A Family, Maybe



Two Dads, Two Babies, and a Court Trial that Brought Us Together

By Lane Igoudin

Fall 2022 Executive Pitch
Presented by Alena Rivas & Kelly Zatlin

APPROACHING THE PITCH

***Instead* of asking yourself:**

- Does every part of the story perform perfectly in its current state?
- Do I personally love this book?
- Is the manuscript, in its current state, ready to be published?

Ask yourself:

- Is there a readership who will buy this book?
- Does Ooligan have the resources to reach that readership?
- Does this book bring something of value to Ooligan's mission, list, and students?

OOLIGAN'S MISSION



Ooligan Press is a student-run trade press rooted in the Pacific Northwest dedicated to cultivating the next generation of publishing professionals. We prioritize literary equity and inclusion. Ooligan strives to publish culturally relevant titles from our local, marginalized voices in order to make literature accessible and redefine who has a place within its pages.

MISSION FOR THE BOOK

This book will educate readers on the lengthy foster-to-adopt process and trials and tribulations that often accompany it, specifically for a gay interracial couple. The author also gives historical context of legislation on LGBTQ+ marital and family rights.

The book aligns with Ooligan's commitment to amplify marginalized voices by telling the story of two gay fathers' journey towards adoption.



BACKGROUND AND AUTHOR INFORMATION

Background Information: *A Family Maybe* is Lane Igoudin's first full-length book. He has written extensively about parenting in the past on sites like Adoption.com, Family Equality, The Forward (New York), Bay Windows (Boston) and The Citadel (Los Angeles). Lane spoke on the queer-identified writer/parent panel "Our Families, Our Stories: Writing and Parenting in the Trenches" at 2019 Lambda LitFest about LGBTQ parenting and public adoptions in California. While Lane does not have much of a social media presence personally, he is well-known in his educational, literary, and adoption/parenting circles.

Author Information: Lane Igoudin was born and raised in Moscow, Russia. A graduate of CSU Long Beach and Stanford University, he is a tenured professor of English and Linguistics at Los Angeles City College and a proud dad of two teens. Aside from writing about parenting for sites like Adoption.com and Family Equality, he has covered mindfulness and spirituality.

THE MANUSCRIPT



FAST FACTS

PROPOSED PUB DATE

February 13, 2024

RETAIL PRICE

$20

GENRE

Nonfiction/Memoir

CATEGORIES

Nonfiction, Memoir,
Family, Legal

FORMAT

Trade paperback
5.5 x 8.5

BISAC CODES

FAM004000 FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS / Adoption & Fostering
FAM056000 FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS / LGBTQ+
FAM057000 FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS / Multiracial Families
HIS066000 HISTORY / LGBTQ+ *

SUMMARY



While Lane and his partner Jon desperately want to be fathers, the foster-to-adopt process in Los Angeles County can be impossible to navigate. Ultimately the system is one that can either put families together or tear them apart.

After taking in two baby sisters, Lane and Jon quickly fall in love with the girls and cannot picture their lives without their foster daughters, Marianna and Gabriella. However, the LA County child welfare system is stretched and overburdened and their lives soon spiral into a mess of drama-filled birth-parent visits and children's court hearings. Lane and Jon go years without knowing whether or not they will be able to officially adopt the girls or if the county will successfully re-unify the sisters with their birth mother, Jenna, a teenager girl who is in the foster care system herself. While the stress of the process erodes their sense of peace, Lane and Jon do all that they can to give Marianna and Gabriella the best lives possible. *A Family, Maybe* is a story about family and the love, dedication, and heartache it takes to build one.

STRENGTHS

A Family, Maybe features various forms of representation–reinforcing Ooligan Press values in representation as a tool to build exposure and awareness and to promote equality and action.

This book offers several incredibly valuable learning opportunities.

It is well-paced and it moves quickly. The author is a strong writer and storyteller.

The author has a history of LGBTQ activism and has been published several times.

Ultimately, this story has the potential to spark discourse about the foster care system in the United States, to ask important questions about equality and human rights.



