

# **THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

## **Submitting publication proposals**

Initial inquiries about publication should be made directly to the chairperson of the Publications Committee at the Book Club of California. Please do not send complete manuscripts. For computer security reasons, we do not accept unsolicited email submissions, and any email message containing attachments will be ignored. Prospectuses should be sent to the following address:

The Book Club of California  
Attn: Publications Committee Chairperson  
312 Sutter Street, Suite 500  
San Francisco, California 94108-4377

Please submit your proposal only to the chairperson. Materials will be shared and redistributed among committee members as appropriate.

We recommend that a book prospectus include the following:

- Detailed statement outlining the manuscript's arguments, themes, and significance to the field
- Annotated table of contents that clearly develops the content and structure of each chapter
- Assessment of the work's fit with existing literature, comparison with published books on the topic, and discussion of the intended audiences and market for the book
- Statement of the anticipated length of the manuscript; plans for tables, figures, or other illustrations; and schedule for completion
- Sample chapter (if available)
- Curriculum vitae
- If your manuscript is based on a dissertation, please discuss how the material and research has been developed, reframed, or otherwise revised. The Book Club of California does not publish unrevised dissertations.
- If your manuscript is an edited collection, please include information about each of the contributors and note if any of the chapters have been previously published.

## **Authors: Book Proposal Guidelines**

## **What Does The Book Club of California Publish?**

Founded in 1912 by a group of San Francisco bibliophiles, the Book Club of California is a small but distinguished and adventurous publisher of fine press works that pertain largely to the history, literature, art, bibliography, and printing of California and the west. To date, more than 228 beautifully produced books bear the Book Club of California imprint. They are artfully conceived, designed, and printed in limited editions by some of the foremost fine printers in California. The majority of these books represent the first and only appearance of their texts in printed form.

The Book Club has worked with an important list of authors whose work transcends traditional academic boundaries to speak to people everywhere. Notable Book Club of California publications include *A Bibliography of California and the Pacific West, 1510-1906* by Robert Ernest Cowan (1914); *Poems* by Robinson Jeffers (with an Ansel Adams photograph) (1928); *Splendide Californie* (2001); and *California in Relief: Thirty Wood Engravings by Richard Wagener* (2009).

The Book Club of California publishes between two and three books annually. All manuscripts undergo an editorial peer-review, which includes outside readings by field experts. The imprint of The Book Club of California is controlled by an editorial committee of members and this committee exercises the final acceptance of all books published by The BCC.

The BCC accepts proposals for general interest and scholarly books in the following broad categories: art, photography, biography, architecture, essays, and printing history. Our bias is for California content. We do not generally publish religious inspiration or revelation, children's books, festschriften, conference volumes, unrevised dissertations, or autobiographies.

## **How Do I Submit a Proposal?**

Please send a book proposal rather than a full-length manuscript. This will allow us to quickly assess our interest in your work. If we decide to pursue consideration of your project, we will either request the full manuscript or send the proposal out for external review.

Please address your submission only to the chairperson of the committee who will review it or pass it to other members as appropriate. Proposals should not be sent electronically, either as disks or as attachments to email messages.

If you would like to have your manuscript returned to you after the waiting period, please state this in writing, and include a self-addressed stamped envelope. Please do not send original materials and keep a copy of everything you send.

## **What Should Be in a Proposal?**

A proposal should give the BCC editors and marketing staff—most of whom will not be specialists in your area—a clear and detailed idea of what your book will be about. Your initial submission should include a letter of introduction, your CV or resume, a sample chapter or two, and a proposal that contains the following:

## **1. Brief Description**

In a few paragraphs, describe the work. Be sure to include what you consider to be the outstanding, distinctive, or unique features of the work. This narrative description should explain the proposed book's purpose, themes, arguments, scope, contribution to scholarship, and place in literature. Please state your argument concisely and clearly.

## **2. Outline / Table of Contents**

Include a detailed outline of the book with paragraph-length descriptions of each chapter.

## **3. Apparatus / Illustrative Materials**

- What do you estimate to be the length of the completed book?
- Approximately how many photographs and/or line drawings (charts, graphs, diagrams, etc.) do you plan to include? If illustrations are planned, please send photocopies of sample art—do not send original photographs, artwork, negatives, or any materials that are irreplaceable.

## **4. Market Considerations**

- For what type of reader is your book intended? Specialists in your field, or in some particular area of a larger field? Is it intended for general readers without specialized knowledge? How would your work be important to members?
- Is it a book that students might use, and if so, students at what level (major or non-major; freshman, senior, graduate) and in what course?

## **5. Competition**

- Describe existing books in this field and spell out how your book will be similar to, as well as different from, these works. Discuss specifically their strengths and weaknesses, how your coverage may vary from the competing titles.
- Please discuss each competing book in a separate paragraph. If possible, please provide the publisher and date of publication as well.

## **6. Status of the Work & Permissions**

- What portion or percentage of the material is now complete? When do you expect to have a complete manuscript?

- Do you plan to include material requiring permission (text, illustrations)? To what extent? Have you started the permissions request process?

## **7. Reviews**

Please provide the names and contact details for two or three people whom you feel would be competent to review your material and whose opinion you would find valuable. We will try to use some of these along with our own selection. Naturally, we do not reveal the names of reviewers without their permission.

### **The Review Process**

After receipt of your proposal, the chairperson of the BCC Publications Committee will review your materials and consider whether the project is a good fit for the BCC list. We make every effort to ensure that editorial decisions are made in a timely manner, but because the BCC publications committee receives many book proposals each year, it may take up to six months for a response to this initial submission. During the waiting period, BCC editors do not accept phone queries regarding the status of your proposal.

If we are interested in your project, we will notify you of our interest and then commission outside reviewers to read and evaluate your proposal. At this stage, we may ask for additional materials. We will, of course, obtain the best available reviewers to consider your work. The review process typically takes up to four months, depending on, among other things, the nature of the project and the availability of reviewers.

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