

University Press Committee
Minutes of Meeting of February 17, 2006
Convened at 1:30 p.m. in Room 904-08, Campus Center

Attending the meeting were chair McFarland, members Afolabi, Avakian, Fong, Harris, Jones, Paradiso, Silverman, and Wise, director Wilcox, and editors Dougan and Wright. Copies of thirteen recently published titles were on display. The minutes of the meeting of October 28, 2005, were approved.

Wilcox reported that seven months into the fiscal year, sales were slightly ahead of the previous year. He said he had been told in December that three positions at the Press would continue to be funded by UMass Amherst in FY07. He described a cordial meeting in Boston with Chancellor Michael Collins and ongoing dialogue about whether UMass Boston would continue to fund the position of the Boston-based editor that has been held for the past seventeen years by Paul Wright.

Wilcox commented on a panel discussion on "Research and Publishing in the Digital Age" at the most recent Faculty Senate meeting and expressed thanks for McFarland's warm words of support when presenting the committee's Annual Report. He also noted that a selection of Press books had been shipped to Boston to be displayed in the President's Office and at the UMass Club.

Wilcox cited recent reviews in various national media, including the *New Yorker* and the *New York Times Book Review*, an NPR radio interview with Arlene Avakian on "Commonwealth Journal," and an hour-long Pennsylvania Cable Network television interview with Robert Allison broadcast to nine million viewers. He also reported that Doreen Baingana's *Tropical Fish* had won the Commonwealth Foundation's Best First Book Award in the Africa region. The award carries a prize of £1000 for the author and a free trip to Melbourne, Australia, for the final judging.

Dougan and Wright described recent meetings they had attended, including the conventions of the American Studies Association and the American Historical Association. At both of these meetings, the Press had an attractive booth in a prime location, and business was brisk.

Under "Other Business," the committee discussed, revised, and passed a resolution urging UMass Boston Chancellor Collins to continue funding a Boston-based editor after January 2007. A copy of the resolution is appended to these minutes. The committee asked the chair to forward the resolution to Chancellor Collins.

The committee also voted to recommend to the Faculty Senate that the committee's membership be revised in the Faculty Senate bylaws. Instead of "Four full-time Faculty Members, one each from the Boston, Dartmouth, Lowell and Worcester campuses, each chosen by their respective governing bodies," the committee recommended the following wording: "Up to two full-time Faculty Members or Librarians from UMass Boston, chosen by its governing body." The reasoning behind this proposed change was that since the 1970s the Boston campus has had a continuous representative on the University Press Committee, and since 1988 UMass Boston has supported the salary and expenses of a Boston-based editor for the Press. All books from the Press currently carry a joint imprint, "University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst and Boston." No such relationship exists with the Dartmouth, Lowell, and Worcester campuses.

Turning to the manuscripts on the agenda, the committee considered twelve projects, presented in alphabetical order by author.

The first project was the reconstructed autobiography of Clarence Adams, edited by Della Adams and Lewis Carlson, provisionally entitled *Clarence Adams and the American Dream: The Story of an African-American Korean War Combat Soldier and POW Who Spent Twelve Years in Communist China*. The consensus among committee members was that the title/subtitle needed improvement, but that Adams's story deserved to be published and would make a useful contribution to the historical record. The project was approved, with one member voting against publication.

In considering Pamela Brooks's *Boycotts, Buses, and Passes: Black Women's Resistance in the U.S. South and South Africa*, the committee noted that it was a synthetic work of scholarship, making good use of oral histories and emphasizing similarities between the experiences of black women in two different cultures. The project was approved with the understanding that the author would revise the manuscript in response to the two readers' reports.

Ethan Carr's *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* was presented as a prospective copublication with the Library of American Landscape History, with the promise of a bulk purchase by the National Park Service. The committee expressed support for the project, but had misgivings about the title. Some said the main title was too obscure and should be changed; others argued that it worked well, but needed a clearer subtitle. The project was approved with the recommendation that the title/subtitle be reconsidered.

Next up was Carole Gaunt's *Hungry Hill: A Memoir*. One member who had read the entire manuscript praised the author's storytelling ability, but said she needed to pay more attention to the architecture of the narrative and create a clearer thematic focus. The project was approved with the stipulation that one of the outside readers be asked to sign off on the revised version.