CHALLENGES

There are several sensitivity issues that must be **addressed in the DE** including:

- Descriptions of skin colors as commodity items i.e. skin the color of coffee, etc.
- Speaking harshly of a teen mother without enough reinforcement of her youth and life circumstances.
- Harsh opinions of those with substance abuse issues.
- Not *adequately* acknowledging the couple's financial privilege (it is mentioned).

The challenge is that we must help him use more inclusive, sensitive language while remaining truthful and authentic to his experience, an invaluable editorial skill to learn.

To some readers, the story may read as anti-reunification given the author's criticism of the mother and the court system. In response, remember that they comply with the court's orders and the mother is given far more chances than she was legally entitled to, and she fell short every time. To point this out is not wrong. To do so without compassion and understanding of the mother's circumstances is. This is Lane's memoir, his experience, and his is a marginalized voice we should not censor. We should seek to help him tell his story while also considering other perspectives.



MARKETING & PROMOTION



SALES HOOK

The true story of two gay men seeking to officially adopt their foster daughters–and their rocky journey navigating the Los Angeles County Child Welfare system.



TARGET AUDIENCE

Who are they as a person?

Social justice-minded, probably in the LGBTQ+ community or an ally, they have or are thinking about fostering or adopting in the US and want to know more about the challenges of fostering and adopting children as a queer person. They are liberal or progressive and enjoy memoirs about subjects they care about.

Why would they read this book?

They would read this book because they enjoy reading memoirs and want to learn more about fostering and adopting as a queer couple/person. While there is tension throughout the story, it ultimately has a happy ending, and everyone loves a happy ending, especially if it involves foster kids finding good homes.

MARKETING SUMMARY



A Family, Maybe is a memoir written by a gay foster-to-adopt parent who has written extensively on the subjects of adoption and queer families. This book can be positioned among adoption memoirs and gay memoirs, as the story takes place during the LGBTQ+ rights struggle of the early 2000s.

PROMOTION SUMMARY



We can use the author's other writing to help promote the book and post past articles that are relevant along with the promotion for this book. We could bundle with *Untangling the Knot* for giveaways or a discount on a bundle of both books.

PROMOTIONAL IDEAS

- Promote alongside Untangling the Knot, include both in a preorder bundle/giveaway
- Potential for bookmarks with resources for fostering and adoption
- Maybe Pride themed bookmarks
- We could potentially partner with the Queer Resource Center and/or the Center for Improvement of Child and Family Services and/or Student Legal Services on campus

MARKETING & PROMOTION MEDIA



PRINT

The Oregonian
Willamette Week
The Portland Mercury
The Portland Tribune
Gay Parent Magazine
The Advocate
The Fight Magazine
Fostering Families Today



TRADE

Shelf Awareness
Library Journal
School Library Journal
Publishers Weekly
The Bookseller
Publishing Perspectives



ONLINE

Daddy Squared: The Gay Dads Podcast (podcast and blog)
Outspoken Voices: a podcast for LGBTQ+ families
Some Families (podcast)
The Proud Parent Club (podcast)
PFLAG
Proud Parenting
The Honestly Adoption Podcast



SOUND

KEPW 97.3 FM
KBOO Radio

OTHER PARTNERSHIPS & MARKETS

MARKETS & STORES

Broadway Books
Annie Bloom's Books
Powell's
Another Read Through
A Children's Place
Barnes & Noble
Elliott Bay Book Company
University Bookstore
Queen Anne Bookstore

SPECIALTY

Foster care support groups (With Love, Embrace Foster/Adoptive family Support Group, Talk it Over, etc)

PARTNERSHIPS

Book club with the Oregon Public Library
Portland virtual lgbtq+ book club

POSSIBLE AWARDS

- Stonewall Book Award
- Lambda Literary Award
- Randy Shilts Award for Gay Nonfiction
- Betty Berzon Emerging Writer Award
- Jeanne Córdova Prize
- Judith A. Markowitz Award
- Best Indie Book Award (nonfiction)

THE NUMBERS



COMPARATIVE TITLES

1

Untangling the Knot

Paperback: 256
Publisher: Ooligan Press
Retail price: $17.00
ISBN-13: 978-1932010756
Dimensions: 6.6 x 9.6 inches
Pub date: Feb 28, 2015
Bookscan (RTD)
Numbers: 334

