Bet You Missed It: What do Lincoln and a three-car garage have in common?

Bruce Strauch

The Citadel, strauhb@citadel.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation

Strauch, Bruce (2017) "Bet You Missed It: What do Lincoln and a three-car garage have in common?," Against the Grain: Vol. 26: Iss. 1, Article 28.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6671

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.
pioneers in monograph publishing. They are willing and able to experiment with new business models, technologies, and partnerships. In some cases, libraries are able to take on book projects that university presses can’t accommodate, for example books on esoteric topics that have little potential to bring in revenue.”

“I’d say that presses would likely not worry much about libraries publishing conference proceedings and ‘gray’ literature as well as data sets and the like,” Thatcher believes, “but would worry about monograph publishing and perhaps journal publishing also (if the press at the university has a journals publishing program). One interesting field that a few libraries are exploring is textbook publishing, as at SUNY-Geneseo. I think this makes a lot of sense because it has a campus focus, drawing authors from the faculty and preparing the textbooks to be used in courses at the university. Only a few presses have gotten involved with this kind of effort at Florida and Temple, so there would probably not be much resistance from presses to this type of initiative. If presses were to revert to the ‘service agency’ model, however, they might eye this business as an activity they may want to run.”

**Future Challenges for Both Press and Libraries**

“Monograph publishing has also been a fruitful area for collaboration between libraries and university presses,” Lippincott notes. “In one collaborative model, the press contributes to move from annual funding to at least salaries coming from general funds, giving staff greater job security. The potential for synergy is also mentioned often, as these alliances provide a broader diversity of perspectives, skills, and talents as well as the opportunity to experiment with the libraries — and other campus partners — on 21st-century learning materials and scholarly works. At the same time, these mergers mean a loss of independence and the need to grow mutual understanding and respect. Some mention the potential threat to the press’ reputation; however, at this point there appears to be little evidence of damage to-date.

However, there are even larger issues facing higher education that impact both research libraries and presses alike. “The next challenge,” Armato believes, “is how the very value of humanities and social science research — the heart of most university press programs — seems to be increasingly called into question. You could almost say that the ‘Serials Crisis’ that preceded the ‘Monograph Crisis’ that then became the ‘Crisis in Scholarly Publishing’ has now escalated into the full-scale ‘Crisis in the Humanities.’ Presses are not only as healthy as their markets, and as universities disinvest in humanities and social science research faculty positions and as graduate programs in those areas shrink, presses will find their core constituency under even greater stress than in the past decade of economic recession.”

There has been enormous change in scholarly publishing in the past two years, with only the assurance that more change is on the horizon. "

**Nancy K. Herther** is Sociology/Anthropology Librarian at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities campus. Her email is <herther@umn.edu>.

---

**Bet You Missed It**

**Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths**

**Column Editor:** Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

**Editor’s Note:** Hey, are y’all reading this? If you know of an article that should be called to Against the Grain’s attention … send an email to <kstrauch@comcast.net>. We’re listening! — KS

---

**BIG BUCKS FOR POTBOILERS**

**by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)**

Mary McCarthy was a feared and revered writer in literary quarters and the author of four novels before she hit it big with *The Group* in 1963. The orgasm scene in Chapter 2 had the nation buzzing. And the Sidney Lumet movie of 1966 hit smack in the middle of the sexual revolution.

The *Vassar* class of 1933 that saw themselves in the eight characters were furious and the reviews were catty, savage, scathing. But the public ate it up and made Mary a rich intellectual.

And that was the real trauma for the intelligentsia — the idea you could actually make money off writing. And they weren’t doing it.


---

**HOUSE OF BOOKS**

**by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)**

You really need the pictures to appreciate this. Pulitzer-winning author Doris Kearns Goodwin and husband live in an 1850s house in Concord, New Hampshire. With 20,000 books in floor-to-ceiling bookcases. Each room has a book theme: fiction, sports, biography, etc. The converted barn is a waiting room for books to be given away.

The three-car garage has her 1,000-book collection. A rich intellectual. Mary McCarthy.

Concord was home to Louisa May Alcott, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry David Thoreau et. al. Doris grooves on that.