

The 'Value Added' in Editorial Acquisitions

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Scholarly publishers have always spoken eloquently of the value we add to the raw manuscripts we publish. But how do we quantify that value? In the new electronic age, when more and more scholars think they need only a computer and the latest version of Quark XPress to be their own publishers, there is a greater need than ever for us to define what we as publishers bring to the process of scholarly communication. In this first of an occasional series of essays, Sandy Thatcher describes the process of editorial acquisition and development and the role of the editorial board. As the custodians of peer review (the activity that distinguishes scholarly publishers), these editors and board members make an invaluable contribution. In future issues, contributors will assess the value of other scholarly publishing professionals – in copy editing, design, production, marketing, distribution, and finance.

When in 1964 Canadian social theorist Marshall McLuhan declared that 'it is a principal aspect of the electric age that it establishes a global network that has much the character of our central nervous system,' the word 'Internet' was not yet part of our popular lexicon. But already McLuhan had foreseen the revolutionary impact of networked computer technology: 'Electricity does not centralize, but decentralizes. Electric power, equally available in the farmhouse and the Executive Suite, permits any place to be a center, and does not require large aggregations.'¹

Rewrite this last sentence as 'The Internet, equally available in the farmhouse and the Executive Suite, permits any person to be an author, and does not require publishers,' and you have a pretty fair description of what some cyberspace enthusiasts have come to believe is the future of literary production and the dissemination of

knowledge. There may not be many yet who think this will all lead eventually to the formation of a 'general cosmic consciousness,' as McLuhan did, but Internet junkies certainly behave as though a 'global village' exists, in which they can communicate with anyone who is hooked into it, anytime and anywhere.²

In the academic community, first in physics and now in other disciplines, the growing popularity of 'preprint' servers and other means of sharing articles directly from author to reader has given rise to the notion that publishers may no longer be needed, their traditional role as intermediary being a function of now outmoded, Gutenberg-era technology. The Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations, launched at Virginia Tech in the mid-1990s, envisages a future in which graduate students will no longer spend years creating their first major pieces of scholarship, only to see them read by a few committee members and then stored, gathering dust, in some academic library's vault. Instead, through a network of servers residing at institutions of higher learning throughout the world, their ETDs (electronic theses and dissertations) will be readily accessible at the click of a button, providing them with the benefits of 'publication' without any real publisher having been involved.³ More recently, the Association of American Universities (AAU) has proposed the idea of 'decoupling' certification from publication as a strategy to defeat the monopoly-like stranglehold that commercial publishers have exercised over the dissemination of academic writing in scientific, technical, and medical (STM) fields, at a price that the AAU's member universities are increasingly unwilling to pay. Here the suggestion is that the only really crucial role that needs to be performed is the validation of scholarship by a body of experts that universities themselves have always provided anyway; once given the experts' seal of approval, scholarly works can be made directly available to readers over the Internet, and only some of these works need ever achieve publication in the traditional sense. The AAU proposal even refers to that kind of publication as involving costly frills: 'unnecessary editorial beautification processes.'⁴

Faced with the threat of 'disintermediation' in this new networked environment, academic publishers are beginning to wake up to the vital need to explain better exactly what it is they contribute to the process of scholarly communication. In an interview early in the fall of 1998, shortly after being elected to chair the board of directors of the

Association of American Publishers (AAP), Peter Jovanovich (CEO of Addison Wesley Longman) identified 'the problem of how to get our significant contributions appropriately recognized' as one of the major challenges confronting members of AAP's Professional/Scholarly Publishing Division. Noting that 'the value-added is more subtle' in this area of publishing compared with textbook publishing, he argued that professional and scholarly publishers 'have the burden of education – educating the librarian and author communities about the extent of our contributions.' And he added: 'Digital transmission does not diminish the amount of labor put into a scholarly work; rather it extends the degree of expertise necessary to deliver the publication.'⁵

