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From the University Presses: Whither Library-University Press Partnerships?

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few inducements to join divisions and round tables. Programs sponsored by ALA units are open to all members, as are any committee or interest/discussion group meetings, though some special events charge a lower fee for members. Being appointed to a committee requires membership in the unit, but a subject for another column could be why ALA members are becoming increasingly disinterested in such appointments. The arrival in the mail of *C&RL* reminds me that I'm an ACRL member and am receiving a visible benefit from this membership. Over the years, I've dropped membership in two other divisions when they ceased distributing print publications. I have enough commitment to ACRL that I'll most likely continue to renew each year. Perhaps this factor doesn't concern other members who are more involved with ACRL through Facebook, Google Groups, Twitter, ALA Connect, and other social media.

The cost savings in eliminating the print version of *C&RL* will most likely far exceed the loss of revenue from any decreased membership dues. Nonetheless, I worry about this slippery slope that I see occurring in many parts of my life. My local daily newspaper went digital and also reduced content to save money. In the beginning, I read the digital version daily, though not as thoroughly because scanning the entire issue was more difficult as I've already discussed above. I stopped reading it completely when I lost the email that contained the password and didn't consider it important enough to go looking for it. The same will most likely be true for the digital edition of *C&RL*. I'll get the digital email about the new issue, perhaps even with a table of contents; make a mental note that I should really, really read it; file the email away in my "read later" folder; and eventually delete the email without reading the issue. To be fair, I have a stack of publications in my office that will also be discarded at some point without systematic reading; but I have at least scanned the most important ones when they arrived and noted the organization that sent them. In the end, I'll have less of a connection with ACRL and ALA. I don't know if other organizations have faced this same issue. A quick Google search indicates that many professional societies stress the benefits of receiving print publications as a perk for joining and at least a few have less expensive online memberships that don't include print journals.

I'm beginning to worry that I look like a Luddite in too many of my columns, but I'll remind readers that the Luddites were right — technology would change their lives in ways that they didn't like. Where they were wrong was that they could do anything to stop these changes. I know better than to make that mistake but hope that I can at least mourn the losses attached to adopting new technologies, including not receiving a print edition of *CR&L*. 🌸

From the University Presses — Whither Library-University Press Partnerships?

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This is the last column I'll write before I retire as director at **Temple University Press**, and it seems an auspicious time to think out loud about how the library-university press relationship has evolved in recent years and where we might thrive by working together in the future.

The January 2014 publication of the **Association of American University Presses (AAUP) Press and Library Collaboration Survey** (http://www.aaupnet.org/images/stories/data/LibraryPressCollaboration_report.pdf) provides a good place to start. The good news — ninety-five percent of the respondents, which included both library and university press personnel — "see the need for presses and libraries to engage with each other about issues facing scholarly publishing beyond the usual topics of open access, fair use, and copyright." A variety of responses to questions throughout the survey show an unmistakable trend toward increasing degrees of library-press interaction, though the benefits of those interactions seem much less clear.

The survey spends a lot of time on the scope and success of library publishing programs, how they differ from press publishing programs, and where (whether) they should cooperate on specific programs. It also notes that the press reports directly to the library at just over seventeen percent of the respondent institutions. That would seem to imply working together much more closely, or at least a better understanding of each other's needs and priorities, but unfortunately, the study doesn't treat that group with any further specificity.

Here's a striking difference between presses and libraries. Slightly over 40% of reporting presses are charged with recovering the costs of their publishing program, including staff salaries and overhead costs, while another 25% are charged with achieving an "acceptable loss," which I expect means achieving a budgeted loss (subvention) negotiated with the administration at the start of a budget year.

Libraries face a very different situation. Only 8.5% of respondents are charged with recovering the full costs of their publishing program. More astoundingly — and I don't know what to make of this — thirty-five percent of reporting libraries say they don't know what their home institution's financial expecta-

tions are of their publishing program compared to sixteen percent of presses. So one in six presses and more than one in three libraries don't know what their institution's financial expectations of their publishing program is. This from a survey sent to library directors, deans, and university librarians (titles vary), and to press directors.

Perhaps — the report doesn't say — library-side folks are included in the number of respondents saying they don't know what financial results define acceptability to presses and vice-versa. That would be a bit of a relief, but only a bit. Because in 2012, when the survey was taken, and surely in 2014, I'd hope every library and press coexisting (or in one in six cases engaged in a direct report situation) on a campus would talk to each other enough to have at least this minimum mutual understanding of what their university's administration expects of them.

