplines it may be advantageous to choose a publisher with an appropriate range of catalogues (e.g. (human) geography and sociology, history, economics; (physical) geography and geology, engineering, meteorology) to maximise exposure and potential audience
- does the publisher have a sales team to promote books internationally?
- does the publisher send out copies to academic journals for review?
- does the publisher attend large academic conferences and participate in book exhibitions?

- does the publisher have a track-record of accommodating specific author requirements and/or are they willing to negotiate over such requirements? For example some publishers are willing to make certain books available in economically-disadvantaged countries at a locally-viable cost.

If a publisher gives you the answers you hope for to most of the above questions, you've probably found the publisher for you. Unlike simultaneous submissions to journals, which are not allowed, it is permissible to submit your book proposal to more than one publisher at the same time. Different publishers will react in different ways if you choose to tell them you have done this. For some it will not be a problem, for others it might be.

Writing and submitting your proposal

In the majority of cases in order to get a book contract you have first to write a book proposal. This is a sales document – it is your attempt to sell yourself and the book you want to write to a publisher. Before writing your proposal, and as part of identifying a potential publisher for your book, you need to consult the publisher's website which should include instructions on how to structure and submit your proposal (information for the RGS-IBG Book Series is provided on page 59). Most publishers request very similar material, including the following:

- a summary overview, which outlines the book's central argument, drawing on the work of others to make an intellectual case for why such a book should be commissioned
- a detailed outline of the book's structure and content, with a short paragraph describing each chapter, and how it speaks to the main arguments of the manuscript. This should show how the book's arguments develop over the manuscript. For edited books, most publishers require a list of chapter titles and named contributors (and their affiliations). Many publishers require an estimate of the final length of the manuscript (and have strict limits for maximum length)
- a realistic definition of the primary and secondary markets for the book
- a list and assessment of competing titles and the ways in which your book will be different from these existing publications
- author's/editor's curriculum vitae and other academic biographical details.

In some cases publishers also like to receive sample chapters or full manuscripts. This is particularly the case in the US, where there is a strong tradition of graduate students turning their PhDs into books in order to gain tenure. In the UK and elsewhere, revising PhDs into books is not the norm, although it does happen, for example in Germany. And, of course, there are also certain risks involved in writing a book for a particular publisher before getting a contract. Put simply, it might not get commissioned and you then have to revisit it in light of the requirements of other publishers.

For proposals for edited books you are often in the awkward position of having to approach contributors before you have a publisher, as the publisher will rarely approve a contract if the contributors are not identified. If you are unable to confirm all of your contributing authors, most publishers will tolerate some uncertainty about who will contribute to the book, but you will need to state clearly who has been approached and has agreed (if only in principle) to write chapters. You will also need to indicate what steps you will take to control the quality and consistency of the chapters and what steps will be taken to ensure the final book is coherent and balanced. Protocols for this vary. In some cases the book editor reviews each chapter and only when the book is complete is it sent out to external review, whilst in other cases individual chapters may be sent out to external reviewers by the editors before they compile the volume. The most appropriate procedure is likely to be dictated, if not by the publisher, then by the editor's level of expertise in relation to the breadth or depth of the subject matter.

The proposal review process

The person to whom you might send the proposal differs from one publisher to another. In some cases you might submit it to the general geographical list, which would mean sending it to the Commissioning Editor. Alternatively you might send it to a series editor, who will tend to be an academic. There are numerous series in which geographers can publish. Wiley-Blackwell supports two special geographical book series: *Antipode Book Series* (edited by Noel Castree) and the *RGS-IBG Book Series* (edited by the two of us). Why does this matter? Well, even when two series are published by the same publisher the division of labour between the academic editor and the commissioning editor might differ. In some cases the academic editors have the final say on which proposals are commissioned; in others it is the commissioning editor that makes the final decision. In addition, in this example, both series are 'geographical' in focus but they have different remits. Most obviously, the *RGS-IBG Book Series* publishes both human and physical geography books whilst the *Antipode* series focuses squarely on radical geographical scholarship.

Once your proposal arrives at the publishers it will usually be sent for review by at least two academics in the field. These will be chosen by the series or commissioning editor, although you may have the chance to suggest possible names. The publishers will be looking for the academic reviewer to comment on the following types of questions:

- what are the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed book?
- what would you see as the likely readership for this book?
- who is going to read it and who is going to buy it?
- are you aware of any competing titles? If so, how does the current proposal compare to these?
- is the author/editor the best person to produce this book? For edited books, are the intended contributing authors the best/most appropriate?