That message echoes a call that University of Texas Vice President and Graduate Dean Teresa Sullivan made a year earlier directly to university presses at the conference on 'The Specialized Scholarly Monograph in Crisis,' co-sponsored by the Association of American University Presses, Association of Research Libraries, and American Council of Learned Societies. Speaking about 'Future Directions' in her wrap-up address, Dr. Sullivan observed that 'university presses have made the point here that they add value to the publication process, a value that deserves compensation. This point is not well understood elsewhere, even in universities. The costs of the peer review and the editorial processes are not likely to decline even if the manuscript is eventually presented to the public electronically. This value-added needs to be better quantified and understood.' In concluding, she called on presses 'to communicate the value added by their peer review and editorial processes. Just as we rely on scientific journals to separate the real science from the junk science, so our presses should help us distinguish between real scholarship and junk scholarship.'

This essay responds to Sullivan's call by showing what contributions acquiring editors and the editorial boards of university presses – which together are responsible for managing the process of peer review – make to the world of scholarly communication. The functions they perform constitute only one part of the overall value that university presses contribute. The contributions of copy editors, designers, marketing staff, and others are important too, but as this process of peer review is what most crucially distinguishes university presses from other kinds of publishers, it merits special attention in any effort to highlight what might be lost in a system that tries to operate without it.

The Role of the Acquiring Editor

Acquiring editors are the eyes and ears of a university press. They look at what scholars are doing in the fields in which their press concentrates – reading articles and book reviews, attending conferences, scanning announcements of grants made by foundations, etc. – and they listen intently to what scholars say about how their fields are developing and who is doing the best work ‘at the cutting edge’ in these fields. When acquiring editors learn about a book being written that they expect to make a significant contribution to scholarship, that fits the editorial ‘profile’ of their press, and that likely can cover its costs from sales (or can be readily subsidized from known institutional sources), they will invite submission of the manuscript, read it critically in a preliminary way, and then arrange for experts to prepare evaluations of it (if the manuscript passes muster on editorial grounds). If those evaluations are positive enough, the acquiring editor will submit the readers’ reports, together with replies from the author and the editor’s own staff report, to the press’s editorial board for final approval that leads (assuming no insuperable financial obstacles) to offering the author a contract.

The acquiring editor’s job does not end with the signing of the contract, however, for the editor must take primary responsibility for seeing that the author has made any final revisions to the manuscript satisfactorily, has delivered it in a format that meets the press’s requirements, has secured all necessary permissions for using copyrighted materials, and has supplied information needed for copyright registration, design, and marketing. And even after the manuscript has passed from the hands of the acquiring editor to the managing editor, who assigns it to a copy editor, there remains a role for the acquiring editor to play as faithful shepherd, overseer, and cheerleader for the book as it makes its way through the various stages of production and then into the outside world, where it needs to be effectively promoted if it is to have its full impact. These dimensions of an acquiring editor’s responsibility are best captured in describing the editor as a book’s ‘sponsor,’ and indeed, ‘sponsoring editor’ is often used as a synonym for acquiring editor. ‘The sponsoring editor has the broadest, most general responsibility for each book, from the time that it is signed to the time it is declared out of print’ – from birth to death, so to speak.⁶

This general overview of the acquiring editor's role only begins to hint at the important function that this person can play in facilitating scholarly communication, however. Without going into great detail, aspects of this role are especially worth highlighting for the 'value' they 'add' to the process. The editor, in fulfilling these functions, serves as hunter, selector, shaper, linker, stimulator, promoter, ally, reticulator, and listbuilder. A brief description of each of these functions will have to suffice for present purposes.⁷

Hunter

The most successful editors do not just sit at their desks passively waiting for manuscripts to arrive 'over the transom' but actively go in search of them. In the hunt for new books, editors sometimes end up providing the stimulus for their creation – for example, by suggesting how papers delivered at a conference might be brought together into a collective volume that no scholar at the conference may originally have thought of editing.

