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Library and University Press Publishing: Then and Now

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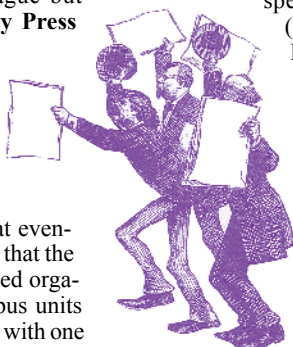
Library Publishing and University Press Publishing: Then and Now

by **Bob Nardini** (Vice President, Product Development, Ingram Library Services) <bob.nardini@ingramcontent.com>

“Everything changed in the fall of 2008,” writes **John Hussey** to open the first of nine articles in this issue of *Against the Grain* devoted to the intersection of publishing by academic libraries and by university presses. **John**, now my **Ingram** colleague but who was then at the **University Press of Kentucky**, relates how the economic crash made a ruin of **Kentucky’s** plans for the publishing season. At the same time, the crisis forced the **Press** to analyze “every facet of the business” to survive in a harsher financial climate. One thing that eventually changed at **Kentucky** was that the **Press** and the library were merged organizationally and these two campus units who until then had had little to do with one

another “were now sharing office spaces,” as **John** puts it in “**Academic Publishing is Not in Crisis — It’s Just Changing.**”

That was the same year, 2008, when *Against the Grain* commissioned an earlier special issue on this same topic (December 2008-January 2009). **Patrick Alexander**, then and now at the **Penn State University Press**, is a special issue contributor then and now as well. “Then,” **Patrick** described the assets university presses might bring to a joint enterprise between organizations so culturally different. He confessed to having “no secret recipe” for success in these unions, which were in



the early stages of taking shape at places like the **University of California, New York University, Cornell, Duke, and North Carolina**. Six years later, **Patrick** finds that best practices “continue to be in relatively short supply” and that cultural differences are as strong as ever. But he suggests that libraries and presses might evolve to complement one another, invoking in his suggestion the biologist **E.O. Wilson**. Read about it and even watch an **E.O. Wilson** video in, “**The Ant, the University Press, and the Librarian: Reflections on the Evolution of Scholarly Communication.**”

Maria Bonn once referred to those early projects from 2008 as the “usual suspects,” pioneers who often found themselves drafted for panels as spokespersons for the young

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If Rumors Were Horses



George Wilton Jacks (grandson of **Bruce** and **Katina Strauch**) was born on Monday, November 10 at 9:42 pm. He weighed 7 lbs, 2 oz. He and his mother **Ileana** and dad **Sam** are doing very well in Jacksonville, FL. Isn’t he just adorable? A precious bundle of joy for all.

Happy 2015! Lots of news to report so far! Where to begin?

McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers’ founder **Robert Franklin** announced that he has passed the job and title of **President** to the awesomely deserving **Rhonda Herman**. **Franklin** will assume the new title of **Founder and Editor-in-Chief**. Founded in 1979, **McFarland** is an independent publisher of academic and nonfiction books. I remember reading about **Franklin** in the *Wall Street Journal* many years ago — it’s a great article. “Publishing: Niche Publisher Prospers — Without Grishams or Kings,” by **Eleena de Lisser**, *Wall Street Journal*, eastern edition, 12 March 1998, B1. Located in the beautiful mountain town of Jefferson, North Carolina, the publisher offers 5,100 books in print, offers nearly 3,000 eBooks through online booksellers, operates its own printing facility, and employs 55 people. **Rhonda Herman** joined the company in 1982 as **Business Manager**. She was promoted to **Vice President** in 1991 and to **Executive Vice President** in 2004. While she has worked at various times in her **McFarland** career in every corner of the operations,

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Library Publishing ... from page 1

movement. **Maria** was then director of the **University of Michigan's** Scholarly Publishing Office. She recalls that publisher audience members ranged from "curious to skeptical to downright antagonistic" toward aspiring library publishers. Now, **Maria** teaches at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the **University of Illinois**, where, a pioneer again, she is busy creating a program to train the "pubrarians" who, she hopes, will make careers in bridging the two cultures which, like **Patrick Alexander**, she sees as complementary. "**Publishing, Libraries, Publishers, and Librarians: Shared Passions and Complementary Skill Sets to Ensure the Viability of the Scholarly Record**" is her account of pioneering then, and pioneering now.

Timely advice comes from **Charles Watkinson** in "**Three Challenges of Pubrianship.**" **Charles** should know. He is a member of the library management team and also director of both library publishing and university press publishing at the **University of Michigan**, where he started in 2014 after holding a similar position at **Purdue University** for the prior five years. Pubrarians, he says, will need to find ways to convince librarians of the value of publishing, while shaping a merged publishing program in a way that protects the university press brand, and at the same time explores the new opportunities that he believes are "worth minting a new word for."

At the **University of Georgia**, it has never been "a question of why or how, but why not and how often" the library and the press, which **Lisa Bayer** directs, should collaborate with one another. Libraries and university presses are not the only constituencies with a stake in new academic publishing ventures, though. That's one message from **Lisa** in "**You Complete Me: On Building a Vertically Integrated Digital Humanities Program at the University of Georgia.**" In her contribution, **Lisa** interviews a **UGA** historian, editor-in-chief at **UGA Press**, and the university librarian about Georgia's faculty-led and library-housed digital humanities lab, scheduled to open soon, and **UGA's** plans to create new forms of scholarship there that will be both transformational and sustainable.

