

April 1997

Publisher Bestsellers- Rutgers University Press

Kathleen Ketterman

University of North Carolina Press

Julia A. Gammon

University of Akron

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ketterman, Kathleen and Gammon, Julia A. (1997) "Publisher Bestsellers- Rutgers University Press," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 9: Iss. 2, Article 24.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.2111>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

Publisher Bestsellers

Rutgers University Press

Column editors: **Julia A. Gammon** (Univ. of Akron) <jgammon@UAKRON.EDU>
(NOTE ADDRESS CHANGE) and
Kathleen Ketterman (Univ. of North Carolina Press) <kjketter@email.unc.edu>

Steve Maikowski, Marketing Director, **Rutgers University Press**, provided information for this issue of *ATG* with a list of ten of the press' bestsellers and number of copies sold. Three of the books on the list are in the **American Women Writers' Series** which are reprints of fiction classics — one of the strengths of this press.

For variety, I checked our circulation statistics for the last three years on the books which we had in our collection (we were missing the cartoon book!) and found they varied from a high of eight circulations (*Gender Play*) to a low of zero (*Hope Leslie*).

Founded in 1936, and with a title output of approximately 70 titles per year, **Rutgers University Press** publishes books of general studies, to name a few. The Press also distributes publications of the New Jersey Historical Society.

Rutgers University Press — Top Ten Bestsellers

- 1) McDowell, Deborah, editor, *Quicksand and Passing*, by Nella Larsen. (1986). — 55,000 copies
- 2) Bernal, Martin. *Black Athens: The Afrosiatic Roots of Western Civilization*. Vol.1. (1987) — 43,500 copies.
- 3) Harris, Sidney. *Einstein Simplifies: Cartoons on Science*. (1985). 40,000 copies.
- 4) Moffatt, Michael. *Coming of Age in New Jersey: College and American Culture*. (1989). 27,000 copies.

- 5) Bernal, Martin. *Black Athens: The Afrosiatic Roots of Western Civilization*. Vol.2 (1991). 18,000 copies.
- 6) Warhol, Robyn and Diane Prince Herndl, editors. *Feminism: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*. (1991). 16,000 copies.
- 7) Thorne, Barrie. *Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School*. (1993). 16,000 copies.
- 8) Owings, Alison. *Frauen: German Women Recall the Third Reich*. (1993). 16,000 copies.
- 9) Warren, Joyce, editor. *Ruth Hall*, by Fanny Fern. (1986). 15,000 copies.
- 10) Kelley, Mary, editor. *Hope Leslie*, by Catharine Maria Sedgwick. (1987). 13,000 copies.



Letter from OK from page 54

dated, for usage changes with the times. But by reading this work, you will become curious about the word you selected. Is it the right word? Does it say what I really mean or will it mislead by its ambiguity within the context of my message? A curiosity about words is not a bad thing in a writer so long as you don't freeze up. When in doubt, keep writing and come back later to agonize and edit. If you do it word by word you will not only never finish, you may have to go to the home for dysfunctional writers where your only intellectual stimulation will be reruns of old sitcoms and game shows. Your mind will not be able to handle anything else, alas.

Another book I find helpful and full of sound advice is *The Writer's Art*, by **James J. Kilpatrick** (Kansas City, Mo.: Andrews, McMeel & Parker, 1984). Here is his justification for this book: "My purpose in this book is primarily to venture a few suggestions, based upon a lifetime as a writer, on how good writers can get to be better writers. I want to speculate on some

of the reasons why so much bad writing abounds. Over the years I have acquired a hundred pretty little crotchets, and I propose to trot them out for critical inspection."

This next work is one you are not familiar with, of that I am almost certain, unless you were an officer in the United States Air Force. Don't laugh, this is a good book, one that will almost certainly help you become a better writer. Let me quote from *Guide for Air Force Writing* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Air Force, 1969. AF Pamphlet 10-1). "The basic purpose of all writing is to get a message across to the reader; it must convey exact meaning. To serve this purpose well, it must be capable of being quickly read and easily understood." "There is no set formula for achieving successful writing, but there are guidelines. For example, good writing is logical. It shows a thorough knowledge of its subject, but it never says more than necessary. And it sticks to the subject. Its outstanding characteristic is clarity — clarity obtained through simple, everyday words; short sentences; brief paragraphs; and lack of complicated

expressions and jargon. In other words, it is simple, clear, and direct." Enough said.

Finally, I would like to recommend *The MLA's Line by Line: How to Edit Your Own Writing*, by **Claire Kehrwald Cook** (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985). I recommend reading it straight through from the "Preface" through "A Glossary of Usage" and on through the "Selected Bibliography." After that you will feel comfortable in skimming chapters or paragraphs as needed. This work is thorough, more thorough than you or I will ever be as we edit our own writing, but we will be more thorough than we ever thought possible or necessary had we not read this *vade mecum* for those of us who write for professional journals. I daresay that even those who aspire to the short story or personal essay will find much of value here. And if you are an editor, aside from your *Chicago Manual of Style* and authoritative dictionary, this is the one work you should own and become familiar with.

There you have it, the secrets to success in the world of library literature and possibly beyond. All that is left is for you to write. 🐿