University Press Committee  
Minutes of the Meeting of May 16, 2014  

Present were chair Tymoczko, members Chang, Clouse, Kelly, Knoper, Porto, Smethurst, director Wilcox, senior editor Dougan, Boston editor Halley, and managing editor Betsch. Copies of nine new titles were on display. The minutes of the meeting of February 14, 2014, were approved.

Under “News from the Press,” Wilcox reported that the search for a new director is in its final stages. Three very impressive finalists came to Amherst in the first two weeks of May. Each met with Wilcox for dinner, then met in the morning with Vice Chancellor Michael Malone, made a late morning public presentation on “the future of scholarly publishing,” had lunch with faculty members (including some members of the Press Committee), met with the Press staff at our offices in the afternoon, and then had an exit interview with the Search Committee. The Search Committee submitted a report to Malone soon after the campus visits. A new director should be in place by July. In the meantime, Wilcox was pleased to report that Clark Dougan has agreed to serve as Interim Director, beginning June 1.

Wilcox noted that there would be a new provost on campus as of July. Katherine Newman is a distinguished sociologist who received her Ph.D. at University of California Berkeley. She most recently served as Dean of Arts and Sciences at Johns Hopkins University. She has published 12 books of which two were from commercial publishers (Knopf and New Press) and the rest from Beacon Press and various university presses (California, Princeton, Harvard, Cambridge).

Wilcox reported that the Press is in good shape financially, and would end fiscal year 2014 on budget. He also noted that an agreement finally had been reached between Amazon and Hopkins Fulfillment Services, the Press’s distributor, settling a lengthy dispute over discounts. This will ensure that Press titles will be routinely stocked and available for purchase via Amazon in the future. In addition, Wilcox reported that the Press has identified and significantly reduced overstocked titles with the aim of eliminating newly assessed overstock fees imposed by Hopkins Fulfillment Services.

With the Committee Chair’s approval, the Press has agreed to distribute a new paperback edition of a book called _Apostle of Taste_, by David Schuyler, the Arthur and Katherine Shadik Professor of Humanities and American Studies at Franklin & Marshall College. It is a biography of Andrew Jackson Downing, an important nineteenth-century theorist and practitioner of American architecture and landscape design. The book was originally published in 1996 by Johns Hopkins University Press, received excellent reviews, and is now out of print. Robin Karson, Executive Director of the Library of American Landscape History (LALH), has proposed to republish the book under the imprint of LALH in a paperback edition with a new introduction by the author.

University of Massachusetts Press books continue to win awards:

* The first is another LALH co-publication—_Community by Design: The Olmsted Firm and the Development of Brookline, Massachusetts_, written by Keith N. Morgan, Elizabeth Hope Cushing, and Roger G. Reed. It has won the 2014 Ruth Emery Award from the Victorian Society in America. The award goes “to books that best advance an understanding or appreciation of the decorative arts or architecture of the 19th Century.”
* Peter Benes’s *Meetinghouses of Early New England* previously won the Kniffen Award of the Pioneer America Society and was named to *Choice Magazine’s* annual list of Outstanding Academic Titles. Now it has been named winner of the 2014 Vernacular Architecture Forum’s Abbott Lowell Cummings Prize—awarded annually to the book that “has made the most significant contribution to the study of vernacular architecture and cultural landscapes.”

* Sue Rainey’s *Creating a World on Paper: Harry Fenn’s Career in Art* has been named winner of the 2014 Ewell L. Newman Award of the American Historical Print Collectors Society. The award is given “to recognize and encourage outstanding publications enhancing appreciation of American prints that are 100 or more years old.”

* Daniel Gilbert, author of *Expanding the Strike Zone: Baseball in the Age of Free Agency*, is one of three winners of the Society for American Baseball Research’s 2014 SABR Award, which honors “outstanding research projects completed during the preceding calendar year which have significantly expanded our knowledge or understanding of baseball.”

* Michelle Coughlin’s *One Colonial Woman's World: The Life and Writings of Mehetabel Chandler Coit* won honorable mention for the 2014 Penny Kanner Prize of the Western Association of Women Historians, which recognizes outstanding books that “use a particular set of primary sources, such as a diary.”

* The Press learned recently that Bridget Cooks, author of *Exhibiting Blackness: African Americans and the American Museum*, was named the inaugural winner of the James A. Porter and David C. Driskell Book Award in African American Art History presented by the University of Maryland last year.