Selector

In serving as the screen to filter out the best manuscripts from the not so good, acquiring editors carry out that most basic task of 'gatekeeping' – 'the one indispensable function they perform,' according to one former press director.⁸ While they do not operate with complete autonomy, constrained as they are in various ways (by their presses' explicit rules regarding maximum length or 'quotas' used to maintain balance across fields, for example, or by 'unobtrusive controls' and even 'political problems'⁹), editors as gatekeepers nevertheless have the power and privilege of being the entry point for what, ultimately, will bear their press's imprint. And in exercising this authority they can significantly influence the contours of scholarship by championing new approaches, ideas, methodologies, or even ideologies. Although it is hardly their enthusiasm alone that accounts for the great strides feminist scholarship has made in the past two decades, surely those acquiring editors who eagerly sought it out and 'selected' it for their presses deserve some credit for its success, in the face of an often grudging acceptance within the mainstream of the academy's humanistic and social scientific disciplines.¹⁰

Shaper

At various stages of preliminary review, an acquiring editor has an opportunity to help shape a manuscript by engaging in what has usually been called 'developmental' or 'structural' editing, to distinguish it from the more fine-grained, line-by-line copy-editing. Developmental editing assists an author in dealing with such problems as the sequence of chapters; the proper role and content of a preface, introduction, and conclusion; the relationship of evidence to argument; the use or misuse of footnotes; omissions of important relevant literature from the bibliography; general stylistic shortcomings such as the overuse of the passive voice or sexist language; too heavy reliance on quotations from other authorities; and broad-scale inconsistencies of a type that require more than simple copy-editing to resolve. Another example is what an editor can communicate to a novice author about the value of opening a scholarly book in political science, say, with some narrative about real-world political events, in order to dramatize the nature of the problem that gives rise to theoretical questions, before going on to discuss the problem as it may be illuminated by theory. The advice, in short, would be to begin by talking about politics rather than political science (or history rather than historiography, society rather than sociological theory, etc.). This is particularly needed for an author whose book originates from a dissertation, where the initial chapter or two is supposed to show the author's mastery of the relevant theoretical literature in the field; that is not a good way to engage the interest of a reader from outside the narrow disciplinary subfield who is attracted to the book initially because of the subject matter, rather than the theoretical issues, it addresses. Developmental editing can cover a wide spectrum of advice, from basic instruction like this about how to go about successfully transforming a dissertation into a book, to the gentle offer of suggestions for fine-tuning an argument or an element of style.

Linker

Editors rarely specialize in a subject to the extent that scholars, by necessity, must. Indeed, 'dilettante' is a word that is sometimes used to characterize an editor, in contrast to 'expert' for a scholar. What acquiring editors lack in depth, however, they compensate for by

having a wider vision of the terrain of scholarship, which can provide advantages in espying links among different areas of ongoing scholarly activity. Editors, with their antennae always extended to pick up early signals of new ideas and their extensive networks of individual contacts, play a meiotic role in making connections among different strands of intellectual development and among the different scholars pursuing them. Occasionally this even allows them to link up the efforts of two authors in the same field who are independently pursuing the same line of inquiry, so that they can collaborate on a book.¹¹ But an editor's ability to forge links is not limited to activity within a single discipline. Because many editors have responsibility for acquisitions in a number of fields, they have a vantage point not available to most scholars of being able to juxtapose and relate developments going on within different disciplines. Because of their broad view of the scholarly horizon, editors often have a special fondness for interdisciplinary writing, and it is no accident that university presses publish a great deal of it, perhaps out of proportion to the importance it has within individual disciplines (as judged, for example, by tenure committees). This meiotic role is usually not very visible to the outsider, but it is valuable in stimulating scholars to pursue lines of inquiry that the structures of reward in their own specialized fields might not otherwise justify. As one observer of university presses put it: 'University presses, as a leading vehicle for intellectual discourse, seldom serve as passive gatekeepers. Instead, they actively shape the cultural agenda by defining their role in the scholarly enterprise through listbuilding and aggressive acquisitions methods. By being on the frontiers of scholarship, a press can help direct the cultural agenda, rather than merely reenforce existing values, beliefs, and practices.'¹²