2

Rock Needs River: A Memoir About a Very Open Adoption

Paperback: 204
Publisher: Brilliance
Retail price: $14.95
ISBN-13: 978-1503903685
Dimensions: 5.5 x 8.5 inches
Pub date: Feb 1, 2019
Bookscan (RTD)
Numbers: 742

3

Stranger Care: A Memoir of Loving What Isn't Ours

Paperback: 432
Publisher: Random House
Retail price: $28.00
ISBN-13: 978-0593230039
Dimensions: 5.8 x 8.3 inches
Pub date: May 4, 2021
Bookscan (RTD)
Numbers: 3,073

PROFIT & LOSS

List Price: $20.00
Pub Date: February 2024
Pages: 260
Dimensions: 5.5” x 8.5”
Print Run: 1,500
PPB Unit Price: $1.85
Ebook Price: $9.99
Ebook Projected Sales: 100
Break-even Point: 587
Author Earnings: $ 1,920
Contribution to Overhead: $3,840



THE TIMELINE



FALL 2022 & WINTER 2023

01

- Acquire book, hash out budget and contract
- Send author questionnaire and receive answers
- Begin work on marketing plan

02

- Title discussion and vote in Exec or within the project group
- DE completed and sent to author
- Bulk up marketing plan

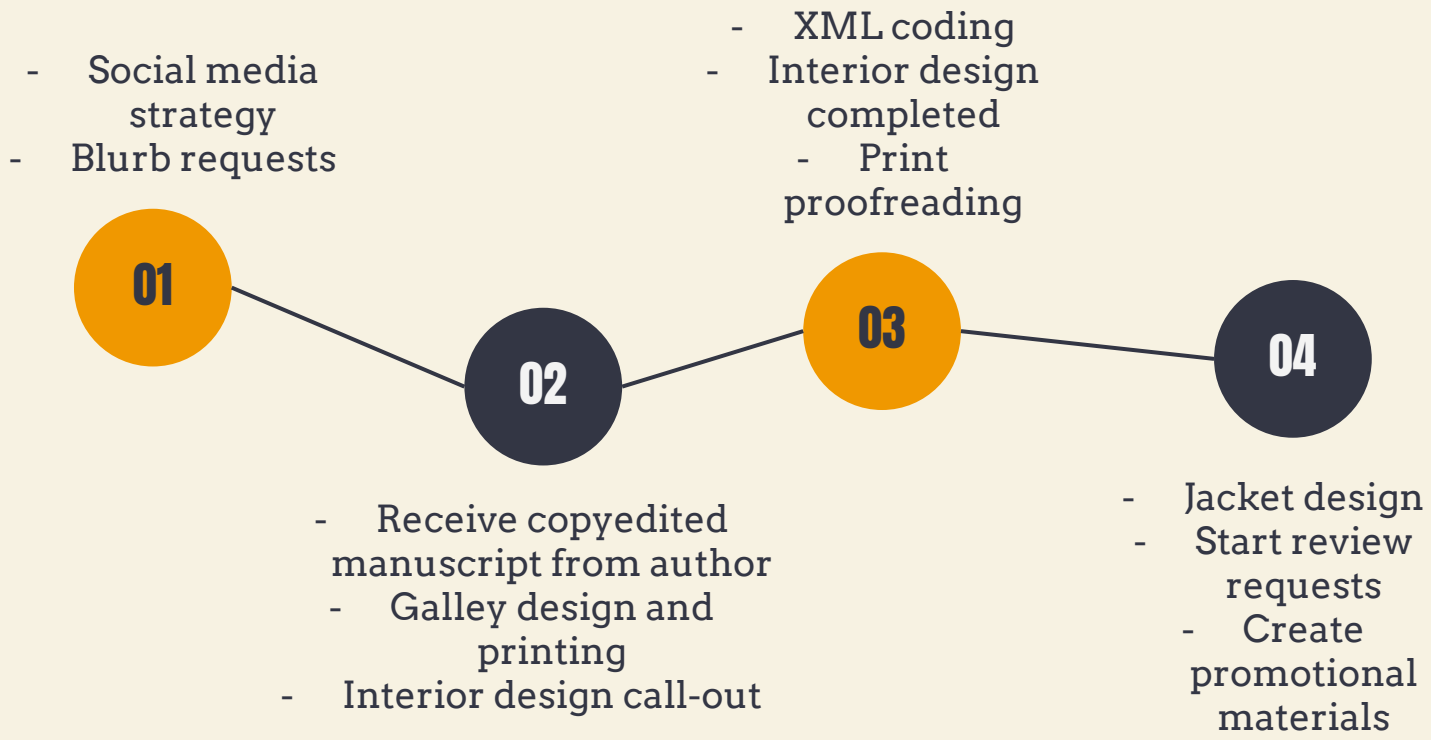
03

- Receive revised manuscript
- Copyediting
- Call for cover design
- Sales kits

04

- Implement marketing plan
- Final cover design
- Complete copyediting

SPRING & SUMMER 2023



FALL 2023 & WINTER 2024

- Files to print!
- Implement social media strategy
- Continue with review requests

01

02

- Ebook design
- Ebook proofreading
- Send out digital review copies

- Continue with social media & marketing strategies
- Mail out review copies
- Launch party planning

03

04

- Final books in warehouse
- Continue with social media & marketing strategies
- Pub date and launch!

VALUE TO OOLIGAN



VALUE TO ACQUISITIONS & EDITORIAL

Acquisitions

- Will offer an opportunity to practice fact checking during the DE as well as an opportunity to address sensitive subjects with the author. It's also a heartfelt, emotional story that many will connect to, and it may help educate those who are unaware of the workings of the fost/adopt system and can lead Ooligan in a promising direction

Editorial

- This is a good opportunity for a DE with structural/organizational edits as the MS, while it does follow a fairly straightforward timeline overall, gets jumbled in quite a few places. It's also an opportunity to check for consistency with names throughout, as they may have been/should be changed to protect privacy. Will require light to medium copyedit.

VALUE TO RIGHTS

Press 1: Libros del Asteroides (Spain)

About the press: They're an independent publisher in Spain that has experience publishing memoirs. They focus on publishing international stories and seem to be very in touch with their community of readers, similar to Ooligan.