There are also two new winners of Juniper Prizes for Poetry and Fiction. The poetry winner is David Kutz-Marks of Dunmore, Pennsylvania, and the fiction winner is Sean Bernard of Laverne, California. The contest judges were faculty members in our Master of Fine Arts for Poets and Writers program - James Tate, Dara Wier, and James Haug for poetry, and Edie Mediev for fiction. All told, 928 manuscripts were submitted for the two competitions—up from 667 submitted the previous year. This increase is due largely to the fact that we can now accept submissions electronically. Promotion and publicity manager Karen Fisk has done a splendid job of overseeing and coordinating the Juniper competitions this year.

Wilcox reported on numerous major national conferences where the Press had a presence since the last meeting. The Press had a table at the Association of Writers and Writing Programs meeting in Seattle (Feb. 26 – March 1), staffed by Jim Hicks and Emily Wojcik of the *Massachusetts Review*, who shared space. History professor and Press series editor Marla Miller, assisted by graduate student Christopher Benning, represented the Press at the National Council on Public History meeting in Monterey, California (March 12 – 16). Editor Halley staffed the Press table at the annual meeting of the American Society for Environmental History in San Francisco (March 12 – 16). Senior editor Dougan attended the Organization of American Historians meeting in Atlanta (April 10 – 12), where the Press sponsored a reception to celebrate the Culture, Politics, and the Cold War series, which now includes more than 30 titles in print. At the reception, Press author Edwin Martini (*Invisible Enemies: The American War on Vietnam, 1975–2000; Agent Orange: History, Science, and the Politics of Uncertainty* – both in the series) was introduced as a new co-editor of the series, joining Christian Appy of the UMass History Department.
Later in May, Halley will staff a Press booth at the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians in Toronto (May 22 – 25). Halley and the new Press Director will attend the upcoming annual meeting of the Association of American University Presses in New Orleans (June 22-24), where Halley will join the Board as a Member-at-Large, serving a three-year term.

Wilcox, Dougan, Halley, promotion manager Karen Fisk, and business manager Yvonne Crevier traveled to New York City for our sales conference on April 30 with the Columbia University Press sales representatives. Before the afternoon meeting, the Columbia University Press sales staff graciously hosted a lunch in celebration of Wilcox’s retirement.

Wilcox noted that Halley will take over duties as Secretary of the Press Committee. In addition, the Committee will welcome new members in the fall: Assistant Professor Samuel Redman and Professor Joel Wolfe, both from the History Department, and Assistant Professor Albert Lloret from the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. James Kelly has graciously consented to serve another term.

Wilcox also noted what a pleasure it has been to work with this committee over the years, saying, “I think the Committee has demonstrated again and again the value of the peer review system, and it has been crucial to the Press’s success through good times and hard times. So thank you for your service and your continuing support of the Press.”

The Committee then turned to the nine manuscripts presented for consideration, taking them in alphabetical order by author. All were approved, some with specific stipulations for revision. As always, the Press staff took extensive notes on the discussion, which would later be shared anonymously with the authors of the manuscripts under review.

First on the agenda was a manuscript titled Audre Lorde’s Transnational Legacies, edited by Stella Bolaki and Sabine Broeck, which came to us with a recommendation from Press author and UMass Professor of German Sara Lennox (Cemetery of the Murdered Daughters: Feminism, History, and Ingeborg Bachmann). This collection places Lorde’s work, both her writing and activism, into an international context, with contributions from scholars from around the world. One committee member was pleased to see mention of the collection’s coherence in the reports, and the editors’ commitment to having chapters “speak to each other.”

Next up was Storytelling and Science: Rewriting Oppenheimer in the Nuclear Age by David K. Hecht, presented as a candidate for the Science/Technology/Culture Series. This project focuses on renowned physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, showing how the story of “the father of the atomic bomb” has been repeatedly retold over the years in the service of multiple ends, and analyzing what these changing narratives tell us about American cultural perceptions of scientists and science. The Committee discussed potential audiences for this book, and speculated about its relevance to other current debates involving public perceptions of science (e.g., climate change and evolution). One committee member saw this project as solidly in the tradition of American studies in that it brings together materials from various fields.

Marilynn S. Johnson’s Boston’s New Immigrants would add to the Press’s recent books focused on Boston history (Vrabel, Finison). The narrative focuses in particular on immigrants coming to the city after the Immigration Act of 1965, which induced a flood of new immigrants that has not yet received much scholarly attention. The author sees similarities to earlier waves but also striking and important differences, in the diversity, in their movement within a global economy, and more. The Committee discussed the need for
a more descriptive title/subtitle. They debated the value of adding more personal testimony, as suggested by one reader, but in the end agreed that additional voices could be effectively inserted as epigraphs.

