

My first trade book - that is, book written for a general audience, instead of for fellow scholars (academic monographs) or college students (textbooks) — was 19 years ago now, Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium. I think it's safe to say that when I wrote the book, I knew virtually *nothing* about writing a trade book. My editor at Oxford University Press urged me to write it and I reluctantly agreed.

I was reluctant because I did not want to write for a general audience. At that time I wanted to spend my life writing scholarship for scholars. But I thought, well, why not - I'll give it a shot. But it was to be a one-off, not a career.

I didn't really know the difference between trade books and scholarly monographs, except when it came to audience. I realized that I would not be writing for experts like the guy in the office next to me, but for lay folk like the guy across the street. I suppose that was pretty much all I *had* to know. I wrote the book. And then I started learning what trade publishing is all about. That was thirteen trade books ago.

Much of my ignorance at the time had to do with the issue of why it is that some trade books sell in the hundreds of thousands and others in the ... hundreds. What makes the difference?

At first, originally, I simply assumed that ...

The Rest of this post is for MEMBERS only. If you don't belong yet, there is still hope for you. You can join today and live happily ever after. So why not? It won't cost much and will give tons. And every penny goes to charity. So JOIN!

You need to be logged in to see this part of the content. Please [Login](#) to access.



[The Miracle of New Life](#)
[Fresh Air Interview Tuesday March 20](#)