

The Academic Author

For Creators of Academic Intellectual Property

1999:7

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Pearson sells S&S titles

John Wiley & Sons has been chosen to purchase all but one of the 55 titles that federal anti-trust investigators said had to be sold before the Pearson-Simon & Schuster deal could be finalized. The purchase price: \$58 million.

The remaining title, *The Human Mosaic: A Thematic Introduction to Cultural Geography*, by Terry Jordan-Bychkov and Mona Domosh, published by Pearson's Addison-Wesley, is still up for sale. U.S. anti-trust investigator John Poole said although the government felt that under the stipulations of the Justice Department's decree Wiley would be an effective competitor for 54 of the titles, the remaining title would have competed with another title Wiley already had.

Wiley spokesperson Susan Spilka said author relations were a high priority. All authors were notified of the sale by letter shortly after the sale was finalized. The letter informed each author of the name of their new editor and other essential information specific to each author.

"We are excited about the acquisition and plan to give it our full effort," said Spilka. "We are fully behind every title in this acquisition and are very excited to begin working with these authors. We feel the titles are a good fit with our existing programs and we intend to give them our full editorial and marketing attention."

Spilka said while Wiley is smaller in terms of overall size, in each of the 16 core college disciplines it publishes in, the company is one of the market leaders. "Because of our size, we can give individual attention that is sometimes not available in larger companies," she said.

Digest from a complete article at taa.winona.msus.edu/TAA/ARTICLES/99/05may/0517wiley.html

TAA National Convention Park City, Utah, June 24-26, 1999

TAA's 1999 convention will be held in Park City, Utah at the Shadow Ridge Resort June 24-26.

The resort is 45 minutes from the Salt Lake City Airport by ground shuttle.

NOTABLE AUTHOR: THOMAS MERTENS

Still fresh through 11 editions

By Kim Pawlak

Although most genetics laboratory manuals don't last beyond one or two revisions, Thomas Mertens and R.L. Hammersmith's *Genetics: Laboratory Investigations*, entered its eleventh edition in 1998. "Most lab manuals don't last for two reasons: They aren't as lucrative for the author as a textbook might be, and most aren't instructor or student-friendly," Mertens said. "Most authors write books for themselves, not a wider audience. We wrote the book so other people could use it."

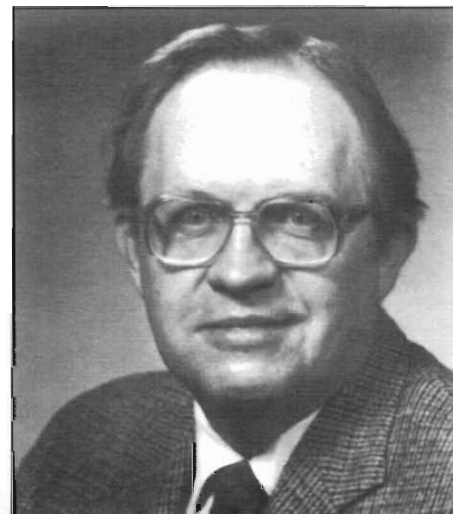
Mertens took over writing the lab manual from Elden Gardner for the fifth edition in 1970. Mertens, who retired from Ball State University in 1993, had used Gardner's lab manual in his classes for a year, but found that it needed updating and expanding. He wrote Gardner with some suggestions for updating the book and was asked to work on the next revision. "We met to discuss the book and after three or four days he turned it over to me," Mertens said. Gardner coauthored the fifth, sixth and seventh editions. By the eighth edition, in 1985, R.L. Hammersmith had joined the project. By the ninth edition, Gardner was no longer involved. Mertens and Hammersmith took over.

In 1998, it won a TAA McGuffey Award for longevity. "Winning the McGuffey was rewarding for both of us; to know people saw the value in what we were doing," Mertens said. "We also enjoyed seeing the evidence that the university was pleased we had received the award. It's funny, when the first edition of the book was published, I had just completed my undergraduate work. Hammersmith was only five years old."

TAA judges called the book "comprehensive and up-to-date." Another said: "This lab manual includes 26 exercises, mainly classical experiments that never become obsolete, but also a few involving modern molecular techniques. Each investigation is presented concisely and clearly." The Texty winning edition has more molecular genetics, new lab techniques and more illustrations.

"It's vital to keep up-to-date with current developments," he said. "I enjoy working with Bob, (Hammersmith). It keeps me current with what's going on in the field. It's important to strike a balance between basic, classical things and current, cutting edge things. Bob has helped me do that, and I think I did the same thing for Gardner."

Mertens said by bringing in co-authors, you



Genetics author Thomas Mertens took his lab manual to eleven editions, winning the TAA McGuffey Award for longevity in 1998.

create a book with longevity:

"Coauthors bring in new ideas. They're current on new developments in the field. That's important, especially in genetics, which is a rapidly growing field."

Mertens said he got started writing textbooks because he wanted to improve his teaching. He co-authored his first book, *Human Genetics*, after being asked by Merrill Publishing to review it. "I reviewed it and made suggestions, and Merrill said 'why don't you just do them, become a coauthor' and so I did," he said. When Merrill was sold to another publisher, though, he said, it got lost in the merger.

"What I enjoy most about writing is getting something I can use," he said. "I like to see it work in the classroom, see how students react to it and learn from it and how that makes my teaching results more effective."

Now retired, Mertens said he "enjoys taking it a little easier." At 63, he figures he'll be handing over *Genetics* to a new coauthor soon.

He and his wife Bea enjoy traveling. They have two children.

