



02:38

I'd say it was exactly the same for me. I just knew that I loved books, and I was really interested in working with authors. But you're right, I think that the industry is full of mystery. And it's, it all happens behind closed doors, and it's hard to understand what goes on within it. So it was a process of, I guess, education and demystification for me. And that's certainly something we tried to do for our authors, when we're working with them to demystify the industry as much as possible.



03:10

Yeah, I definitely feel like I was lucky enough, I did an undergraduate in publishing. So coming into SFU, I knew what to expect. But I feel like a lot of my classmates who did stuff like marketing or English literature and stuff like that really didn't know what they were walking into when they started in the master's program.



03:27

That is interesting. I had done an undergraduate degree in English literature. But then once I learned about the program at SFU, I knew that I needed to gain some industry experience in order to get into the program. And so I spent a year working in publishing. So I didn't assume that I knew a lot. But I was starting from a place where I had some insight. And fortunately, those companies and one of them in particular, really, the people who run the company, really took it upon themselves to try to help educate me. So I was really fortunate that by the time I got into the industry, I feel I'd maybe had sort of a microcosmic education in so that I could understand and have some context for what we learned about in the master's program.



04:10

I find that nowadays, it's really hard to get a job in publishing, if you don't have any background experience.



04:17

I think it was harder than two. I think I was very lucky. I put out a lot of different feelers and I cobbled together a number of things. So I did first an unpaid internship for a short time then I worked part time in a few different places. And I did some retail jobs while I worked part time in publishing, and so that was certainly the case 25 years ago, I don't know if it's changed much.



04:40

It really doesn't sound like it because that's really similar to what I've done. I think everyone who started in my program really came in with like a publishing dream. So I was wondering if when you started kind of going into publishing did you kind of have that big dream like that one

when you started kind of going into publishing did you kind of have that big dream like that one thing that you were like, This is what I'm gonna do. This is what I'm here for.



04:57

No, I think I just had a big love I'd love to book and I didn't come in with a lot of preconceived notions, I was really interested in the process. And I had, I came to visit SFU, I met with the people who ran the program, and felt really, really well taken care of. And, you know, really, they really took the time to help express me what it would feel like I had reached out to a few different programs elsewhere and didn't have that experience at all. So the main reason I wanted to go to SFU, due to master publishing program was actually because I had, I felt that I, that the people who are running, it really gave me excellent visibility into what I should expect. And that made all the difference for me. So no, I think I think that I felt a lot of trust in the fact that I would be guided and in some interesting directions that I could explore. And I also don't think that I had preconceived notions about where my particular set of skills or talents really lay at the time, you know, I knew that I was very young, very junior, and that it would take me some time to figure out what were my strengths and what I could bring to bear. And as it turns out, I ended up being kind of a generalist in a way. And I think that that served me well, when I went to to co launch my own company, that general expertise has been really helpful in a lot of different ways.

I would I would extrapolate to, and say that I think that's true of publishing in Canada as well. We have to, you know, being right next to us, we have to be scrappy, and, and creative and opportunistic as well, relative to what happens on the other side of the border.



16:37

Absolutely, especially when even most of our major publishers now are American run companies. So absolutely, I find that even though he has been around for a little while, it still is pretty unique. And it's running model, like we still really see that the publishing industry is like very set in tradition. And you see lots of people trying to change that right now. B r p t t

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incredible, you know, sort of multifaceted sets of expertise that we'll see through the next few years. And I feel really proud of our ability to actively cultivate that and to be a force for change. So those are some examples. Actually, I have one more. Okay, one more?



30:48

Yeah, let's hear it.



30:49

Because this one is a is reflective, I think of the it was the word multifaceted that made me think of it. It's many of our authors see publishing, and they take a very multifaceted approach to publishing and we try to meet them there and help support them in all of what they do. So we have worked with an amazing author named Bob Joseph. Now for many years, Bob runs a company called indigenous corporate training. And he he wanted a publication that would support the work that he and his team do in how to support helping to teach non indigenous organizations and individuals how to work more effectively with indigenous organizations and people. And so we created a book that was very much designed to support the the training and the work that he does. But being a really insightful data driven person, he noticed that a blog post that he wrote, called 21, things you may not know about the Indian Act, took off, it really became a very, very important part of the conversation around the Indian Act in Canada, part of the national conversation, and he noticed that there was huge interest in that particular post, and we t ê ê



33:46

We have some really good model for doing that. It definitely wasn't something that came from nowhere. You know, when when we worked in CNM, I remember working on several books under the Greystone imprint where they were very responsive, for example, in creating a book that was specific, let's say to, you know, Pocky theory that was, was indelibly in people's mind for him to, you know, the floods that happen and in and around Calgary at the time. So it's very, very hard to pull off. But it's that sense of risk and reward. And I can't say that it's something that publishers can easily or comfortably do all the time. And we're not usually working with other people who want to work with that level of go to market speed. However, it's something that we were really keen to push ourselves and to try to push ourselves into an extreme sort of situation so that we could have just experiment we wanted to, we really support that level of experimentation where possible, and we thought, well, we better do it too, if we're going to help coach our authors into it as well. But it's hard to do. There are no easy answers, but once in a while, it's um If you can swing it, it's really worth trying.



35:03

And I'm sure like the skills that you learned from that can still be applied even in normal situations where you're not pushing a book that fast. So it's just a good learning experience.



35:14

It was, absolutely, it was a really important moment in our gross, I think the company and as a team,



35:21

so I know that you're on a time crunch. So I'm just gonna bring it to the last couple of questions where I just wanted to actually address the people who are going to be listening to this podcast, the incoming students SFU, the new grads that are going to be going out into the industry, but do you think there's like one piece of advice you have sort of that everyone who's trying to put their foot in the door of the industry should know that they may not know,



35:45

I think you called it earlier in our conversation where you were talking about networking and making connections with people, I think the more you can do that in a meaningful way, the better, I'll say to when you're interviewing this small thing, but it's quite meaningful, doing meaningful, tailored follow up really makes a difference to, I've noticed in our hiring, at page two, some of the people who not only interviewed really well, but who sent some, just simple but responsive and meaningful and kind follow up really made an impression. And that gave us the opportunity to see another facet of who it was we were talking to and who we were meeting with. So those are just just been thinking about the actual job search or looking for internships or things like that. Those are two things that bring immediately to mind. And I would just say to that, while there's not, I don't have a lot of easy answers for the difficult



40:05

Yeah, we'll see. Yeah, let me know if you figure that one out.



40:09

I think I think that's gonna be like the whole country as a whole all the publishing people, we need to just sort of put our minds to that one.



40:17

Yeah, maybe the world.



40:19

Awesome. So I don't want to take up more of your time because I know that you said you were busy. I want to thank you so much for doing this interview.



40:26

Thanks, Brenda. Everything and thanks so much for your time. Yeah,



40:30

thank you. Okay, take care. Bye bye.



Paige Smith 40:39

After School is a podcast project from Simon Fraser university's faculty of communication, art and technology. This has been our conversation with Jesse Finkelstein, hosted by Miranda winters sale. The after school podcast is created by Tessa arsenal, Emma Keeler Duga, Stacy Copland, myself, Paige Smith, and each of our student hosts. You can also learn more about publishing at sfu@publishing.sfu.ca and follow them on Facebook and Instagram at SFU publishing. NEXT TIME ON After School, we'll be hosting a conversation with Nick Doring, a software engineer with experience in product design and user experience who graduated from SFU School of interactive art and design. Make sure you subscribe to after school on your podcasting app of choice so you don't miss this great conversation. See you next time.