Georgia isn't alone in having located a new collaborative venture inside library walls. In "**From University Press to the University's Press: Building a One-Stop Resource for Scholarly Publishing,**" **Gary Dunham** and **Carolyn Walters**, of **Indiana University**, record how **IU's** Office of Scholarly Publishing was created in 2012 to move "content dissemination on campus from the university press to the university itself." One highly visible outcome from the merged organization has been a "Scholars Commons," housed in the library, where publishing consultation services are offered by staff from the library, the press, IT, and other campus groups, and where attendance at panels and workshops about book proposals, book contracts, and publishing a first book have forced the OSP, in effect today the "University's press," to find larger rooms for these oversubscribed events.

What if there is no local university press? That's the case at Oregon's **Pacific University**, whose **Isaac Gilman** believes that libraries of all kinds need to consider making publishing a core service, even to the point of prioritizing it over "legacy services." **Isaac**, himself the Publishing Services Librarian at **Pacific**, describes in some detail the philosophical as well as practical barriers publishing libraries will need to overcome, in addition to the skepticism they will face from both within their own profession and from without. "**Adjunct No More: Promoting Scholarly Publishing as a Core Service of Academic Libraries**" presents **Isaac's** case.

"How did we get into this mess?" asks **Kevin S. Hawkins**, of the **University of North Texas**, referring to today's "dysfunctional" scholarly publishing system where library budgets and the cost of scholarly and scientific works so often head in different directions. **Kevin** doesn't see "small-scale collaborations" between libraries and presses as the answer. Instead, in "**How We Pay for Publishing,**" he argues the need to "reimagine" an entirely new system for production of and access to scholarship.

Kevin isn't alone in believing the current system is broken. Wait till you read **Paul Royster**, of the **University of Nebraska-Lincoln**. **Paul**, in "**A Library Publishing Manifesto,**" explains exactly why he thinks library publishing is needed to atone for the "sins" of commercial publishers and what he counts as

the failings of university presses. If readers find his contribution "overly rhetorical" or "hyperbolic," as he admits they might, they'll be clear on where **Paul** stands. They'll also find as vigorous an argument for the value of library publishing as they're likely to encounter anywhere, as well as some practical advice for library publishers, all of it based in part upon what **Paul** has learned directing **Zea Books, Nebraska's** own program.

Last spring I heard **Paul** deliver a version of his article at the Library Publishing Forum, a meeting mentioned by several contributors. Library publishers and university press publishers were side-by-side for the first time at a national meeting like this one, and when they met in Kansas City there was an extraordinary level of energy. Sometimes it was energy over what libraries and university presses could do together. Sometimes it was energy over what libraries should do on their own. Sometimes the mood was friendly. Sometimes it was not. If there was a consensus at all, it was that everyone experienced a degree of creative tension that's rare at any conference.

This issue captures some of that same energy, and some of that same tension. Libraries and university presses are different but complementary. Libraries and university presses can work together to reinvent scholarship. Libraries should go it alone. Scholarship belongs to the university, not to the university press. University presses are essential and will respond to any challenge. The whole thing is broken; let's start over. Readers of *Against the Grain* will find all these points of view here.

"Everything changed," **John Hussey** wrote to open things up, and in many ways it has. Organizationally, more libraries and university presses face mandates to work together. Fiscally, nothing has been the same since the crash. Some of those same "usual suspects" from 2008 are still with us, but this issue wasn't intended to check up on them. Then and now, what hasn't changed is that we are still not sure how to answer this question: What's the best relationship between library publishing and university press publishing? Is there an answer? Read the issue, get a taste of our contributors' energy, and enjoy the discussion they offer to the *Against the Grain* community. 🌿

Rumors from page 8

But — great news!! **Ann Okerson** and **Jim O'Donnell** will be teaming up on **Back Talk** beginning with the February issue. We are very excited!

I remember when **Susan Spilka** was Vice-President, Corporate Communications at **John Wiley and Sons**. Now the bam-zowie **Susan** is Marketing and Communications Director at **CHORUS**. Remember the panel in 2014 **Charleston** by **Scott Plutchak**

(University of Alabama Birmingham), **Greg Tananbaum** (ScholarNext), **John Vaughn** (Association of American Universities), and **Howard Ratner** (CHORUS). The Panel was about the OSTP directive (2/22/13) to make peer reviewed articles and data resulting from research funded by federal agencies publicly accessible which has inspired several new initiatives, most notably the SHARE project being developed by university and library groups; and the publishing community-offered CHORUS project. There's a lot of info online. <http://www.katina.info/conference/conference-info/program/>

Speaking of which, watch the videos from the 2014 *Against the Grain* Penthouse Suite Interviews that are now available! See our chats with **Dr. Sheila Corral**, from **Pittsburgh University**, **Cheryl LaGuardia**, from **Harvard University**, **Scott Plutchak**, from **University of Alabama Birmingham**, **John Rennie**, from **Access Science**, and **Dr. James West**, from **Penn State University**.

<http://www.katina.info/conference/atg-penthouse-suite-interviews-now-available/>

The Library Lantern, the librarians' newsletter from **Taylor & Francis** had a great write

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