Stimulator

Just as editors can help shape the cultural agenda by forging links among people and ideas, so too they can influence the direction of scholarship by stimulating the production of certain kinds of writing. Editors at university presses, unlike their counterparts at some commercial houses (especially those involved with textbook and reference book publishing), rarely commission books, it is true.¹³ Their primary job is to keep abreast of the latest advances in scholarly knowledge and encourage the writing of books embodying these new ideas. But

sometimes editors have opportunities to provide incentives for scholars to consider writing a certain kind of book they might not otherwise have thought about. Often this happens when an editor originates an idea for a new series. One example is the series of short books published by the University of California Press under the rubric of Quantum Books. The editor who was responsible for launching this series in 1974 offered a good rationale for it: a book between 60 and 120 printed pages traditionally existed in a kind of limbo, too long to be an article for most journals, yet too short to be a full-fledged book in most publishers' view. But it has the advantage that it 'can be read as a unit, at a single sitting, as a singular and coherent intellectual experience.'¹⁴ Another example is the series that Yale University Press initiated in 1969 known as Yale Fastbacks. As the name suggests, the purpose of the series was to provide a means for works on timely subjects to be written and published much more quickly than the normal process of publishing would allow. Probably the most famous book in the series is *Impeachment* (1974), written by noted constitutional scholar Charles Black to educate the public about the process of impeachment at a time when it looked as though President Richard Nixon might be subjected to it. Black completed the manuscript in three weeks, and the Yale Press rushed it through production in a mere twenty-eight days.

Promoter

The acquiring editor's work does not end with the appearance of a book in print. However well produced a book may be, and no matter how much the editor has done to ensure its scholarly quality, no book can succeed in accomplishing its purpose unless it reaches the audiences for which it is intended. Although the marketing department has the chief responsibility for promotion, a good editor will function also as the author's cheerleader, first within the house by stimulating enthusiasm for the book among other staff and then later by actively helping to carry out the marketing department's plans. Contacts the editor has developed with book review editors at major media, for instance, can be called into play for titles that have genuine trade potential. Or an editor, knowledgeable about different organizations with special interests, might be aware of a prize that one of these organizations sponsors for which the book could be submitted, or

about panels at conferences that these organizations may hold where new books are discussed in an 'author meets critic' format, or about listservs for subfields where announcements for new publications may be circulated. Authors, one would think, should know about these opportunities, but often enough they do not, and acquiring editors can help make sure these opportunities for special promotion are not overlooked.

Ally

The loyalty of an author to a publishing house is a value that no acquiring editor should underestimate. The reputations of some major publishers in the past, like Scribner's and Knopf, were built to a great extent on such loyalty, nurtured by such legendary acquiring editors as Maxwell Perkins, the editor of Faulkner, Fitzgerald, and Hemingway. While fading as a tradition in commercial publishing, owing to the predominance of more purely mercenary interests, author loyalty still remains alive to some extent in countries like Britain and is seen, too, in university press publishing, which in many ways resembles the era of commercial publishing when it was still identified as (with apologies for the sexist overtones) 'an occupation for gentlemen.'¹⁵ The advantages to a press come not only from the author's own productive output, which may number half a dozen books or more over the course of a career, but from that author's goodwill in referring other authors to the press and, generally, serving as a cheerleader for the press, too.¹⁶ Conversely, and more to the point here, as an ally of the author, an acquiring editor makes the author's project, which may take many years and several books to accomplish fully, in some ways his or her own. This does not necessarily mean that the editor shares the author's intellectual agenda or ideological point of view. It only means that the editor believes that the author has something important to say that is worth disseminating to as wide a public as the publisher can reach. An acquiring editor can play a role here that is distinct from what the author's own professional colleagues may be able to do for the author, partly because of the editor's constant exposure to a wider universe of intellectual discourse and partly because of the editor's sensitivity and savvy about matters of marketing and promotion that may be well beyond the ken of many academics.¹⁷

