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Library Publishing Is Special: Selection and Eligibility in Library Publishing

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Selection and Eligibility in Library Publishing

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Library publishing is ... special.
Traditional publishing is based on ownership, commerce, paid exchanges, and scholarship as a commodity
A Toddler's Rules of Possession

1. If I like it, it's mine.
2. If it's in my hand, it's mine.
3. If I can take it from you, it's mine.
4. If I had it a little while ago, it's mine.
5. If it's mine, it must NEVER appear to be yours in any way.
6. If I'm doing or building something, all the pieces are mine.
7. If it looks just like mine, it is mine.
8. If I saw it first, it's mine.
9. If you are playing with something and you put it down, it automatically becomes mine.
10. If it's broken, it's yours.

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Libraries are based on a service model of sharing resources & free exchange

I believe library publishing should be based on those values.

Selection and Eligibility in Library Publishing
We should not adopt the values of the system that has been exploiting us.

Library publishing should not duplicate or emulate traditional publishing.
What do university presses really think of library publishing?*

- “... no perceivable quality control, no revenues”
- “Libraries are not generally equipped to publish in a market-driven economy.”
- “Libraries ... are rarely suited to engage in ... editing, design, and printing.”
- “If library wants to publish, [it] should do so through the press.

“most libraries have done very little research on how exactly scholars and students are using materials.”

“[In] our library’s digital publishing group there is simply no knowledge of publishing. It’s one thing to create content or even package it. That doesn’t mean you’re publishing.”

“The danger is that the library might want to take us over, since they are very aware that some presses are now reporting to libraries!”
Advice to libraries:

Do not take over the press !!!

Selection and Eligibility in Library Publishing
• Condescension

• Disdain

• Outright antagonism

Why would we want to adopt those attitudes towards ourselves?
What did the libraries do that was so terrible?

1. Took in survivors from the university presses that went under.

2. Kept scholarly presses afloat for 30 years by buying monographs that nobody wanted to read or check out.
What publishers know about the future of publishing:

... and after I acquire all the other publishers they’ll have to deal with me on my terms...

Dunno. I’m just a penguin.
The future is wide open.

Nobody has the answers.
We are not gatekeepers.

Our mission is dissemination.
Libraries publishing ...
Publishers publishing ...

1. high rejection rates
2. surrender of intellectual property
3. long production schedules
4. high cost of products
5. limited dissemination
We started our imprint (Zea Books) because we encountered projects that:

1. needed to be published, and
2. were being left out by “regular” publishing system.
Our Mission

Provide a publishing outlet for scholarly work that does not fit other available publication models.

• too long
• too short
• too esoteric
• too expensive
• too complicated
• too strange
Authors are ... 

Scholars who are either 

• affiliated with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln or

• working in research areas of significant interest at UNL

Q: What is not of significant interest at Nebraska? 
A: Texas football
Zea Selection Policy

• **Does not** require formal peer review

• **Does** seek an opinion from knowledgeable expert (on campus, if possible).
Ornithology

Selection and Eligibility in Library Publishing
Parasitology

The Fish Doctor
Autobiography of a World Fish Parasitologist
Glenn L. Hoffman

Reported Incidences of Parasitic Infections in Marine Mammals from 1892 to 1978
John R. Felix

Estudios científicos en el estado de Hidalgo y zonas aledañas
Volumen II
Holocaust

La grand misère

Great Misery
Maisie Renault
translated by Jeanne Armstrong

Leon Malmed

We survived
... at last I speak
Music History

Musical Mechanics for the Organist

Part I

by Jacob Adlung

edited for publication by Johann Lorenz Albrecht

with commentary by Johann Friedrich Agricola

English translation by Quentin Faulkner

Syntagma Musicum II
De Organographia

Parts III - V, with Index

Translated and edited by Quentin Faulkner
Early American Texts

OBSERVATIONS
As well Historical as Theological, upon the NATURE, the NUMBER, and the OPERATIONS of the
DEVILS.

I. Some Accounts of the Grievous Molestation, by DE- MONS and WITCHCRAFTS, which have lately annoy’d the Country, and the Trials of some eminent Malefactors Executed upon occasion thereof, with several Remarkable Carnations therein occurring.
II. Some Counsels, Directing a due Improvement of the ter- rible things, lately done, by the Unusual & Amazing 
Rage of EVIL SPIRITS, in Our Neighborhood; & the methods to prevent the Wrong which those Evil 
Angels may intend against all sorts of people among us, especially in Accusations of the Innocent.
III. Some Conjectures upon the great EVENTS, likely to befal, the WORLD in General, and NEW-ENGLAND in Particular, as also upon the Advances of the TIME, when we shall see BETTER DAYS.
IV. A short Narrative of a late Outrage committed by a knot of WITCHES in Scowhald, very much Resem- 
bling, and so far Explaining, That under which our parts 
of America have laboured!
V. THE DEVIL DISCOVERED: In a Brief Discourse 
upon the TEMPTATIONS, which are the more Ordinary 
Devices of the Wicked One.

by Cotton Mather.

Edited, with an Introduction, by Reiner Smolinski

De bestiis marinis
or,
The Beasts of the Sea

by

Georg Wilhelm Steller

THE CONSTITUTIONS
OF THE FREE-MASONS.
CONTAINING THE
Hillary, Charges, Regulations, &c. of that most 
Ancient and Right Worshipful FRATERNITY. 
For the Use of the LODGES.

by James Anderson,
as edited and published by Benjamin Franklin, 1734.
Art History

Media Revolution
Early Prints from the Sheldon Museum of Art

Society and Style
Prints from the Sheldon Museum of Art

Selection and Eligibility in Library Publishing
Women’s Studies

Remarkable Russian Women in Pictures, Prose and Poetry

Marcelline Hutton

Selection and Eligibility in Library Publishing
Look to

1. Your own needs
2. Your own resources
3. Your own opportunities
Maintain your autonomy

• **Control costs:**
  Nothing attracts supervision as fast as funding.

• **Start small and build up:**
  Much easier to build up than to scale down.
Know your author

You will not have the protective layers of interference that traditional publishers can rely on.
But this is a good thing.
Look for “shovel-ready”

Beware of “Winnie-the-Pooh” projects that get stuck half-way out.
My criteria:

Eligibility:
1. Scholarly (or of interest to scholars)
2. Ready to publish

[3. Not suitable for univ. press]

Selection:
1. Everything
What is needed most:

A comprehensive shared delivery network—Your publications automatically go into our catalog (and ours into yours) upon publication.
My time is up.

Thank you.
Zea Books:
http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/zea/

email:
proyster@unl.edu