In the case of *American Architects and Their Books, from Andrew Jackson Downing to Charles Sumner Downing*, edited by Kenneth Hafertepe and James O'Gorman, the committee again focused on the title. Members deemed the volume a worthy companion to *American Architects and Their Books to 1848*, but thought it ought to have a parallel title. The project was approved with the expectation that the editors would carry out the revisions described in their letter of response to the reports.

The only concern expressed about Diane Jacobsohn's *Boston's "Three-Decker Menace": The Buildings, the Builders, and the Dwellers, 1870s–1930* was whether sufficient funding could be found to underwrite the costs of producing this lengthy study in a well-illustrated edition. The Graham Foundation was cited as one possible source of support. In light of the author's plan for revising and refining the manuscript, it was approved.

In evaluating *The Future of Work in Massachusetts*, edited by Tom Juravich, the committee noted that one of the reviewers had failed to comment on all of the chapters. But given the thoroughness and enthusiasm of the other report, and in view of Juravich's thoughtful letter of response, the committee approved the project. One member commented on the excellent reputations of many of the contributors.

Blanche Linden's *Silent City on a Hill: Picturesque Landscapes of Memory and Boston's Mount Auburn Cemetery* was presented as another book to be published in association with the Library of American Landscape History. It was described as a much revised and entirely redesigned edition of a work that was well received when first published in 1989. It was approved without hesitation.

The project that elicited the most substantial discussion was Edwin Martini's *Invisible Enemies: The American War on Vietnam, 1975–2000*. One of the two reports described the author's scholarship as "impressive but selective," while the other called the manuscript "original, lucid, and convincing." Committee members expressed some concern about the title/subtitle and about whether the author should be encouraged to visit presidential libraries. One member asked if the author's use of cultural studies was oversimplified. In response, Dougan described the manuscript as a work of cultural and political history, rather than cultural studies, and pointed out that one historian's ideological slant may be another historian's historical truth. In the end, the project was approved with the understanding that the author would revise and cut as described in his letter of response to the reports. One member voted against publication.

The next project was Carol McEldowney's *Hanoi Journal, 1967*, edited by Suzanne Kelley McCormack and Elizabeth Mock. Members asked questions about McEldowney, who died in 1973, and about the form of the journal and the commentaries. The project was approved as a valuable addition to the historical record.

Last on the agenda were two projects proposed for the Press's "Native Americans of the Northeast" series. The first was Laura Mielke's *Moving Encounters: Sympathy and the Indian Question in Antebellum Literature*, a comparative study of Euro-American and American Indian authors in the period 1820–1860. Noting the "high bar" set by the series editors, the favorable reports, and the prospect of a subsidy from the author's university, the committee approved publication with appropriate revision.

Also in the "Native Americans of the Northeast" series was *The Journal and Plans of Survey of Joseph Treat—1820: Wabanaki Homeland and the New State of Maine*, edited by Micah Pawling, a project that he hoped would "help set an important precedent for cooperation between scholars and Native American communities." Supported with a \$7,000 grant from the Maine Community Foundation, the book would be published in association with the Penobscot Nation. Apart from suggesting that the title and subtitle be reversed, the committee had no misgivings about this project and it was approved.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m. No date was set for the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Wilcox
Secretary

cc: Faculty Senate office

Attachment: "Resolution of the University Press Committee, February 17, 2006"

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Since the 1970s, UMass Boston has had a voting faculty representative on the University Press Committee (the Editorial Board of the University of Massachusetts Press). In 1988, the Amherst and Boston campuses signed an agreement establishing an office of the Press at UMass Boston, with an editor whose salary and expenses would be covered by UMass Boston. Paul Wright was appointed as editor. This arrangement developed into an extremely productive relationship between the two campuses, and all books published by the Press now bear the dual imprint, "University of Massachusetts Press / Amherst and Boston."

Recognizing the great value to the Press of having an editor based at UMass Boston, and acknowledging the very important contributions that Paul Wright has made over the past seventeen years, the University Press Committee urges Chancellor Michael F. Collins to provide full funding for an editor's position, beginning in January 2007, and to proceed with a search for Paul Wright's successor.