

**ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS COMMITTEE  
FOR  
ACADEMIC YEAR 2011–2012**

**Presented at the  
720<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate  
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## **FY12 summary**

The University of Massachusetts Press continues to publish an impressive list of peer-reviewed books in print form, while also making many of those titles available as e-books. During FY12, a total of 32 new books were published, 12 new-in-paperback editions were produced, 78 titles were reprinted, and more than 40,000 individual volumes were distributed to customers worldwide. The University Press Committee met three times and approved 29 new manuscripts for publication.

Recognizing that faculty and students increasingly prefer to access research materials online, the Press has formed partnerships with Google and other Internet-based companies to produce and sell e-book editions. It has also joined with 70 other university presses to form the University Press Content Consortium, which now offers 17,000 titles in aggregated e-book collections. Libraries purchasing these collections have perpetual access rights, with unlimited simultaneous usage, downloading, and printing of chapter-level PDFs.

In partnership with the W.E.B. Du Bois Library, the Press has placed a small selection of titles in the ScholarWorks digital repository on an open-access basis. A variety of other related materials are also available at ScholarWorks, as the Press experiments with ways to supplement its print publications. The staff continues to explore new economic models designed to maximize access to scholarship while still covering essential costs, such as peer review, editing, design, promotion, and distribution.

Despite a difficult economy, the Press met its budgetary and financial targets for the year and maintained very high standards of editorial content and design. The University Press Committee commends the Press staff for its excellent efforts.

## **Background**

Founded in 1963, the University of Massachusetts Press seeks to support and enhance the University's stature as a top-tier research institution by publishing outstanding works of peer-reviewed scholarship. The staff also provides general advice to faculty and graduate students on a wide range of publishing questions. Since its inception, the Press has sold over 2,000,000 individual volumes. Today it has more than 1,000 titles in print. Eight employees, along with an enthusiastic crew of student interns and outside sales representatives, produce and market 30 to 40 new titles annually. The main offices of the Press are located in the East Experiment Station on the Amherst campus. There is also a satellite office at the University of Massachusetts Boston, staffed by an editor whose salary is funded by that campus.

For administrative, financial, and personnel matters, the Press reports to the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Editorially, it reports to the University Press Committee, which includes a faculty representative from the University of Massachusetts Boston.

The Press has developed a number of partnerships to assist with marketing and distribution. Its sales representatives include the Columbia Consortium (for bookstores in the continental United States), Scholarly Book Services (Canada), the Eurospan Group

(United Kingdom and Europe), and East-West Export Books (Asia, the Pacific, and Hawaii). Warehousing and order fulfillment functions are handled on a contract basis by Hopkins Fulfillment Services, a subsidiary of Johns Hopkins University Press.

### **FY12 statistical summary**

During FY12, 32 new books were published—4 in hardback, 6 in paperback, and 22 simultaneously in hardback and paperback editions. In addition, 12 new-in-paperback editions were produced and 78 titles were reprinted, in many cases using print-on-demand technology. All told, 44,202 volumes were shipped to customers in the United States and abroad. Net sales for the year amounted to \$823,352, and authors were paid \$59,311 in royalties. The Press ended the year with an operating surplus of \$3,208 and a revenue trust fund balance of \$94,045.

Another way to look at the Press's finances is to use the comparative data compiled each year by the Association of American University Presses. In the latest statistical survey, the Press is placed in a peer group consisting of 22 presses of similar size. The average figure for annual sales per employee in this group is \$85,000. The figure for the Press is \$103,000. The inventory ratio (the value of inventory as a percentage of annual net sales) at the Press is 49% lower than the average for the peer group, which means the Press has not been overprinting and sitting on unsalable books. The level of total "parent institution financial support" for the Press is 25% lower than the average for the group (even without taking into account the 7.5% administrative overhead fee on all Press expenditures, which the Press is required to pay to the University). All of this suggests a lean and efficient operation.

### **Press Committee activities during FY12**

The University Press Committee met three times—in October, February, and May—to discuss projects under consideration and review the publishing program. Following a rigorous process of peer review, 29 new manuscripts were approved, along with the winners of the Juniper Prizes for Fiction and Poetry (selected by faculty in the English Department's MFA program from more than 600 entries) and the Grace Paley Prize in Short Fiction (published in cooperation with the Association of Writers and Writing Programs). The committee also approved a distribution arrangement for a volume produced by the US Commission of Fine Arts.

Prior to each meeting, committee members reviewed 200 to 300 pages of supporting materials, which described and evaluated the manuscripts under consideration and documented the process of peer review. The committee then discussed each project thoroughly, evaluating the scholarly quality of the proposed publications. In making its decisions, the committee took into consideration the recommendations of the acquisitions editors and series editors and the written reports of at least two scholars in the field. In selecting projects to be brought before the committee, the Press editors reviewed hundreds of proposals and manuscripts, evaluating them in terms of quality, audience, financial viability, and appropriateness for the University of Massachusetts Press list.

In recent years, the Press has focused primarily on books in the field of American Studies broadly defined—books that explore the history, politics, culture, and environment of the United States—as well as works with a transnational perspective. It has benefited greatly from the contributions of series editors, including UMass Amherst professors Christian

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Appy, Ethan Carr, Arthur Kinney, and Marla Miller and UMass Boston professors Jeffrey Melnick and Rachel Rubin. The Press currently has thirteen active series, ranging from “American Popular Music” to “Culture, Politics, and the Cold War” to “Science/ Technology/ Culture.”

