

ENDNOTE

1. Toor's article, "The Book Editor: Midwife, Handmaiden, Groupie," was published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* on 13 June 1997. As of 28 March 2012 it could still be accessed online at the *Chronicle's* Web site, albeit only by subscribers. Toor has provided access to the article through her own Web site at [www.racheltoor.com/BookEditor.html](http://www.racheltoor.com/BookEditor.html)

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**The Business of Publishing**

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IN-HOUSE CONCERNS

It is a truth universally acknowledged that, in the end, publishing is venture capitalism. Apologies to Jane Austen (and to venture capitalists), but beneath the agendas and goals of every publisher lies a basic business model: for a book to be published, funding must be available. Behind the publisher's concerns about whether the book will find a large enough readership (often the main goal for the trade publisher) and whether it will contribute to its scholarly discipline (an additional and very important concern for an academic press) looms the question of how to pay for production and related expenses.

There are a number of ingredients that go into making a book: the paper, jacket, and binding material; the page and jacket designers; the professional copyeditor and professional proofreader (if your publisher commissions them, and you hope they do). All of these outside suppliers must be paid. Payment of the firm's in-house employees must also factor into the equation: the acquisitions (or commissioning) editor, the marketing and sales teams, and the customer service staff must all earn a living. Even an e-book requires outside professional work that includes copyediting, proofing the text, and digital coding, and sometimes intermediaries are needed to pass the digital material from the publisher to the e-book platform (Kindle, etc.). Such expenses from outside suppliers can be considerable and are usually paid for by the publisher before the book comes into stock. In other words, these expenses are put forward in advance, and the book pays them back through sales.

There is also, of course, the issue of the book's topic: Is it a good fit with the publisher's list(s) or its general scholarly orientation? Acquisitions editors usually ask themselves whether a book will fit their current list(s), but they may also consider whether or not the book helps develop that list in a desired direction. Also of great importance to the academic publisher is whether a title or a group of titles will contribute to the field and help the discipline grow and stretch into new areas of investigation. Consider, for example, a monograph that focuses on only one play, on one geographical or cultural region, or on a very narrow time frame. If such a study presents a useful argument but only offers evidence from very closely focused material, it cannot interrogate and confirm the argument's conclusions in a

way that will be more broadly applicable to the disciplines of theatre and performance studies. This kind of close analysis may work for a journal article, or for a specialist publisher, but will rarely be comprehensive enough for a book-length monograph at a larger scholarly press, and editors will often suggest to authors of such texts that additional examples be included and the examination widened.

#### ON THE CONFERENCE CIRCUIT

Because a finished book is an object that requires careful handling, storing, and shipping, publishers are cautious when organizing conference exhibitions. Authors (and readers) need to know that there are financial implications involved with shipping and displaying books, and all these factors must be considered as a publisher decides which events to attend and how many books to bring to those events. If books are damaged during shipping and handling to and from a conference, they cannot be sold later and must be destroyed; this too must be factored into any decision to attend and display titles.

That said, publishers and their editorial teams don't just attend conferences to sell books; they also want to know that a conference's participants are interested in their titles and pleased that they are there. Often we know which conferences are important in our field and should be attended each year, but we also rely on our authors to let us know about important new events and on attendees to let us know our presence matters to them. A conference book exhibit offers a wonderful space for editors to see authors they know and to meet new people, to hear new book ideas, to discuss the state of the field, and, frankly, just to have a good chat. So at your next conference, don't be shy: please do visit our displays, meet with editors, and see what's new. Even if you don't buy, it's very useful for us to make contact, and that contact makes it worth the effort to bring our books and products to the conference.

For an academic publisher it is not a matter of making a profit, but if each book can pay its own way, the firm will remain healthy and able to publish and contribute further to our shared discipline. Ours is a delicate balance between funding and publishing: working together, publisher and author can create and nurture a strong balance among the needs of the finished book, the needs of its market, and the needs of our readership.

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**New Roles for Scholarly Publishers: "Theater Historiography," the Web Site**  
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#### THE STORY OF THEATER HISTORIOGRAPHY

The launch of the Web site "Theater Historiography" by the University of Michigan Press in 2011 reflects what we see as the changing role of the university