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From the University Presses — Celebrating the First Annual University Press Week

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Throughout 2012, the **Association of American University Presses** has been celebrating its 75th anniversary. As librarians and publishers gather in Charleston this November, we're preparing the capstone of our year with the first annual University Press Week (November 11-17). The occasion calls for an examination of just what we celebrate in **AAUP** and "University Presses" — and why we invite our librarian colleagues to celebrate these things with us.

In 1937, more than 20 university press publishers gathered together in New York City and agreed to a new association's constitution. The **AAUP** today has grown to more than 130 members while serving its founding mission of cooperation and service to the non-profit scholarly publishing community.

That mission pre-dates the formal foundation of the association however — university press publishers from all around the country had been meeting annually since the early 1920s. The first broadly collaborative venture, a joint catalog, was essayed in 1928. Further cooperative projects followed through the early thirties, ranging from shared mailing lists to foreign trade opportunities to discussions of relations with libraries. Nice to know we've been engaging each other for over seventy-five years!

Some resisted formalizing this cooperative group, but by 1937 factors began to weigh in favor of creating an association. The work required by joint projects had become such that a rotating formal executive secretary position or presidency was the most agreeable solution to sharing the administrative burden. (The **AAUP** Central Office, with a professional staff, was not established until 1959.) Also, a commercial group had recently begun advertising book distribution and sales services as the "United University Presses" group. This, more than any other factor, may have tipped the scales for the more reluctant publishers in the room. If they were wary of the commitments to commonality rather than independence signaled by formalizing their association, they were even more concerned to protect the common spirit implied by the university press name. (Once the **AAUP** formed, the offending company changed its name to "University Books, Inc." and was seldom mentioned again in surviving **AAUP** records.)

Though our group was in this respect founded to protect the name of "university presses," the full formal name of **AAUP** — the **Association of American University Presses** — posed a bit of a conundrum from early on. Was "American" necessary? Only U.S. and Canadian publishers constituted the original founding group, but the U.S. offices of **Oxford**

University Press had long been involved in the annual get-togethers and various collaborative projects. Would **Oxford**, and other international universities, be welcome in the American University Press group? Scholarly societies, think tanks, and museums began to launch or expand publishing operations with the same mission and on broadly similar models to those of the members of **AAUP**. What of these publishers who were not university affiliated?

Those questions have been answered over the years. The U.S. branches of **Oxford** and **Cambridge University Presses** joined **AAUP** as full members in 1950; and **AAUP's** international members can be found in eight countries around the world. Twenty **AAUP** members are not affiliated with degree-granting institutions, from independent publishers such as **Beacon Press** and **Island Press** to scholarly societies such as the **Modern Language Association** and the **American Historical Association**. New library-based publishing operations share the underlying mission but not the label of university presses.

Proposals to change the association's name to better reflect its membership have been floated regularly almost since day one. Even the word "Presses" can seem like a bit of a misnomer today — the publishing activities of **AAUP** members are now more likely to rest on bits and bytes than ink and type!

But the proposals never get far. At base, "American university press" turns out to be useful shorthand for a certain model of publishing — not model in the sense of business model, but a specific ideal for mission-driven scholarly publishing. In the university context, **Daniel Coit Gilman** famously stated this ideal so: "It is one of the noblest duties of a university to advance knowledge, and to diffuse it not merely among those who can attend the daily lectures — but far and wide." A more universal version could well be adopted by any member of **AAUP** as a statement of purpose: "to advance knowledge far and wide." The membership eligibility guidelines of the **AAUP** make clear what are considered the baseline requirements for fulfilling such a purpose: a member must be not-for-profit, must be professionally staffed, and must publish peer-reviewed work of original scholarly research.