Once the editor receives the reviews they will then act. In some cases this means liaising with others at the publishers. In other cases it means speaking with other editors or an editorial board, as is the case for the Wiley-Blackwell *RGS-IBG Book Series*. The editor will then make a decision on your proposal. If the decision is to accept then the commissioning editor will present the proposal to senior staff within the publishers for contract approval. In most cases this is straightforward, but in some cases authors might be required to make some changes to their proposal before being issued with a contract. The decision to reject a proposal, at whatever stage, can be taken for all manner of reasons. Sometimes the proposal is simply not good enough. In other cases it might be felt that the book does not fit in the publisher's list or series. Whatever the outcome, the reviewers' comments will be forwarded to you, so even if the proposal is not accepted you can take on board the comments when producing a revised proposal that might then be accepted elsewhere.

The contract and delivery of your book

Don't think that submitting the manuscript marks the end of your work – it doesn't! When you sign a contract with the publisher it will detail your responsibilities including specifying the expected word length and delivery date. The contract will indicate the number of presentation copies you can expect and will set out a royalty percentage. This is always low. Very few academics make any money on publishing academic monographs (see question 5.9 in Section 5 FAQ). The publisher will also provide guidelines detailing how the manuscript should be formatted. As with journal articles, it is the author's responsibility to secure the right to reproduce any copyright images or other material, and to pay any necessary permission fees (see question 5.5 in Section 5 FAQ). Sometimes publishers will agree to pay you an advance on future royalties towards these expenses.

Once you pass the completed manuscript to the publisher it is likely that it will be reviewed by at least one academic referee. This should take a couple of months and you will then be expected to respond to these comments, which normally will consist of matters of substance rather than style. Typical revisions that you might be asked to make include the balancing of content, removing any repetition and reducing the length of the book (make sure it is within the word limit you agreed before you submit it!). Once you submit the final version of the manuscript it will be passed on to another section of the publishers, or increasingly, to a freelance employee. Typically the manuscript will go through the following stages:

- copyediting: the publisher commissions someone to read the manuscript. They check the grammar, the spelling of the text and the references. The copy-editor will contact you with a list of queries which you will need to address before the manuscript is typeset
- typesetting: the manuscript is typeset according to the publisher's house style

- proofs: you will be sent a copy of the proofs, which you will be required to check promptly for errors. A professional proof-reader may also be appointed by the publisher. At this point in the publication process an index has also to be compiled, either by you or by a professional indexer. Where 'professionals' are employed it is likely that you will have to pay for this against your future royalties
- printing: the manuscript is finalized and the book is printed
- publication: the advance copies are sent to you a week or so before publication, with the rest to follow once the book is published.

Post-publication activities

Books don't sell themselves. They have to be sold. While the publisher will market the book it is also your responsibility as the author to do your bit. This can take a number of different forms. All publishers ask authors to complete a marketing questionnaire. This makes the job of the publisher easier. Authors are required to provide a whole host of information usually including:

- short academic biographies
- short and longer descriptions of the book, including its main purpose and the thinking behind writing it
- key features
- the book's main competitors and its USP (unique selling points)
- details of the book's main audience
- mailing lists around which details of the book should be circulated
- conferences or professional meetings where the book should be displayed
- scholarly journals which are likely to review the book.

It is worth providing as much information as you can to the publishers. That will improve their ability to market and to sell the book. It will make sure that you see your book marketed effectively, reviewed in journals and on sale at conferences. There is nothing worse than having invested all that time and effort in writing a book to find it not on display at conferences or not being reviewed in journals. Ultimately whether a book sells or not depends on a number of things. Some of these are beyond your control. What you can do as an author is to produce a clearly written and organised book that is aimed at a particular audience and then do your bit to market it wherever and whenever you can. Good luck!

Box 5: Writing a book in physical geography

Martin Evans

Perhaps increasingly the currency of science is the paper in a well-cited international peer-reviewed journal. Why then would a physical geographer want to write a book? Possible motivations include both research and pedagogic reasons although often, as they should be, these two poles are comfortably blurred.

Why write a research monograph?

