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Linda Behrend

University of Tennessee, behrend@utk.edu

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Issues in Vendor/Library Relations — The Book & the Scholar: Celebrating the Year of the University Press

by **Linda Behrend** (Assistant Professor/Catalog Librarian, Subject Librarian for Philosophy and Religious Studies, The University of Tennessee, 306 Hodges Library, Knoxville, TN 37996-1000; Phone: 865-974-0392) <behrend@utk.edu>

Column Editor: **Bob Nardini** (Senior Vice President & Head Bibliographer, YBP Library Services, 999 Maple Street, Contoocook, NH 03229; Phone: 800-258-3774 x. 3251; Fax: 603-746-5628) <rnardini@ybp.com>

In celebration of the "Year of the University Press," a year-long campaign of the **Association of American University Presses (AAUP)** and the **Association of Research Libraries (ARL)**, the **University of Tennessee Libraries** and the **University of Tennessee Press** co-sponsored a two-day public symposium September 23-24, 2005, at the **University of Tennessee** in Knoxville.

"The Book & the Scholar," held in **John C. Hodges Library**, was designed to emphasize the relevance of the university press to the academic community and to focus attention on its importance in faculty publishing and scholarly communication. **Barbara Dewey**, Dean of the **University of Tennessee Libraries**, and **Jennifer Siler**, Director of the **University of Tennessee Press**, welcomed attendees, who included **University of Tennessee** faculty, staff, and students, **UT Press** personnel, and other interested persons from the book and publishing world and from the community.

Day one of the symposium fo-

cused on the relationship between university presses and universities. **Bob Levy**, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, served as moderator. **Loren Crabtree**, Chancellor of the **University of Tennessee-Knoxville**, introduced the keynote speakers and stressed the importance of scholarly communication and scholarly publishing, stating, "University presses are critical to sharing scholarly information." **Crabtree**, himself a scholar, said he couldn't imagine the book going away.

Peter Givler, Executive Director of the **American Association of University Presses**, and **Sandra Yee**, Dean of Libraries at **Wayne State University**, addressed the importance of a university press, expectations of the university regarding the press, and strategies for ensuring the vitality of the press in a program on "The University Press on the Campus and in the Academic Community."

Givler gave a historical overview of university presses, which were started in the United States around 1870-

1875 to disseminate the work being done in university laboratories. In order to share the very specialized work they were doing, the universities subsidized their presses. According to **Givler**, there are approximately ninety to ninety-five university presses in the United States and Canada today. Total membership of the **AAUP** is 124, including associate members such as research institutions, scholarly societies, and museums. Characteristics of university presses are that they are nonprofit scholarly publishers, their imprint is under the control of some faculty or university body, an editorial board and peer review ensures the quality of their publications. The mission of university presses is to publish scholarship, with the decision to publish based on whether a work will make a significant contribution. University presses help knowledge advance, **Givler** said, and, despite tight finances and a small readership, are freed from the necessity of making publishing decisions based on purely financial reasons. They can publish on subjects with a limited market and often, by publishing books of regional interest, are the means of cementing a good relationship between the university and the local community.

Sandra Yee, Dean of Libraries at **Wayne State University**, talked about "The Value of a University Press in Academia." University presses, she said, provide an opportunity for young scholars to share their knowledge. Other reasons she cited for the existence of university presses are to publish for small audiences of specialists interested in concentrated fields of research and to publish important authors from around the world in translation. Some university presses have created niches or specialty areas for which they are well known. **Yee** mentioned **Africana Studies**, **Jewish Studies**, **Labor and Urban studies**, and the **Great Lakes of Michigan** series as specialties of the **Wayne State University Press**. At **Wayne State**, the university press reported to the University Library system until 2001, when it was transferred to the Provost's office. Among the issues affecting scholarly publishing that **Yee** highlighted are radical changes in higher education, declining budgets in academic libraries, the importance of faculty research and the dissemination of newly discovered or created knowledge, and the need to preserve scholarly work.