Reticulator

'To reticulate,' according to the *Random House Dictionary*, is 'to form a network.' A major activity of acquiring editors is building networks – networks of advisers, whether they are authors or not, who can keep an editor informed of new developments in a field, refer an editor to work in progress by colleagues, provide early leads to the best and brightest of the graduate students whose dissertations may be worth transforming into books, and even serve as reviewers of completed manuscripts. A network is, in a sense, an expanded alliance: allies are those authors with whom an editor has developed the closest working relationships over the longest period of time. Members of a network include allies but also many other scholars with whom an editor maintains sufficient contact to keep the pipeline of information open – and even people from outside academia, such as media contacts who can help disseminate news about a scholarly breakthrough or challenging idea to a broader public (in general magazines like *The New Republic* or *The Nation* or ones more focused on the educational community like the *Chronicle of Higher Education* or *Lingua Franca*). Although networks have always been a fundamental medium for communication among scholars, and have been made more effective than ever by the advent of the Internet, probably not many people are aware of how acquiring editors have contributed, if not to the formation of such networks, at least to their further articulation.

Listbuilder

An acquiring editor, if given the time and support, can build a list of books that, relating to one another in an intellectually coherent way, form a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. By cooperating with each other, under the guidance of the editor-in-chief or director, the acquiring editors together can create an overall list for the press that gives it a distinctive editorial profile, which can translate into prestige, public image, effective marketing, financial value, and appeal to new authors. While this may seem valuable mostly to the publishing house, it can also have value for the authors whose books benefit from their membership in such a list, thereby enhancing their stature and contributing to the influence that an entire intellectual enterprise may be creating.¹⁸

Acquiring editors can all give many examples of these multiple roles they perform from their own experience – and they may be able to enrich this list with yet other roles. This survey, we may hope, can minimally serve as a reminder of the varied ways that editors participate in the system of scholarly communication and thereby add some special value to it that would not exist otherwise.

The Role of the Editorial Board

The main function of a university press's editorial board is to review the proposals submitted to it by acquiring editors who are seeking its authorization to publish books that will bear, through the press's imprint, the university's seal of approval. The board's decisions are at most presses permissive, allowing the press to proceed with publication, but at some presses obligatory, mandating publication (unless, presumably, the press will go broke in the process). The board usually consists of anywhere from a very few to a dozen or more faculty members appointed by a university administrator, often the same one to whom the press director reports, with a sprinkling of administrators added at some presses. The board examines the reports solicited by the acquiring editors from scholars who are expert on the subject matter of the manuscript, may read some parts of the manuscript selected to give an overview of the work or a sample of the author's style (including at the very least the table of contents), and takes into account any additional information about the author, the reviewers, and the manuscript that the acquiring editor provides in an accompanying staff report.¹⁹

A certain tension exists in this final stage of the editorial process between the acquiring editors and the editorial board. It is, usually, a tension that has positive benefits. As one former member of Yale's editorial board put it: 'I believe a university press is healthy when a spirit of affectionate antagonism exists between the editorial committee and the house editors ... Editors, after all, control the process in a fundamental way; they decide what will and will not enter the system ... Editors create the agenda for the editorial committee in every sense.'²⁰ Part of this tension comes from the mainly negative, veto-like function that the editorial board performs. As nicely described by one of Yale's editors, 'the committee's role is, in fact, to identify the absence of quality – to pluck the remaining weeds out of the bouquet

that the editors bring to each meeting.'²¹ An editorial board can also play a constructive role, however, in making suggestions about how an already good manuscript might be made even better, by further revision or through consultation with another type of expert, and how it might appeal to multiple audiences and make its potential appeal more manifest, as by changing the title in certain ways, for example.

What is most crucial for understanding the uniqueness of the whole editorial process at university presses is the way that the editorial board and the acquiring editors, engaged in this 'affectionate antagonism,' manage to arrive at a synthesis of viewpoints that achieves a special kind of balance between tradition and innovation.