One of the challenges which has faced physical geography since the quantitative revolution is how to upscale detailed process measurements to address problems at landscape scale. Increasingly technological changes such as high resolution remote sensing, cosmogenic isotope approaches to surface dating, and the computational power required for high resolution numerical modelling have begun to offer useful approaches to this problem. However, truly integrative quantitative models of landscape function require a basis in a conceptual model of sub-system interaction that is often lacking or simplistic.

The recognition of the importance of understanding connectivity within and between sub-systems in fields as diverse as geomorphology and landscape ecology (e.g. Briery *et al.* 2006) emphasises the need to properly understand interactions between what might be quantitatively well specified landscape sub-systems. Clifford (2001) suggested that physical geography might be regarded as an emergent property of our detailed process investigations. Consideration of such emergent properties requires a reflective and synthetic approach to the data. There are questions about landscape function that cannot yet be addressed in a fully quantitative manner, in part because the conceptual underpinnings are not fully in place. Publishing at book length allows the physical geographer to establish narrative connections between substantive empirical findings. Essentially the synthetic understanding of a particular landscape or physical system which can be developed in the less constrained format of the book has the potential to be an important tool in the development of the conceptual models which can underpin further quantitative analysis at the landscape scale.

In addition to the academic reasons for book publishing there are also potential benefits in enhanced links with user communities. Many fields of physical geography have important interactions with the policy sphere. Writing a book is a useful way to communicate with the policy community. Whilst this community is actively engaged with the academic literature time constraints mean that they are perhaps more likely to refer to a considered synthesis of recent work than to your full *oeuvre* of journal literature. In this context, and given that funding for applied work is an important source for many areas of physical geography, it can only be a

good thing to be identified as 'that geographer from the University of Rummidge who wrote the book on...'

My own experience of writing a book was a monograph in the *RGS-IBG Book Series* co-authored with Jeff Warburton (Evans and Warburton, 2007). The motivation to write the book came from the feeling that there was a larger story emerging from our ongoing work on peatlands, which required more space than the typical journal article to fully explore. In some senses it was also a manifesto aimed at influencing future peatland research to consider more fully the physical components of peatland systems. Only time will tell if we had any success in this regard but as the research assessment bureaucracies continue to demand 'agenda setting science' writing in book form is one way to develop and promote your preferred research agenda.

Whilst it may not be the primary purpose a well-written monograph is an important pedagogic tool, invaluable for upper-level classes and postgraduate students. It is, however, a rather different discipline to writing a targeted undergraduate textbook, which is considered separately below.

Why write a textbook in physical geography?

The pedagogic motivation for writing a textbook is straightforward. As academics we all make use of textbooks as an organising framework. The basic role of the textbook is to propagate the accepted wisdom but across a range of subfields it is possible to identify textbooks that have been hugely influential in advancing a particular view of the discipline. Writing a textbook really is your chance to influence a generation of physical geographers both within and beyond academia. Textbooks are important in establishing paradigms and whilst the volume which overturns a paradigm may be a once in a generation event most books can play an important role in updating the accepted wisdom and perhaps subtly changing its emphasis. For this reason writing a textbook should not be seen as exclusively the role of longer serving academics. Many of the more valuable and innovative texts of recent years have been written or edited by relatively early career geographers.

Writing the book

What of the practicalities? Well the good news is that because book publishing remains something of a minority interest within physical geography publishers are often keen to receive proposals. In general, opportunities to write traditional monographs are fewer but there are some options, including the *RGS-IBG Book Series*. Once a contract is in place there is the small matter of writing the book. This is typically a departure in writing style for physical geographers raised on a diet of 6000 word papers and for most physical geographers the best comparison is probably with writing a PhD thesis. It will take longer than you think, and, like a PhD,

the final editing and assembling of front matter and so on will take much longer than you think. Nevertheless, it is a rewarding experience and the satisfaction of seeing the finished product is considerable and if you end up on 'Desert Island Discs' in 30 years time you are more likely to be introduced as the author of 'insert your latest greatest book' than the author of 62 peer reviewed papers!

Box 6: Finding a publisher and publishing a book

Stephen Legg

Like most first time authors, I found the prospect of securing a publisher incredibly intimidating. The publishing world appeared to be a closed sect, which could only be penetrated by an ingeniously orchestrated series of applications, references, re-drafted proposals, and good fortune. The reality, thankfully, is much simpler. Most publishing houses have clear online applications for proposals, which should obviously be followed as closely as possible, and the lists of existing and forthcoming coming books and series provide a pretty navigable route to the most receptive editors. The application process also stressed to me the invaluable importance of seeking advice from colleagues and mentors, as well as from published sources (e.g. Germano 2001).