Here's another mystery. The survey asks, logically enough, what types of materials the library and press partner to publish. Yet only thirty-five of eighty-three respondents even bothered to answer the question. I'm not sure if this is because there are so few press-library publishing partnerships that result in an identifiable product (partnership can be defined in terms of subsidies, archiving, and other activities that don't produce an actual product).

I'll end what I'm sure can quickly become a boring recitation with two hopeful stats. Twenty percent of library-press collaborations are more than ten years old, and another twenty-five percent are between five and ten years old. These things appear to last; I would guess the fifty percent under five years old result from an accelerating number of such programs, not a high failure rate.

Equally hopeful, absolutely none of the respondents have any plans to suspend existing partnerships between presses and libraries, and 70% plan to develop new ones. Cooperation is in the air.

To which I can only say, thank heavens. The absence of real understanding between these key university players in the scholarly communications ecosystem has puzzled me throughout my almost thirty years in university press publishing. Presses, except for some of their journals departments, didn't understand libraries even as customers for the longest time. Libraries didn't understand the financial pressures the university puts on presses and, even worse, tended to lump university presses with commercial presses, especially on those occasions — and there are some — when presses took the same positions as their commercial

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coupons. Some librarians have even told me, when I mentioned that some anti-commercial press policies were badly hurting university presses, that the latter were unfortunate collateral damage.

But if university and commercial presses are cousins with occasional common interests, libraries and university presses are siblings, birthed by the same institution and living under the same collective roof. We may resent each other at times, be jealous at other times, but at the end of the day we're family, and the family can only prosper if we develop and cultivate cooperation.

This can be done both by finding new projects to work on together and by evolving our institutional relationships. To start with the latter, I can offer a specific example. My successor as director at **Temple University Press** will also serve as the library's (which really means the university's) scholarly communication officer, in which capacity she/he will work with both library and press staff on an everyday basis. This is to some extent modeled on the **Purdue University** library-press model and will include moving the press into the library as a way of a) getting it back on campus after a four-year exile to a three-miles distant satellite building and b) giving the library and press staffs real opportunities to get to know each other and start thinking together. Other presses also live in actual libraries — Indiana, Arizona, and Georgia come to mind — and I hope they will periodically report, as they did at the 2013 **AAUP** meeting, on their successes and their difficulties.

At this writing, something like twenty presses report to libraries. It would make sense for them to meet at **ARL** or **ALA** or **AAUP** conferences to compare their experiences and perhaps to foster cross-institutional partnerships to deal with some of the larger issues that simply can't be resolved by individual institutions alone. These include tackling the problem of the massive outflow of university money to commercial presses (mostly, but not always for STM materials); the outflow of student funds to commercial textbook publishers; the free rider problem, whereby universities and colleges without presses allow those that have them to bear

by far the lion's share of the costs; and the honest consideration of whether all scholarship needs to be open access or whether alternative solutions might offer OA where it's most needed while revenue-producing items — more affordably priced to be sure — would help build a sustainable system. Indeed, as **Temple** Dean of the Libraries **Joe Lucia** has suggested, we need to work better together to define what constitutes success in scholarly communication. There is so much to do, and we can do it so much better if really engage each other so that we take full advantage of our complementary skills.

With that I bid you all adieu. Many thanks to those who have read any of the pieces I've contributed in the past couple of years. If some of them have sparked a thought or two, then the effort has been worth it. I hope to find new ways to contribute to the scholarly communications ecosystem in the months and years ahead, so you may from time to time hear from me again in this space. Meanwhile, my thanks to **Katina Strauch** for the opportunity to share my thoughts and to **Tom Gilson** and **Toni Nix** for putting up with my challenges to the concept of a fixed deadline. You folks are great! 🌱

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Pelikan's Antidisambiguation — "Moirologists, Authority, and the Academy"

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I heard someone say recently, "The textbook industry is in trouble. You can't swing a dead cat without hitting someone who thinks they can write the next textbook replacement..."

Huh? Who would want to swing a dead cat? How would such a person be regarded in a professional setting? And where does the expression "you can't swing a dead cat without hitting (this or that)," come from, anyway?

The World Wide Web seems to be, well, not-fully-informative on this last question. *Yahoo Answers* labels as "Best Answer" a meandering set of data points touching variously upon "the hit TV show Cheers," the idea that the gestured form of the expression is performed "by circling of one hand in the air like a lassoing action," and the assertion that "the term 'dead cat' is an expression from the mide-70s... not referring to our kitty friends

though." Finally, the *Yahoo Answers* entry links to an etymology site according to which, "...there is no trace of this phrase, [sic] before the last twenty years."

Hmmm. If I remember my **Tom Sawyer** correctly, it was **Johnny Miller** who, for the privilege of helping **Tom** whitewash the fence, "...bought in with a dead rat and a string to swing it with..."

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