'Interestingly, university presses operate within a system that ... balances the interests of received knowledge and emerging knowledge. The editors themselves ... have a bias toward emerging knowledge. They prefer works that challenge the status quo because these will be the books with the most potential for influencing intellectual currents ... Yet the scholarly publishing enterprise also is biased toward the status quo. Peer reviewers and editorial committee members tend to be established scholars in a field – the very ones, in fact, who may have built their careers on what is now called the status quo in their disciplines ... But the editors, who get to select the peer reviewers ..., look for scholars who would be open to new directions in their discipline as long as the work measures up to the standards of scholarship.'²²

This dynamic does not exist in other areas where peer review is employed to uphold standards and make decisions about what gets published. Typically, the decisions an editor of an academic journal makes about what articles to accept reflect judgements made by specialists about the value of new contributions to that particular speciality; no broader set of criteria is brought into play. It is important to emphasize that, even though they may represent a general bias towards tradition, or the status quo, the members of an editorial board most often do not function, in their role on the editorial board, as experts on a particular subject matter in the way that the external reviewers do or in the way that they would themselves if asked to review articles for a journal in their area of specialization. Rather, they operate within a broader intellectual framework where the general and overarching values and standards essential to the academic en-

terprise, whether in the liberal arts or in the sciences, are the chief determinants of what is deemed to be of high quality and thus worthy of publication. This aura of 'wisdom,' if you will, that pervades the discussion at editorial board meetings (if they are properly serving their function) results in a different kind of decision-making than is found just about anywhere else in the world of scholarly communication.²³ It reflects that creative synthesis of dilettantism biased towards innovation and interdisciplinarity, which is the contribution of acquiring editors, with expertise used in a generalized manner biased towards tradition and high intellectual standards, which is the contribution of the editorial board. The result of these interacting forces is, at its best, to steer decisions in a direction that favours publication of works of more general value to intellectual life as a whole rather than of works that contribute primarily to just one of numerous academic niches.

Compared with this kind of decision-making process, the system of certification decoupled from publication that the AAU envisages, through reliance on cooperation with learned societies, clearly looks a lot more like the very specialized kind that goes on in academic journal publishing, where the dimension of broader value and certainly interdisciplinarity are accorded little if any recognition and respect.²⁴ At a time when universities are being pressed by a sceptical and sometimes hostile public to defend more the value that they contribute to society, it ill behoves them to think about disengaging from, or doing an end run around, a decision-making process already well tested for producing publications that not only broaden horizons across disciplines within the academic community but have a chance of influencing larger currents of intellectual life outside. University press books, just because of the editorial process they undergo, often convey the best that universities have to offer to the public at large while providing stimulus to more research at the cutting edge of academic disciplines. This is a value added to scholarly communication that deserves more recognition than it has usually received, even within the academy, and certainly in the world beyond.

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- 1 Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw-Hill 1964). Quotations are from the 1965 paperback edition, pp. 36 and 348.
- 2 Ibid., 80 and 93
- 3 Information about the NDLTD may be found at <http://www.ndltd.org>. Also see Penn State University's 'Final Report and Recommendations of the Committee on Implementation of Electronic Theses and Dissertations for the Graduate Council' (Fall 1998), accessible at <http://cac.psu.edu/etd>.
- 4 The idea of 'decoupling' was first presented by University of Rochester Provost Charles Phelps, at a conference at the California Institute of Technology in March 1997, in a paper entitled 'The Future of Scholarly Communication: A Proposal for Change.' It was later developed into a full-blown proposal by the AAU entitled 'A Proposed AAU Initiative for Streamlining Scholarly Communication.' It is also mentioned in 'To Publish and Perish,' *Policy Perspectives* 7, 4 (March 1998), an article summarizing a conference sponsored by the Pew Higher Education Roundtable, Association of Research Libraries, and Association of American Universities, which is accessible at <http://www.irhe.upenn.edu/pp/pp-main.html>.
- 5 Association of American Publishers, 'An Interview with Peter Jovanovich,' *PSP Bulletin* 1, 1 (September/October 1998): 1
- 6 Walter W. Powell, *Getting into Print: The Decision-Making Process in Scholarly Publishing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1985): 132
- 7 For a fuller description of these functions, plus the function of 'shepherd' (which is mainly internal to a press), see Sanford G. Thatcher, 'Listbuilding at University Presses,' in *Editors as Gatekeepers: Getting Published in the Social Sciences*, ed. Rita J. Simon and James J. Fyfe (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield 1994): 209–58, esp. 210–29.
- 8 J.G. Goellner, *Who Will Keep the Gates?* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press 1990): 8
- 9 For more about these constraints, see Thatcher, 'Listbuilding,' 215–8; on unobtrusive controls and political problems, see Powell, *Getting into Print*, 113 and 144–58.
- 10 Here it must be noted that some commercial academic publishers, like Routledge, played a major part in championing feminist studies and, more recently, cultural studies – though it is also worth mentioning that some of their best editors got their careers under way working for university presses.