Your editor(s) will continue to offer you advice, so your preferred choice for publishing house should obviously be weighed up against the likely degree of editorial input. This will vary with regards to an individual editor, but also with regards to whether you are applying to publish a stand-alone book, one in a discipline-specific series, or a book in a subject-specific series. All of these have their advantages with regards to, for instance, a unique project, one seeking disciplinary exposure, or one in need of specialised advice and targeted publicity, respectively. These are not mutually exclusive categories of course. My experience with the *RGS-IBG Book Series* at Wiley-Blackwell showed that a series book can also be treated individually, and thus be marketed by other series/sections at the publishers, but also that the right choice of referees can secure expert advice, whilst still situating the work in a series that seeks a wider audience within the discipline of geography.

Many first time publishers will be using material from their doctorate, whether written directly up into a book, or as the basis for new directions of post-doctoral research. I was (well) advised during my viva and afterwards that a publisher might have difficulty accepting a proposal which, like my thesis, had two analytical frameworks (colonialism and nationalism) as well as the competing

claims of theoretical work (on Foucault) and empirical work (on Old Delhi). I thus returned to do some research on my original case study of New Delhi and worked on a more thorough theoretical and historiographical exploration of my approach. These provided opening arguments for the book (Legg, 2007), which then framed two chapters that were based on the first half of my thesis and some new research work.

This approach may also present opportunities to prepare research papers on topics of interest, which connect to the book material but do not fit into the proposed structure. While these papers *can* then be referred to in the book, one reviewer of my manuscript argued that if this material was relevant it should be in the book, if not then it needn't be referenced. Each editor should have guidelines on this, as well as a policy on reprinting already published material. I personally found publishing papers a valuable means of securing extra feedback, as well as an outlet for pursuing more detailed theoretical and empirical sub-themes within the wider project (as well as the more pragmatic necessity of complementing a book proposal with other published material in order to find a job...) While publishing times vary, my book took a year from final submission to publication, which is substantially less time than it has taken several of my journal papers to make it into print. And while many young academics in the UK may be concerned that a book only equates to one RAE/REF submission, the rewards in terms of publicity and recognition are widely recognised and rewarded (especially within university frameworks regarding promotion etc). Good luck!

4 Publishing Beyond the Academy

4.1 Policy writing: to, for and against

Anthony Bebbington

The pressure on geographers to be ‘relevant’ seems – for good or ill – to be increasing. In the UK, for example, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) asks us to identify the beneficiaries of our research and our plans for ‘user engagement’ when applying for grants. My own university – like others I presume – includes ‘knowledge transfer’ or ‘knowledge exchange’ as one of its measures of staff performance; and more generally our universities are under scrutiny to demonstrate (and if possible generate revenue from) their contributions to society. Engaging policy is but one way of addressing this question of relevance. What follows are thoughts on issues that arise when one writes with a view to ‘policy relevance’ (also see Box 7).

First, not all policy is public policy, and not all public policy is government policy. Governments, NGOs, social movements, businesses, and international agencies all have policies and these are, often, oriented towards the concerns of different groups in society and reflect distinct visions of how things should be. Some are more ‘public’ in orientation, others less so. Indeed, there can be serious disagreements between the policies of different actors, and researchers have to choose which of these positions to support and which to resist. In this sense there is really little difference between engaging policy and engaging advocacy – they are different sides of the same coin.

Second, in being ‘policy relevant’ one can write *for*, *to* and *against* policy. You can be part of a process preparing policy documents; you can write materials with a view to contributing to the preparation of policy statements that other people are writing; and you can write with a view to challenging and disagreeing with policies, again in the hope of influencing them. While the position from which one writes in each of these cases differs, they each share the challenge of writing in ways that will resonate with the ways in which policy framers and makers think and speak.

Third, writing *for*, *to* and *against* policy demands a certain style. Once, when writing one particular piece for a policy influencing NGO, I was told to write something a policy maker could read in the bath in 20 minutes. I don’t actually believe things are this basic. Policy writing can have considerable substance, and can and should involve complex ideas. Long documents (with good executive summaries) can also have an influence. However, the style needs to avoid our discipline’s pet words and terms, needs to be engaging and needs to show links between analysis and action. This does not mean the writing must always say ‘what should be done’ (though you will often be asked that) – but it does mean that the policy framer and maker must be able to see the links between what is written and the range of courses and domains of action that are open to them.