Press 2: Kiepenheuer & Witsch (Germany)

About the press: They are a smaller press with a strong backlist of memoir titles. They seem very open to working with presses abroad and are easy to contact regarding foreign rights.

Press 3: Au diable vauvert (France)

About the press: It is a small press that states it wants to promote modern literature, which fits this memoir.

Press 4: Editorial Marea (Argentina)

About the press: They publish non-fiction titles and value stories about social and political current affairs, which is relevant to the legislation on LGBTQ+ adoption rights in America.

VALUE TO M&P & DESIGN

Marketing & Publicity

- The MS could be marketed across the US as a personal, in depth look at the foster/adopt system. It has the potential for national press as well with the author's regular speaking appearances and the many hot-button issues it entails. Pubbing during an election year may increase interest in these topics. The team and M&P departments will get experience marketing and launching in an area a little further from home (but also here at home!)

Design

- This MS has a lot of interior design opportunities with the various quotes from legal questionnaires, courtroom documents, etc. to make those stand out throughout the text. The cover brief and design will need careful, thoughtful consideration and provides the opportunity to collaborate with DEI for sensitivity

VALUE TO SOCIAL, DIGITAL & DEI

Social

- Social media could be used to engage with different audiences for the manuscript. Posts could also highlight some of the quotes used for design. Team can work with author, DEI, Social, Marketing, and Publicity to determine best way to position posts given sensitive subjects.

Digital

- The manuscript is a strong option for ebook and audiobook production.

DEI

- The MS will need a pretty thorough sensitivity read with multiple perspectives as the MS features a variety of people from different backgrounds. DEI will be involved at all phases of this project.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PITCH TEAM

Jenny Davis
Sarah Bradley
Nora Kuyumjian
Kyndall Tiller
Yomari Lobo
Em Villaverde
Haley Young
Abby Relph
Claire Curry
Elliot Bailey
Brenna Ebner
Savannah Lyda

FINAL REMINDER

Ask yourself:

- Is there a readership who will buy this book?
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- Does this book bring something of value to Ooligan's mission, list, and students?

THANK YOU!

It's time for our Q&A.

Please raise your hand!

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