*Massachusetts and the Civil War: The Commonwealth and National Disunion*, edited by Matthew Mason, Kathryn P. Viens, and Conrad Edick Wright, grew out of a conference held at the Massachusetts Historical Society, where Wright is chief editor in residence and Viens is research coordinator. The volume editors worked closely with contributors to organize and edit the essays “with both quality and thematic coherence in mind,” and committee members commented favorably on the editors’ willingness to address concerns about the coverage of women and what one peer reviewer described as an implied “Massachusetts exceptionalism.” The Press has published several books in association with MHS over the years, including the highly regarded *Hope & Glory: Essays on the Legacy of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment* (2001) and Conrad Wright’s own *Revolutionary Generation: Harvard Men and the Consequences of Independence* (2005). Like those works, this one comes with a subvention.

The next project on the agenda, Gary Murrell’s “The Most Dangerous Communist in the United States”: *A Biography of Herbert Aptheker*, is the first full-length biography of the Marxist historian and political activist who served as literary executor of W.E.B. Du Bois. Aptheker had a longstanding relationship with the Press, having published five edited volumes of Du Bois’s correspondence and other writings under our imprint between 1973 and 1985. Both outside reviewers recommended publication, though one of them first needed to be assured that Herbert’s daughter Bettina had been consulted about the project, in light of the revelations of childhood sex abuse contained in her 2006 memoir, *Intimate Politics*. Bettina Aptheker—who has published two books of her own with the Press—has in fact encouraged Murrell’s biography from the outset, and she recently agreed to write an afterword explaining why. The Committee unanimously agreed that the Press should move forward with publication. One committee member noted that there could be interest in a Chinese translation, given Aptheker’s status as a well-known public figure in the PRC.

*Landscapes of Exclusion: State Parks and Jim Crow in the American South*, by William E. O’Brien, is a candidate for our series, Designing the American Park, edited by Professor Ethan Carr, which we co-publish with LALH. In this manuscript, O’Brien looks at park records to tell the story of segregation from the 1920s to the 1960s. One committee member saw this project as “fascinating and important to the field.” Another committee member agreed with a reader who pushed for more voices of African Americans who experienced this segregation, though few of those voices were preserved in official park records. The author could do further research in the archives of black publications of the time, such as the *Chicago Defender*. The project was approved with the understanding that Halley would pass along suggestions to the author.

Holly V. Scott, in *Younger Than That Now: The Politics of Age in the 1960s*, examines the concept of youthfulness as a cultural and political symbol in the 1960s and early 1970s. A candidate for the Culture, Politics, and the Cold War Series, this project was reviewed by series coeditors Christian Appy and Edwin Martini as well as two outside readers. The Committee discussed the reasons for the preoccupation with youth during ‘60s, with one committee member suggesting that the author could strengthen her argument by considering the impact of the postwar expansion of the American university system. One committee member felt the project was coming at the topic in an interesting way, and was surprised that a comparable study had not been done before. The manuscript was approved for publication, pending final revision in response to the advice of the peer reviewers and under the supervision of the series editors.
Next, the Committee considered Jean Trounstine’s *Boy With a Knife: A Story of Murder, Remorse, and the Fight for Justice*. Trounstine, who has written multiple books on prisons, focuses here on one young man’s story, out of New Bedford, Massachusetts. Trounstine uses his story, in which he murdered a fellow teenager, served time in prison, and eventually got out on parole, to illustrate the injustices in our criminal justice system when applied to minors. Committee members appreciated the author’s plans to address the issue of race in her revisions, as recommended by one reader.

The last project considered was *Forms of Association: Making Publics in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Paul Yachin, a candidate for the series Massachusetts Studies in Early Modern Culture, edited by Professor Arthur F. Kinney. This essay collection focuses on the work on Richard Helgerson, a scholar and major participant in a series of annual meetings that were part of an initiative called Making Publics: Media, Markets, and Association in Early Modern Europe (MaPs). The MaPs project brought together an interdisciplinary team of researchers to investigate the creation of “publics” – voluntary forms of association built on the shared interests, tastes, and desires of individuals – in Europe from 1500 to 1700. These essays consider both Helgerson’s writings and questions surrounding Renaissance public-making. One committee member wondered if the volume would be improved were Yachin to share the chapters with all the contributors. The project comes with a subvention from McGill University, where the editor is Tomlinson Professor of Shakespeare Studies and Director of the Institute for the Public Life of Arts and Ideas.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m. No date was set for the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Halley
Secretary

cc: Faculty Senate office