These three requirements together help to insure one of the distinct aspects of **AAUP** members: an editorial independence. In this way, **AAUP** members partake of the ideal of academic freedom held by scholars. In some countries, a university's press is established to print and distribute the work of the institution's faculty. This is not so in the American uni-

versity press model (though some American presses have roots in institutional printing services), nor, in fact, is it a method of scholarly communication valued by most disciplines (or in tenure and promotion cases). The university press, in the American model, is not a mere microphone for the institution but a key player in an institution's, discipline's, or community's intellectual life. A press with a strong editorial list seeks out the best possible work in that field — from home or abroad — and publishes it under the institution's imprint, burnishing the author's, the institution's, and the press's own reputation. Among the first publications of the press **Gilman** founded were the *American Journal of Mathematics* and the *American Chemical Journal*, rather than the *Journal of Johns Hopkins Mathematics* or *Chemistry*.

The American university press model quickly won high marks. Indeed, **Peter Dougherty**, **AAUP** President and director of the **Princeton University Press**, tells the story of a **Princeton University** president's visit to India in the 1960s: the official was politely greeted and promptly queried as to whether **Princeton University** was perhaps affiliated with the **Princeton University Press**!

While many **AAUP** members have developed disciplinary specialties distinct from those of their home institutions, presses also focus on developing programs complementary with institutions' core strengths. If one of the values of an **AAUP** member is the ability to carry the flag of their university or organization "far and wide," then it is particularly valuable that the press can help trumpet an institution's own prestige in economics, analytic philosophy, musicology, or Mesoamerican archaeology.

Many **AAUP** publishers, particularly those based at public universities and historical societies, look to advance knowledge not just "far and wide" but "near and deep." Such presses have a strong commitment to publishing works of regional significance and supporting regional voices in a way that no commercial or distant publisher is likely to do. Those readers who have gathered in Charleston might look to the most recent publications of the **University of South Carolina Press** for a striking example of this commitment: you'll find a book on conservation in the Lowcountry, an encyclopedic guide to the Revolutionary War in SC, an anthology of the gritty side of Southern literature, and a photographic exploration of Charleston's private gardens, among many other such titles.

Both the regional and national constituencies of **AAUP** members were highlighted in

continued on page 70

the aftermath of the spring 2012 closure or reformulation (since reversed) of the **University of Missouri Press**. Protests came not just from scholars and press authors all over the country, but also from Missouri readers, writers, faculty, alumni, and leaders. It became exceptionally clear that a Press is an integral part of a university's community and, more, can help to open up that community in irreplaceable ways.

University Press Week will carry the lesson of Missouri into all of our communities. The focus of the 2012 celebration is presses' role in "contributing to an informed society." For that is the true work an AAUP member press undertakes for all its constituents, local, national, and international — the books, journals, reference works, apps, and scholarly networks of these publishers offer reliable information, knowledge, and lasting availability through a variety of formats. AAUP's "Books for Understanding" program, listing the highest-quality books across a spectrum of contemporary issues, demonstrates what the American university press means for an educated citizenry, and the University Press Week Fine Print* (*not just print!) online gallery highlights what it has meant for disciplines and communities for more than a century.

Creating an informed society is certainly impossible without the work of librarians, and so our talks with each other continue and intensify. Libraries and university presses are the most natural of partners, and so we are especially pleased to invite our colleagues and friends at Charleston and throughout the library world to celebrate University Press Week and, as you'll read elsewhere in this issue, to help us look forward to the next 75 years of collaboration in service to the advancement of knowledge. www.universitypressweek.org 🍷

fearing being wrong at the cost of the valuable knowledge we gain from experimenting with what books we choose to publish and how we publish them. University presses can and should be a lynchpin in the new system of scholarly communication. It is up to us, however, to understand what it is that we do that works and how we add value, and conversely, which of our activities need to be reimagined for a digital age. This can best be done through considered experimentation, whether with electronic workflows that make our content more flexible (in both its putting together and taking apart) or with enhanced eBooks that enrich both the user's knowledge and experience. So here's to the next 75 years, AAUP. May they unfold in an environment of reimagining, experimentation, and purposeful collaboration that will make university presses matter, keep us relevant, and make us thrive. 🍷

Biz of Acq — eBook PDA at Eastern Michigan University

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One of the hot topics at recent conferences, including the **2010 Charleston Conference**, has been Patron-Driven Acquisitions, or "PDA." It was the topic of two publications in 2011: *Patron-Driven Acquisitions: History and Best Practices*, edited by **David A. Swords**, and *Patron-Driven Acquisitions: Current Successes and Future Directions*, edited by **Judith M. Nixon**, **Robert S. Freeman**, and **Suzanne M. Ward**.