Saying that she sees university presses in transition, **Yee** cited modern innovations in scholarly communication such as institutional repositories, **MIT's Cognet** collaboration, **DSPACE**, **Internet-first University Press**, **EScholarship** at the **University of California**, **BiblioVault**, and **Project MUSE**, a joint university press and library project. **Yee** concluded

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Leaving the Books Behind *from page 91*

toured through the **Fitzgerald Room** in our Department and found it fascinating. There are books, manuscripts, papers and all manner of the gifted writer, to be sure. What I find truly fascinating is the ambience of the room. When the door opens, you walk into a world of the 20's and 30's. There is no mistaking the smells, the memorabilia, and the sheer excitement of the atmosphere. We have just acquired the original screenplays **Fitzgerald** worked on, with his personally penned notes in the margins, and they are a biographer's dream. Got me to wondering why we do not introduce our American adult writers to the younger generation, unless they have written for youngsters. Second through fifth graders are simply not aware of these great writers. I have begun sifting through biographical materials on **Fitzgerald** and I think I have found a way to introduce these writers. There are many homes and rooms and special collections around the United States that are open, like museums, to the public and to researchers. There is a simple storyline that can be used like a series of visits to look briefly at these people and build excitement toward reading and learning of these authors. I am beginning to explore that hole in our literature and release the children's minds into venturing through our homegrown literature. My mother taught us to

read from the only books we had, my grandfather's English editions of the masters. We inhaled the leather bindings, marveled at the construction of the book, and were transfixed by the "words" that were used. It fueled my need for poetry and descriptive prose. It fueled my need for understanding people, places and things. It gave me a love for libraries and vaults full of leather bindings. My grandmother was a Law Librarian and she took me to her library most days of the week. I became a super shelfer (at four years old) with help from her "Law boys," and learned a new appreciation of the materials. Later in school, I worked my way through a BA learning the Technical Services end of the Library. When my first chosen field of endeavor found my research to be too good for publication (they felt it would put them out of business), I returned to my first love — Libraries. They have been my home and my passion ever since. At the **Charleston Conference**, I find so many wonderfully passionate people and I soak up all the emotion I am able to carry away. The Conference and this journal have refueled my energy banks year after year. Now, it is my turn to energize the world with words. I will be graduating in May 2005 and will carry with me the associations and mentoring of many people. I hope to continue writing for **ATG**, as it fills a void in my life, but we shall see. At any rate, the next column will return to issues, hoping that this digression has not been too boring for the reader.

with a description of **Wayne State University's** Book and Author series, a collaborative effort of the University Libraries and **Wayne State University Press**.

University of Tennessee Professors **Benita Howell**, Anthropology, **Michael Lofaro**, English, and **Bruce Wheeler**, History, spoke on "The University Press and the Academic Career." As professors who have published with university presses, they commented on the significance of the university press to an academic career.

Linda Phillips, Head of Collection Development & Management for the **University of Tennessee Libraries**, moderated a panel on "Book Publishing Trends in the Digital Age." Panelists, who presented demographics and trends in the academic disciplines, were **Sara Williams**, Collection Management Coordinator; **Molly Royse**, Humanities Coordinator; **Jane Row**, Social Sciences Coordinator; **Ron Gilmour**, Science & Technology Coordinator; and **Jennifer Siler**, Director, **UT Press**. Publishing trends addressed by the panel ranged from economic issues, including shrinking library budgets and the rising cost of materials, especially journal subscriptions; the proliferation of chain bookstores, globalization of the market, mergers among publishers, and the use of the Internet for book marketing; the rapid rate of technological change, an increasingly wide range of media types, poorer print quality, smaller print runs, and more out-of-print books; the rapid growth of electronic publishing and the need for ways to access and preserve electronic publications; **BiblioVault**, **PLoS (Public Library of Science)**, costs associated with print-on-demand, page charges, author subventions, and electronic publishing issues related to author recognition and requirements for peer-review and tenure.