Fourth, the more that one writes *for* policy, and from within policy making bodies, the more likely it is that documents will be produced by teams. It is rare that you will write them alone. Moreover, the more formal the reports, the more they will be subject to review not only on grounds of substance, but also by teams from External Affairs and even Legal Departments. The changes that will be made to the language you initially used, and decisions about what can and cannot be said, can be painful. Often these changes can be negotiated and argued over, but you will lose more of these arguments than you will win. Such experiences make clear the sense in which, when writing in these sorts of institutional domain, you have to let go of what you write in a far more profound sense than when writing for an academic journal.

Engaging policy in these different ways is both frustrating and rewarding (and I suspect it is rarely only one or the other). The frustration comes from being ignored, from having your ideas adapted in ways with which you feel less than comfortable and from having to argue your case without being able to take as given many of the terms and preconceptions one might often take for granted when engaging like-minded geographers. The rewards are also many, and derive from having your writing read, considered and above all taken seriously by policy communities. Two particular rewards stand out. First, one gets to engage on a deeper level the people working in these communities – and many of them are brilliant, incisive and, not least, decent human beings. They have much to say that contributes to our own work and the ways in which we frame our research – their contributions often differ from those made by our academic colleagues. Second, one is given some insight into how particular policy making, framing and advocacy processes work in practice – the lessons are often very subtle and rich.

In everything that geographers write, the risk we run is that once the words are in print, they can be used and interpreted in ways we never intended or anticipated. In this sense writing for policy is much the same as the other writing geographers do. If there is a difference, perhaps it lies in the extent to which such policy writing has to assume a language and style that make it accessible to a wider range of users, which increases both the risks and potential rewards that are at stake.

Box 7: Walking the tight-rope: postgraduate experiences of publishing a policy report

Friederike Ziegler

My doctoral research involved participatory research on daily mobility and social exclusion for older people in County Durham. It was funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council as part of its CASE funding scheme, which involves a partnership with an external funding partner. As part of the initial agreement with

my CASE funding partner (Age Concern), I consented to write a project report with findings of the study. The report was to be a balanced but detailed account of factors that influence older peoples daily mobility from their perspectives. The aim was to improve the understanding of policy-makers and planners of the older peoples' service requirements locally and nationally. After discussions with my supervisors who have experience in writing reports and after having read some other policy reports I developed the structure and form of my own report which was entitled 'Getting Around' (available on www.ageconcern-durham.org.uk). The general contents and layout were discussed with Age Concern, but they had little input into the report at this stage (for later feedback see below).

Writing this report turned out to be quite a challenge for a number of reasons:

- 1 **Various audiences:** The potential audiences for the report were policy-makers on a local and national level; voluntary organisations; local service providers; community organisations; older people (including the research participants) and the general public. There were pragmatic considerations to be taken into account. For instance the report provided a brief summary and overview of the findings as well as 'implications for practice'. Many policy-makers and professionals have little time to read a twenty-page report, so the summaries gave those individuals the most important information 'at a glance'. In addition, I provided an appendix with all comments made by participants village by village, in order to provide local service providers with a basis for improvements and action. To make the main part of the report more readable and interesting, participants' quotes were interspersed, adding authentic voices to illustrate the description and analysis. The final report was distributed to all participants, as well as professionals dealing with services that affect older people such as policy-makers and planners on County and District levels (e.g. transport), Primary Care Trusts, Social Services and voluntary organisations.
- 2 **The participatory process:** An important part of the participatory approach of this research involved feedback sessions with participants and funding partners in order to give them an opportunity to comment on the draft report and request additions or changes (see Section 4.3 for more on publishing from participatory research). Participants made few changes to the document, except for requesting that the general language and tone of the report be changed from being 'gloomy' about decline in mobility in old age, to being positive about the active and enjoyable lives that most older people have. The resulting changes did not appeal to the funding partner because of their own agenda.

- 3 **Hidden agendas and compromises:** The funding partner's intention was to use the research findings to support applications for funding from statutory agencies to provide much-needed services to older people. This agenda required older people to be portrayed as in need of support, which conflicted with participants' own positive portrayal of their lives. As a compromise I agreed to add a special section to the report, which gave an account of the lives and specific needs of participants with physical disabilities or sensory impairments. The report was initially to be about 20 pages long but in the end contained 30 pages with the requested additions and appendices.