As the **Nixon** set points out, "PDA" has already been occurring. Virtually all libraries have used patron input to build their collections; and many libraries, including ours, have been purchasing interlibrary loan requests rather than borrowing when appropriate to the collection. In our case we have been purchasing paper copies and rush order and process them. **NetLibrary** offered the "PDA" of eBooks many years ago.

Why the sudden attention to patron-driven acquisitions (again)? Tighter (if not decreasing) acquisition budgets, the cost of storing volumes, declining print circulation, pressure to repurpose library space, and continuous expansion and embracing of electronic resources by the public are just some of the reasons libraries are migrating to eBooks. The pendulum has been swinging away from just-in-case collection development to favor just-in-time purchasing.

eBooks are not new to our library. We have participated in Michigan state-wide purchases of **NetLibrary** eBook packages and purchased selected Springer eBook backfiles. Our computer science selector has been managing a small subset of computer books in "Safari." Our Department of Information Technology has graciously been paying for campus access to "Books 24x7," for which we have added a record and link for each title in our catalog. With the exception of "Safari," our purchases have been for sets of books.

In 2011 we expanded our selection options in **YBP's** Gobi book ordering system to allow our selectors to purchase individual electronic books instead of paper format when we signed an agreement with **ebrary**. Since we already had a contract with **NetLibrary** for earlier purchases, selectors could also opt for **NetLibrary** eBooks when available (now called **EBSCOhost**). Several selectors immediately embraced electronic over print in the expected subjects of business, science, and computer science. Our business collection has especially migrated to electronic as our College of Business is located downtown and not on the main campus where the library is. The rest of selectors have chosen electronic over print in their areas sporadically to never.

After hearing and reading about the various "PDA" eBook selection programs, we decided to launch a pilot project by expanding our existing pacts with **YBP** and **ebrary**. **ebrary's** short-term loan (STL) system allows our patron to use the eBook for free until a charge is triggered by 1) using the resource for more than ten minutes, 2) viewing ten or more pages (not counting table-of-contents or indices), or 3) copying pages. Once triggered, a STL generally costs 10-15% of the eBook price and allows unfettered access to the book for 24 hours without generating another STL. We decided to pay for three STLs with the fourth event generating a purchase.

Our current approval/slip plan with **YBP** was reviewed. The profile was retained with some exceptions: for instance we excluded publishers that do not allow any short-term loans (one event automatically triggers a purchase). We also excluded textbooks, cookbooks, conference proceedings, dictionaries, and books classified by **YBP** at a professional level. We also capped the price for an eBook at \$200.

We decided to add records for all **ebrary** eBooks that matched our profile from 2010 to date (2009 and older was deemed already out of date for many subjects). The ISBNs from our current catalog were matched against the **ebrary** database. Only eBooks that we did not already own in print or electronic were added to our catalog.

The initial **ebrary** "PDA" catalog records were reviewed by our cataloging librarian. Our systems librarian arranged for the backfile of 2010 to-date eBook records to be added to the catalog as well as for weekly download of new "PDA" records. It was decided to add the phrase, "DDA Title," in a 590 note: the librarians and staff can identify the **ebrary** titles from other eBooks in our catalog. (**YBP** calls their system "demand-drive acquisitions" hence the "DDA").

We created a deposit account with **YBP** to pay for the orders for the pilot instead of penalizing any subject fund; thus, assuring those selectors who have refused to select any eBooks in their subjects.

Due to extenuating circumstances (ahem: a flood), we finally got the "PDA" new and backfiles of older records started in the beginning of May 2012. We did a silent rollout: we did not announce to the public that there were approximately 10,000 new eBooks available.

During the first three months (May-July 2012) 77 books generated STLs and five received enough STLs to be ultimately purchased. Of the

continued on page 72