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Publisher's Profile: Berkshire Publishing Group

Joyce Dixon-Fyle

DePauw University, joyfyle@depauw.edu

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Publisher's Profile

Column Editor: **Joyce Dixon-Fyle** (Coordinator, Collection Development, DePauw University) <joyfyle@depauw.edu>

Contact details:

Berkshire Publishing Group

120-122 Castle Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230-1506 U.S.A.

Phone: (413) 528-0206 • Toll-free: 1-888-520-0071

Fax: (413) 541 0076 • Email: info@berkshirepublishing.com

Website: www.berkshirepublishing.com • Berkshire Blog: www.berkshirepublishing.com/blog

Berkshire @ Twitter: [www.twitter.com/karenchristenze](https://twitter.com/karenchristenze)

Founder and CEO: Karen Christensen

Email: karen@berkshirepublishing.com

Vital statistics

- Number of employees: 6 in Great Barrington and 1 in Beijing — *this small group is the nucleus of a network of authors and editors that spans the globe, and who are very much part of who and what **Berkshire** is*
- Number of books published annually (print, electronic, open access, etc.): 4 multi-volume reference titles; 6 books or eBooks
- Total number of books on our backlist (in print): 60
- Number of articles: 10,372
- Number of authors: 4149
- Number of authors contributing to more than one publication: 845
- Number of countries where **Berkshire** authors live: 101
- Number of pages: 48,345
- Number of volumes: 114

History and brief description of publishing program

Berkshire Publishing Group was founded in 1998 as a specialist academic book development company and worked with major US and UK publishers to develop global reference titles that were published under the **Routledge**, **Sage**, **Scribners**, **Macmillan**, and other imprints. At the end of 2004, **Berkshire** began releasing its own titles, beginning with the 5-volume *Berkshire Encyclopedia of World History* (McNeill et al.).

The company's headquarters are in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, a town of 7,700 people located in the southern Berkshire Hills. W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963) grew up in Great Barrington, and his global thinking and activism inspire **Berkshire Publishing** today.

Before founding **Berkshire**, **Karen Christensen** had had a brief publishing career in London, where she worked on scientific journals and also on the **T. S. Eliot Letters**. She is an environmental author as well as a publisher, with books translated into many languages, including Chinese.

Berkshire has an on-site staff of six, but it also operates as a virtual company, with editors and support staff in various parts of the world, including China.

About the Berkshire name

Berkshire's name comes from the Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts, an area famous for summer theatre and Tanglewood concerts, but the name **Berkshire** has other associations. **Berkshire** is an English county, just southwest of London, and many people assume the company is based there (our British colleagues like to pronounce the word "Bark-shaw"). When I go to events in New York with a significant financial industry or Wall Street crowd — content industry conferences, and National Committee on U.S.-China Relations meetings, for example — people peer at my badge and their eyes brighten. "Oh, **Berkshire Publishing**," they say. When this happens, I have to explain that we have no connection with Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway — "Not yet, anyway," I say.

Berkshire has a Chinese name, too, carefully chosen by a group of Chinese colleagues to echo the sound of the U.S. name and to have a good meaning. It is 宝库山, literally **Treasure Library Mountain**, or **Treasure Mountain Books**. The name was chosen to suggest our New England location in the Berkshire Hills and our vision for global knowledge resources. Another reason for choosing Bao 宝, meaning treasure, is that the word, spoken with another tone, means hug — which suggests the kind of networking and international bridge building that **Berkshire** has made its mission. Our Chinese cards use both Bao characters, treasure + hug, and our name appears as **Bao Media Group**. 🌲

*The view from Knob Hill, up the street from **Berkshire Publishing's** office in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. — Photo by **Karen Christensen**.*