Although writing a report from a collaborative and participatory research project can be challenging, I found it a worthwhile and positive experience. The funding partner as well as policy-makers, service providers and planners showed interest in the project findings reported, and some have taken action in line with the recommendations. The report also demonstrated to research participants that their input had been taken seriously and participants themselves told me that they found the report an interesting and enjoyable read.

4.2 Geography and the media: a personal experience

Klaus Dodds

The first time my name and research interests appeared in the national media was in January 1993. I was, at the time, finishing off my PhD thesis at the University of Bristol and working on a geopolitical analysis of Anglo-Argentine competition in the South Atlantic and Antarctic. A member of the organising staff attached to the 1993 IBG annual conference (now the RGS-IBG) informed me that a journalist from *The Times* was interested to hear about my conference presentation. The subject matter was the 1982 Falklands War and he was intrigued in part because of the high level of media interest recently engendered by the 10th anniversary of that conflict (i.e. 1992). The following day a short piece appeared about my talk. It was a salutary experience.

It was instructive for a number of reasons. First, it was extremely flattering as a graduate student to be interviewed by a senior journalist from a well-known newspaper. It helped my self-confidence no end. Second, the actual content of the piece bore limited resemblance to the content of my presentation. The journalist in question was not present in the audience and I had spoken to him a day in advance. Journalists, as I was to learn later, are frequently working against tight deadlines and are eager for a simple but effective story and associated headline. Third, I discovered that there was little point in talking about my

theoretical interests. I was forced to speak concisely and simply without any reference to geopolitical jargon. Finally, I learnt that the media are highly sensitive to anniversaries in general.

Over the next fifteen years, I have written and presented on Radio 3 and 4, appeared on national television and radio in the UK and beyond, written a regular column for the *Geographical Magazine* and appeared, often without my consent and knowledge, on a host of internet sites, some media-related and some not. From my own experience there are a number of ways in which you can engage with the media. One of the most important things to understand is that radio, television and newspaper journalists are working with very different kinds of mediums with corresponding institutional and professional constraints.

There are at least three ways of developing your engagement with the media. First, with the help of a media professional (and all universities have a press office of some sort, as do learned societies such as the RGS-IBG), you can develop a series of press briefings, which are short summary pieces of your research. They are usually never more than one side of A4 in length and attempts to summarise in an interesting and accessible manner the subject in question. They have to be 'eye-catching' in terms of a dramatic finding, a striking quote, or perhaps something that is simply counter-intuitive. In other words, you thought you knew everything about said topic but my research completely reverses or overturns received wisdom. Timing can also be critical – a major anniversary is always helpful in raising public interest in general. The briefing must be accessible and at the bottom of the summary correct contact details are clearly essential. In my experience, journalists send a quick email or phone directly and then will make a judgement as to whether to pursue the potential story.

Another way of raising your media profile and subject matter is simply to write a letter to a national newspaper about a topical subject, that you have some claim to knowledge or insight. Recently, I wrote a letter to the *Guardian* about a piece about the Antarctic, which they headlined 'Icy imperialism'. After the letter was published, Canadian, German and Scottish radio broadcasters contacted me about the story and I was later invited to participate on a television show put out by the Iranian government funded Press TV. There was a downside, as a representative from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office was less pleased with me for my contribution to a debate that s/he thought was unduly 'sensationalised'. From my point of view, the original letter presented me with a surprising opportunity to talk more widely about the Antarctic from a geopolitical and geographical viewpoint.

The final way, which I recommend, is making sure you liaise with your university's press office and ensure that you feature in any experts' directory that exists. This is a great way to ensure that interested journalists can see quickly who might be able to comment or participate in a particular feature. Journalists are always up against it in terms of deadlines and you need to be accessible and capable of responding to short deadlines.

Media exposure is fun and occasionally financially rewarding as well. But like most things in life can also be double-edged – it might well jar with a more academic manner of speaking and writing. And you might not even be described as a geographer – according to BBC radio staff I am a geopolitical historian.