At each committee meeting, director Bruce Wilcox reported on significant developments at the Press and in the broader world of university press publishing. He urged members to read a new report titled [Redefining the Academic Library](#), which includes a long section “Rethinking the Scholarly Publishing Model” with an emphasis on open-access modes of publication. He also described various improvements in infrastructure, including a new, more efficient system for tracking royalties and the successful effort to upgrade the Press’s website so that it is now placed on a Drupal platform and driven by the Press’s database.

Editors Clark Dougan and Brian Halley reported on conferences attended and editorial initiatives undertaken. During FY12, they staffed Press exhibits at numerous academic conferences, where they met with current and prospective authors and displayed an array of recent titles. Among these conferences were the annual meetings of the American Studies Association, combined History of Science Societies, American Historical Association, Modern Language Association, American Society for Environmental History, National Council on Public History, Organization of American Historians, and Native American and Indigenous Studies Association. The Press also mounted displays at the New England Independent Booksellers Association convention and the AWP Bookfair and was represented in cooperative displays at the London Book Fair, Book Expo America, and the Frankfurt Book Fair. All of this activity helped to enhance the reach and reputation of the University both nationally and internationally.

The committee also noted the success of the Press staff in securing grant support on a title-by-title basis. These grants came from a range of sources, including foundations, cooperating organizations, individuals, and other universities and colleges.

### **Online distribution**

As scholarship continues to shift to the digital environment, the Press has taken steps to ensure that its books are accessible via online search engines and online booksellers. It participates in the Google Books program and in Amazon’s “Search Inside” program. It has also made arrangements to market e-books via Google Play, Amazon Kindle, Barnes & Noble Nook, and the Apple iBookstore. The aim is to make University of Massachusetts Press books available as widely as possible, in whatever format readers prefer.

### **Notable awards and honors**

\* Peter Benes’s *Meetinghouses of Early New England* was named winner of the 2012 Kniffen Award of the Pioneer America Society presented to the best book in the field of North American material culture. The book received splendid reviews, including this notice in *Choice*: “A handsome and magisterial volume that will be the definitive study of the meetinghouses of Puritan New England for this generation. . . . an indispensable guide to the relationship between religion and material culture in early America. Summing Up: Essential.”

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\* Elizabeth Stillinger's *A Kind of Archeology: Collecting Folk Art in America, 1876–1976* was chosen as one of the 18 “Best of the Best Books from University Presses” by a committee of librarians, who presented the selected titles at a panel at the 2012 American Library Association convention. In a front-page review, *Antiques & the Arts Weekly* wrote: “Heavily illustrated and just shy of 450 pages, the book is a sweeping, De Mille-style epic populated by dozens of dealers, collectors, curators and museum directors, many of them remembered for their strident disdain for convention. In her always lucid prose, Stillinger identifies the players and their key contributions to the field’s evolution. . . . It is hard to conceive of a more thoughtful or thorough guide.”

\* Barbara Hochman's *Uncle Tom's Cabin and the Reading Revolution: Race, Literacy, Childhood and Fiction, 1851–1911* received the 2012 DeLong Book History Book Prize from the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing. The author was presented with a \$1,000 prize at SHARP's annual conference. The book received outstanding reviews, such as this from *Choice*: “Clearly and concisely charting the interplay of the text of the novel itself, its societal and print contexts, and readers’ responses, this volume will undoubtedly serve as a model for future scholars.”

\* Christopher Daly's illustrated talk about his book, *Covering America: A Narrative History of a Nation's Journalism*, at the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism was featured in an hour-long segment on C-SPAN Book TV. *Publishers Weekly* commented on the book as follows: “In this scholarly yet readable volume, Daly presents a surprisingly spirited and detailed account of American journalism and the many ways in which the press has impacted the trajectory of American history, and vice versa. . . . Any history book runs the risk of being bland, but Daly peppers the text with amusing anecdotes and intriguing facts. In addition to the interesting stories, he makes many cogent arguments about what the press has meant to the country’s shared history and identity.”

\* Raymond S. Bradley's *Global Warming and Political Intimidation* generated a lot of media attention. Bradley was interviewed in *Global Change*, *Inside Higher Ed*, the *Boston Globe*, and the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*. He was featured on several public radio stations, including WFCR and WAMC, and in the “Political Bookworm” blog of the *Washington Post*. He also published an op-ed piece in the *Guardian* on global warming as a litmus test for Republican candidates, and another piece in *Nature*. A Japanese-language edition of his book is scheduled for publication shortly.

\* Four fiction titles received national honors. Juniper Prize for Fiction winner Gregory Smith's *The Law of Miracles* won the Minnesota Book Award for First Fiction, which was presented at a gala awards dinner in Minneapolis that drew 800 people. Another Juniper-winning volume, Andrew Milan Milward's *The Agriculture Hall of Fame*, won *ForeWord* magazine's first fiction prize. Douglas Light's *Girls in Trouble* was named a finalist for the Indiana Authors Award in the Emerging Authors category. Christine Sneed's *Portraits of a Few of the People I've Made Cry* won the Chicago Writers Association Book of the Year Award, was a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for First Fiction, and received the John C. Zacharis First Book Award.

\* Over the course of the year, books from the Press were favorably reviewed in a wide range of newspapers and scholarly journals. These reviews attest to the high quality of the publishing program and suggest the important ways in which the Press enhances the reputation of the University as a leader in research and scholarship.