- 11 An example from my own experience is the collaboration of two political scientists, Bruce Berkowitz and Allan Goodman – both originally planning to write their own books about the modern intelligence community until I brought them together – that resulted in *Strategic Intelligence for American National Security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1990). That collaboration, once started, continued with my encouragement in their joint editorship of a series of volumes emanating from the CIA's Historical Review Program that Penn State University Press has been publishing.
- 12 Paul Parsons, *Getting Published: The Acquisitions Process at University Presses* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press 1989): 175
- 13 A partial exception exists in the sciences, where scholars do not have the same academic incentives their colleagues in the liberal arts do to write books. In this area acquiring editors at university presses are much more apt to engage in active commissioning of books; otherwise, many books would not be written at all.
- 14 William J. McClung, 'The Short Book,' *Scholarly Publishing* 1, 1 (October 1969): 46. McClung began his article with a telling quote from Harold J. Laski: 'One sixteen-page tract by a George Bernard Shaw will do more good than all of the Ph.D. theses of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton combined,' 45.
- 15 See Frederic Warburg, *An Occupation for Gentlemen* (London: Secker & Warburg 1959).
- 16 On the advantages that accrue to publishers from authors' loyalty, see Powell, *Getting into Print*, 50, 156, 181.
- 17 A personal example comes from a letter written to me in December 1990 by the late economist Julian Simon, who graciously said: 'If it had not been for S. Thatcher and PUP [Princeton University Press], my 1977 book probably would still be looking for a publisher ... And if the 1977 book had not come out, all the rest on population would not have happened, also. The dissemination of radically new ideas hangs on a much thinner thread than most people believe, even in a pluralistic society. DNA would have been discovered in a few months even without Watson and Crick, but in the social sciences, one editor and one press can be decisive for a long time.'
- 18 An example in my experience is the list of books in political development that Princeton University Press published in the 1960s and 1970s, building upon the core of edited volumes in the series *Studies in Political Development* sponsored by the Social Science Research Council.

- 19 For more information about the composition and functioning of the editorial board, see Paul F. Parsons, 'The Editorial Committee: Controller of the Imprint,' *Scholarly Publishing* 20, 4 (July 1989): 238–44, and J.G. Goellner, 'The Editorial Board: Friend or Frustration,' *Scholarly Publishing* 21, 3 (April 1990): 184–8.
- 20 Bartlett Giametti, as quoted in Parsons, 'The Editorial Committee,' 240
- 21 Ed Tripp, as quoted in Parsons, *ibid.*, 241
- 22 Parsons, *Getting Published*, 200
- 23 This is, of course, the ideal; editorial boards, like other academic committees, are at times subject to all the ills that politics, petty jealousies, disciplinary bickering, and other forms of conflict and animus inflict on the intellectual enterprise.
- 24 With respect to interdisciplinarity at least, it is only fair to recognize that some learned societies and their premier journals, especially in area studies, promote dialogue across disciplines, and even some individual journals do, such as the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*. But even here the decisions about what to publish don't have the same advantage of breadth of interdisciplinarity and focus on communicating even beyond the academy that typically characterize the decision-making process within university presses.