"Charting Our Vision," a question and answer discussion with **Givler**, **Yee**, **Williams**, and **Stephen M. Wrinn**, Director of the **University Press of Kentucky**, focused on ways that a university can support its press. The discussion covered a wide variety of topics including fundraising, endowments, editorial and advisory boards, the "value added" by publication with a university press, "one book, one city" programs, joint university press and library events, partnerships between presses and professional societies, scholarly book reviews, quantity vs. quality in publishing, print-on-demand, electronic publishing, digitization of traditional publications (books, journals, etc.)

vs. "born digital" items, and university press areas of specialization.

On the evening of September 23, "Tennessee Reads," a new book club co-sponsored by the **UT Library Friends** and **UT Press**, held its inaugural meeting with **Daniel S. Pierce**, Professor of History, **University of North Carolina**, Asheville, as the featured speaker. **UT Press** published **Pierce's** revised doctoral dissertation as *The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park* in 2000. **Paul Bergeron**, Professor Emeritus of History at **UT**, who directed **Pierce's** dissertation, introduced the author and provided background information on **Pierce** and his book. **Bergeron** and **Pierce** discussed the writing of the dissertation, its revision, and submission to **UT Press** for publication. A reception, book sale, and author signing followed **Pierce's** talk.

The second day of the symposium was a Writers Workshop, moderated by **Jennifer Siler**. **Steve Wrinn**, representing university presses, and **Dan Pierce**, representing authors who want to find a publisher for their dissertation, presented a session entitled "What's the Difference: The Dissertation Becomes the Book." **Pierce** told how he turned his dissertation into a book, and **Wrinn** detailed what presses look for in an author. Suggestions and advice that **Pierce** gave for future dissertation writers were to (1) select a dissertation topic that a university press would be interested in publishing; (2) attend professional meetings, make contact early with publishers, present at conferences and professional meetings, research which presses publish what subjects; (3) listen to your committee, ask their advice, enlist people in your field to read your manuscript and give feedback; (4) be patient, don't rush your project to a press, listen to reports from your readers and the press, and keep working on your manuscript. **Wrinn's** advice to new authors, from the perspective of an acquisitions editor, was to attend professional conferences and meetings, don't submit an unrevised dissertation, make your book readable, put it away for a time (e.g., six months) to let it get "cold" before working on it again, send a proposal rather than your manuscript, and view your editor as a friend and teammate.

"Finding a Publisher: Research and Presentation" featured **Peter Givler**, formerly director of the **Ohio State University Press**, and **Wrinn**. **Givler** contrasted the relatively lonely activity of writing and the extremely social process of finding a publisher and marketing your book. His suggestions for finding a publisher included making a list of the publishers of books you are reading, looking at publishers' Websites, searching the sub-

ject area guide of the **AAUP** membership directory, attending professional conferences and making personal contacts, and meeting with editors. **Wrinn** presented information about submitting a book proposal and book contracts. Copyright issues, subsidiary rights, translation rights, and the influence of reviews of your book were also covered in the discussion.

The final session, "The Author's Role in the Publication Process," led by **Tom Post**, **UT Press** Publicity and Promotions Manager, and **Cheryl Carson**, Marketing Manager, presented keys to successful marketing. Among the topics discussed were book contracts, the book summary and marketing questionnaire, advertising, book signings, appearances at scholarly meetings, book reviews, and prizes and awards.

Suggestions for Further Reading:

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Year of the University of Press Website. "What is 'The Year of the University Press'? And Why?" <http://www.aaupnet.org/arlaaup/about/index.html> (accessed January 20, 2005).

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My visit to Singapore suggests to me that our library culture is indeed global and that we have much more in common with each other than is different.

Endnotes

1. Taiwan College and University Libraries: Problems and Prospects, *International Library Review*, 10 (1978): 397-405.
2. *Eleven Librarians Visit China* (ed. by Diane Perushek), Association for Asian Studies Committee on East Asian Libraries Bulletin, 61 (February 1980): 55-64; 62 (June 1980): 45-53. My part was in the concluding section entitled *Problems Confronting Major Libraries*, 52-53.