

Prepub Buzz — Publishing the Unabomber — And Others Fit to Print

Here's a high-profile way for a small press to launch:
announce you'll be publishing a book by Unabomber Ted
Kaczynski.

Judy Quinn

March 1, 1999

Beau Friedlander, publisher/editor in chief of New York City's Context Books, the new publishing arm of his three-year-old book packaging company, Context Media, will publish Kaczynski's memoir, *Truth Versus Lies*, as part of an inaugural spring list, most likely in May.

Last summer Kaczynski sent his handwritten manuscript (which will translate to a 548-page typeset hardcover) to Simon & Schuster, which passed on the project. Friedlander, hearing about that rejection, contacted Kaczynski and eventually signed this book as well as another he learned about through him, *The United States of America v. Theodore John Kaczynski* by Vermont law professor Michael Mello, which is also expected to be published in May. At press time, Friedlander is still negotiating with a distributor.

"Kaczynski is a historical figure; anything he writes is of historical interest," Friedlander said. He said that Kaczynski's book is an engaging memoir that "discusses his childhood and all the media about him," not another rather mind-numbing manifesto like the one published in newspapers and then for a short time in book form, and which is now out of print.

Any royalties from the book — which Friedlander admitted will most likely be small — will go to Kaczynski's victims. Kaczynski, currently serving a life sentence in federal prison for 16 bomb attacks that killed three people and wounded 29 others, cannot profit from any book sales.

And although two of his six first books are on the topic, Friedlander isn't obsessed just with the Unabomber. The 29-year-old Bennington/Oxford/Columbia University grad — who said he left academia "with a headache" in 1995 and worked at Knopf briefly before starting his book packaging company — also plans, among other projects, a reprint of the work of French poet Malcolm de Chazal. And at press time Friedlander was continuing to find projects others deemed too hot to handle: he's currently negotiating to co-publish with his role model, publisher Barney Rosset, Pia Pera's *Lo's Diary*, that Italian homage to *Lolita* that was dropped, due to threat of lawsuit by the Nabokov estate, by FSG.

The Ted K Archive

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Publishers Weekly. <www.publishersweekly.com>

www.thetedkarchive.com