Box 8: For your eyes only... not any more! Writing for different readerships

Alasdair Pinkerton

For almost twenty years of my formal education, from primary school to PhD, the act and art of 'writing' was consistently emphasised as the key means of expressing scholarly thoughts, opinions and critical reflections. And yet besides the occasional schoolboy treatise or student newspaper article these creative expressions were locked into a private dialogue between student and teacher. Writing was safe, secure, and absolutely not in the public domain. This was writing with a safety net...and it doesn't last forever.

For me, the safety net was removed in late 2005 when, as part of an ESRC initiative, I was awarded a placement within the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST). The aim was to intensively research the lively issue of 'pervasive computing' – an active subject within Information Technology, with significant privacy, safety and environmental implications – and produce a four-page briefing document highlighting all the major policy areas affected. The audience could, in theory, be any interested party, but 'POSTnote' briefings were aimed at busy politicians who wanted a brief overview of contemporary science and technology issues. Sentences were to be short and punchy. "Think *Daily Mail*", I was told, "maximum fourteen words per sentence". The information had to be clear, removed of technical jargon, and grounded with case studies. And yet it also had to reflect the complexities of the subject matter, and the viewpoints of multiple – often diametrically opposed – stakeholders. The challenge was enormous, and the learning curve was greater still. These early lessons, though, have proved invaluable.

Lesson number one: Think about *audiences*. Politicians, it was made clear, demand a very different kind of writing than do academic geographers and I had to learn to constrain any discussions of purely theoretical interest. Much like when communicating with journalists, writing for policy-makers demands a brevity and cogency rarely found in academic journals. This is not to say that the ideas and issues under discussion have to be simple and/or simplified; only that the writing has to relay complexities in a straightforward, transparent, and (ideally) eye-catching way. This is especially important when promoting your research in

have explicit authority to post an article online. However, this policy also has the following advantages: it facilitates international protection against infringement, libel or plagiarism; it enables the most efficient processing of licensing and permissions in order that the article can be made available to the fullest extent both directly and through intermediaries, and in both print and electronic form; it enables the publisher to maintain the integrity of an article once refereed and accepted for publication, by facilitating centralised management of all media forms including linking, reference validation and distribution.

Terms of contributor agreement differ according to the publisher, but many allow the submitted article pre-peer review to be made available widely – i.e. sharing print or electronic copies with colleagues and posting an electronic version on your personal website, employer’s website/repository and on free public servers. Others allow for the accepted article to be placed in a repository after an embargo period (Emma Smith).

5.5 I’d like to reproduce a copyright image in an article and/or book. How do I go about securing permission to reproduce it?

It is usually the author’s responsibility to secure permission to reproduce copyright images (or other material) and to pay any necessary fees. Fees vary, and can be quite expensive. If you would like to reproduce an image from another article or book, you need to contact the publisher to ask for permission and to pay a fee. If the image is in an archive or collection, there is usually a form for you to complete, which provides details about charges. You also need to secure permission from the copyright holder to reproduce an image if it is available on-line. In all cases, you will need to provide full information about your forthcoming publication, including its likely circulation and whether you are applying for English-language or world-rights to reproduce the image. Before your article or book is published, you will need to send your publisher the agreement to reproduce the image, as well as full details as specified by the copyright holder for acknowledging its source. If you are writing a book, your publisher might be able to provide an advance to cover the costs of reproduction fees against any future royalties, as discussed in Section 3 (Alison Blunt).

5.6 What is the best way to approach magazines and newspapers to publish freelance articles?

See Section 4.2 for advice on writing for the media. As Klaus Dodds explains, university press offices and learned societies such as the RGS-IBG provide expert advice on drafting a press release or briefing, and often have extensive media contacts. International academic conferences also have press officers, who liaise between journalists and academics and identify the best strategy for publishing research findings in magazines and newspapers. In addition to seeking this expert

advice, it is also possible to send letters, opinion pieces or articles directly to magazines or newspapers. Bear in mind Klaus’ advice about the style of writing, the topicality of the piece, and whether there is a compelling reason for submitting it at a particular time (Alison Blunt).

5.7 As a PhD has to represent original work, are there any problems with publishing material from it before submitting the thesis?

As discussed in Section 2.6 and Boxes 3 and 4, some PhD theses are written by publication, and usually include articles that have been published alongside those under review and those ready to submit. Other PhD theses are written as a monograph, and are then subsequently revised into a series of articles and/or a book. In the latter case, sometimes one or more articles will have been published – or at least submitted for publication – before the final thesis has been submitted or examined. In both cases, full acknowledgement and citations should be given to the published versions of material that appear in the PhD thesis. If you have co-authored articles that subsequently appear as part of the PhD, it is likely that you will have to document the extent of your contribution to the article (Alison Blunt).

