

It is an honor and a pleasure to have been afforded this opportunity to add to the reminiscences and well-wishing on the occasion of the retirement of Alfred Hofmann, after his many years with Springer.

Alfred and I first interacted in 1994 with regard to a volume of proceedings on conditional rewriting that I was editing for Springer's *Lecture Notes in Computer Science series*. That was an electronic exchange on technical matters, but soon after I began to meet Alfred regularly and in person at conference bookstands. He was always gentlemanly and generous. We engaged in numerous lively discussions, which I thoroughly enjoyed. These often revolved about the unfortunate over-commercialization of academic publishing and concomitant deterioration of publishing quality.

As circumstances would have it, I commenced the editing of festschrifts and libri amicorum when, in 2003, my doktorvater, Zohar Manna, reached his sixty-fourth year (sadly, he passed away two years ago), and his many students and colleagues were organizing an event in Taormina, Sicily in honor of that occasion. When a few years later, in July 2006, I proposed a volume in honor of (the late) Boris (Boaz) Trakhtenbrot's 85th birthday, Alfred wrote to me, as follows:

Without any doubts, Boris Trakhtenbrot deserves this kind of honorary publication and it is an excellent aspect to see you personally involved in such a project: the Manna-Festschrift you have organized for [the] occasion of Zohar's 64th birthday certainly is among the very best LNCS Festschrift volumes published so far (and I usually refer to LNCS 2772 as a sample book when I am asked for advice on how to approach an LNCS Festschrift project).

His repeated praises and encouragement turned what was intended as an isolated project or two into what eventually snowballed into a total of eight color-cover volumes for various colleagues over the years—all overseen by Alfred. Alfred was most helpful in all respects. He encouraged my preference for fine art on the covers, as well as other whims of mine. When I wasn't happy with the quantification of what constitutes "substantial change," he graciously allowed flexible re-use of contributions in future works. When someone wanted to translate a chapter into Russian, he approved it free of fees. And in January 2013, in connection to volumes honoring the late Yaacov Choueka, he went along with an oversized project:

We trust in your quality control, and if not you, as the ultimate LNCS Festschrift expert, who else should be first in doing a three-volume LNCS Festschrift project as editor.

There was, moreover, one legal matter that always stood in the way for me (as it should for everyone). Springer's lawyers had introduced what is to my mind an unacceptable indemnification clause in their standard copyright form. Anna Kramer, who worked in Alfred's office, wrote back in May 2007 as follows:

I have spoken to Alfred Hofmann about this. You may cross out the Indemnification clause, “and that he will indemnify Springer-Verlag against any cost, expenses [or damages for which Springer may become liable as a result of any breach of this warranty].”

Alfred renewed this exemption from their standard practice each time I edited a volume. In January 2013, he sought to allay my concerns:

Not in a single case so far among thousands of thousands of such signed forms the indemnification case needed to be activated. I do not want to insist on the indemnification clause if you don't like it for fundamental reasons, however, please note that this is okay for almost everybody and well-established practice in scientific publishing.

I am deeply grateful for the decades of Alfred's continual support and appreciation, and for the sustained, meaningful professional friendship that developed between us.

May your retirement bring you, Alfred, very many years of health, contentment, satisfaction, and fulfillment.

All the very best,
Nachum