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Today I share news about my colleague and friend Phyllis Grann, who has decided to retire after more than forty years in the business.

Phyllis's retirement brings to a close one of the most distinguished careers in book publishing. She began her career in 1958 as secretary to Nelson Doubleday, before moving to William Morrow, then Simon and Schuster, and finally to Putnam. Over the next twenty-five years, she became President, Chairman and CEO of the Putnam Berkley Group, and then, following the merger with Penguin USA, CEO of Penguin, Putnam. While Phyllis was there, the company became one of the most successful and profitable in the industry. Phyllis was responsible for publishing, and in some cases personally editing, such international best-selling authors as Tom Clancy, Patricia Cornwell, Sue Grafton, A. Scott Berg, Kurt Vonnegut, Daniel Silva, John McEnroe and Judy Blume.

In 2001, Phyllis stepped down as head of Putnam, Penguin and in 2002 accepted a job at Doubleday doing what she enjoys most—editing. At Doubleday, she acquired and edited such writers as Jeffrey Toobin, Tina Brown, Bob Herbert, Jim Newton, Ayelet Waldman and Tim Weiner, winner of the National Book Award. She also edited Stephen Carter and John Darnton for Knopf.

"Doubleday has allowed me to continue doing what I love," Phyllis said to me recently.

"And

as much as I have enjoyed the work, I now feel it is time to step back." The good news for all of us: she will be available as a consultant and freelance editor, continuing to work with her authors under contract.

Phyllis is among the towering figures who have shaped book publishing. We know her as a brilliant editor and savvy businesswoman, but more important, in my view, is the role she has played as a confidant and mentor to many in our industry. I certainly have learned a great deal from her.

I know you will all join me in wishing Phyllis well. Her last day in the office will be June 9th.