5.8 How does co-authorship work, both in terms of academic publications and writing a PhD by publication?

Co-authorship is important in certain fields of geography – particularly in physical geography – and/or if your research forms part of a larger research project, working with a team of collaborators. Co-authorship can take a number of different forms. Sometimes each of the co-authors writes different sections of an article or book and works together to develop the argument as a whole. If different authors contribute equally to the final article, it is usual practice for their names to appear in alphabetical order. At other times, a lead author (who should be named first in the list of co-authors) drafts the article, and then circulates it to the other co-authors for comment. It is important to be clear about your responsibilities as co-author, whether in terms of drafting the article or responding promptly to a draft that another co-author has circulated (see Box 2). It is also important to be clear about the different contributions of different authors. You will often need to document the nature and extent of your contribution as co-author, whether you are writing a PhD by publication, or applying for jobs, tenure or promotion (Alison Blunt).

5.9 Can you make money from writing academic books?

Generally not much, although there are exceptions (e.g. key textbooks that are regularly reprinted). And wanting to make money is definitely not the reason for writing an academic book, as you would probably be very disappointed! As Kevin and Jo explain in Section 3, you might well be able to secure advances on future royalty payments to pay

for permission fees and/or to employ someone to compile the index. Whilst these payments are often essential in ensuring that the book can go into production, they also mean that it will take quite a while for any royalty payments to come through to you. Royalties are also paid proportionately to co-authors and editors, so are smaller if you have written or edited a book with other people. But receiving a cheque every six months or once a year – no matter how small – is always welcome. There are also other ways of being paid for your published work. In the UK, for example, the Authors Licensing and Collecting Society (www.alcs.co.uk) secures payments for authors when their work has been copied, broadcast or recorded. For academic authors, this is usually most relevant in terms of fees paid when publications are xeroxed. Your contract will also specify how many copies of the book you will be sent upon publication (and check whether this includes hardback as well as paperback copies), and provides details about the author discount for purchasing further copies of your book, and others published by the same publisher (Alison Blunt).

5.10 When publishing collaborative and participatory research, what is the best way of balancing commitments to collaborators with intellectual property rights and the need to protect our own work?

Arguably, participatory action research and intellectual property rights are epistemological opposites and are therefore difficult to 'balance'. A participatory approach emphasises knowledge *sharing* rather than proprietary control, and recognises that *all* participants have rights to the data/knowledge produced by projects. But this is complicated because of our multiple commitments to various stakeholders (e.g. grant awarding bodies and our academic communities) and the need to produce certain outputs in certain ways. So when commencing participatory research it makes sense, along with other ethical protocols explaining the research, to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or Standards of Engagement agreement. Such agreements can help to establish ownership of the research and its various products, and the particular publishing plans of researchers and others involved. Focusing on this issue can establish a much stronger foundation for collaboration. The MoU should clearly identify what labour, resources and other support each party is contributing to the research, what will happen to data generated throughout the research process, who will have access to it and how it will be stored. It is also worthwhile identifying the anticipated published outputs (e.g. videos, artwork, reports, journal articles) and how intellectual property rights will be attributed based on resource inputs – ideas, labour, equipment etc. This is particularly important to clarify if there is any chance that profits will be made from any work disseminated (mrs c. kinpaisby-hill).

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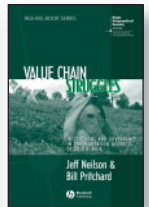
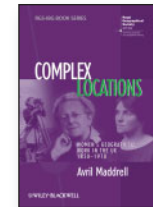
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Typescripts should be double-spaced with wide margins and should feature a title page, abstract and key words. Spelling should be in UK English.

Illustrations should be submitted as eps or tiff files wherever possible. All scale lines should be labelled in km and maps should feature a North arrow. Tables must be typed using few horizontal rules and no vertical rules and be numbered consecutively using Arabic numerals (Table 2, etc). Titles should be concise, but as informative as possible. The approximate position of Tables and Figures in the text should be marked in the typescript.

Authors must use the Harvard referencing system, in which authors names (no initials) and dates are given in the main body of the text, with specific pages indicated if required. References are listed alphabetically at the end of the paper.

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