Digested from a complete article at www.TAA.winona.msus.edu/taa/NOTABLE/mertens.html

Presses: Market for scholarly books shrinking

Time, economic pressure and a smaller audience in some markets have led many scholarly publishers to seek smaller manuscripts from authors. Walter Lippincott, director of Princeton University Press, explains that the market for scholarly books is becoming smaller and smaller. "The shrinking of scholarly books is nothing new," Lippincott said. "Big manuscripts have always been a problem." Big books cost more to produce.

If a book is to be big, said Lippincott, it has to have a high price with a large market. The size of the book, he said, depends on the size of the market, the type of book it is and what discipline the subject is. "Some disciplines are more price sensitive than others," he said. He considers a small book 100,000 words or less: "Once a book goes over 120,000 words, it's not so small. If a book is very large, it makes you think more than once about accepting it."

History author Steve Ross, whose book, *Working Class Hollywood: Silent Film and the Shaping of Class in America*, was published by Princeton in 1998, said he was given a word limit when he signed the contract for the book. However, he said,

few academics translate words into pages: "You write as many words as it takes to do the job right." When he sent in the final manuscript, the production department estimated that it would run in excess of the agreed contract. He was told to cut the manuscript by about 100 pages. The reason, said Ross: The cost of paper has risen so dramatically that extra pages add a great deal of expense to production, especially if a book is slotted for a trade market. "I managed to cut around 60 to 70 pages," he said. "This was still not enough. I was told that my contract called for a book of about 384 pages." In order to publish it at the price of \$29.95, Ross agreed to take a lesser royalty.

"I admit, I was initially miffed about having to cut my manuscript," Ross said. "However, looking at the book now, I think cutting forced me to sharpen my arguments and reduce material that while interesting, was not essential. In my case, a shorter book made for a better book."

European studies author Tony Judt said the length of his 200-page book, *The Burden of Responsibility: Blum, Camus, Aron and the French Twentieth Century*, published by Chicago University Press, was his choice, not that of the publisher. "I've never been asked

to shorten a book, though, to be fair, I've never written one that came in at over 380 pages," Judt said. "I'm agnostic at length — it depends on the subject, material, etc. — but on the whole, shorter books are often better, if only because the capacity to write briefly and succinctly often corresponds to the ability to think clearly and to the point." Theodore Ziolkowski, author of a 217-page book, *The View From the Tower: Origins Of An Antimodernist Image*, published by Princeton University Press, said he has never felt the slightest pressure from his publishers regarding length. "The length is determined solely by the requirements of the subject," he said. "In the case of my *Tower* book, I wanted to deal with the poems they wrote about those towers. A longer book would have been pedantic. But when I'm dealing with a larger subject, I need more space — and more time to write."

taa.winona.msus.edu/TAA/ARTICLES/99/04apr/0420scholarlybooks.html

NEWS BRIEFS

Publishers mum. Book publishers remain mum about whether they are trying to wring more profits by squeezing author royalties for electronic spin-offs of books. Some former Simon & Schuster publishers have been sending letters to authors to sign addendums to accept flat 10 percent royalties on electronic rights, which are generally less than the rate in the core contract. But Allyn & Bacon won't comment about a general contract policy. Nor will McGraw-Hill, John Wiley and other publishers.

taa.winona.msus.edu/TAA/ARTICLES/99/04apr/0401erights.html

Authoring costs. Charles Lytle, director of the Biology Outreach Program at North Carolina State University, will report on the results of a survey into the costs and benefits of textbook authorship on the careers of college faculty, with his TAA convention presentation, "Career Implications of Authorship for College Faculty." Lytle surveyed textbook authors, college administrators and senior faculty members and found significant variations in the perceived value of

textbook authorship, a lack of uniformity in criteria for promotion and tenure, and in the operational definition of "scholarship" by the faculty promotion committees and college administrators.

Wolters purchase. A German-based global academic and information publisher, Wolters Kluwer, bought State Tax Institute, which produces tax newsletters from accountants and other professionals. The acquisition will be folded into Wolters' CCH business and tax law subsidiary. Terms were not announced.

For sale. The publisher Primedia confirmed it is selling some education products to raise cash, perhaps \$500 billion, to pare down its debt. On the dock: *Weekly Reader*, *Facts on File*, and *American Guidance Service*.

Interactive texts. Electronic and computer engineering technology professor Scott Tippens, of Southern Polytechnic University, will address effective strategies for creating and delivering interactive content and future directions for electronic publishing, with his TAA convention presentation, "Authoring and Publishing in the Electronic

Medium: Meeting the Expectations of Students and Faculty."

Busy People. TAA would like to know what you've been up to lately. Have you written a book, CD-ROM or journal article? Changed jobs? Retired? Self-published? Anything you'd like to pass on to your peers in the Busy TAA People or At The Keyboard sections of the on-line newsletter, we'd like to hear about. For At The Keyboard entries, please include name, field, university, COAUTHOR, (FIELD) UNIVERSITY, TITLE OF WORK, (PUBLISHER), YEAR. For Busy TAA People entries, please include name, field and university, COAUTHOR, (FIELD) UNIVERSITY, TITLE OF WORK, (PUBLISHER), YEAR. Send entries to kmpawlak@mwt.net or call Kim Pawlak at (608) 248-3107.

TAA server. Two Apple G3 computers were rigged as servers for the TAA on-line newsletter and installed in editor John Vivian's office at Winona State University. Computer whiz Mike Cavanagh, a mass media author at Winona State, installed the equipment. Cavanagh said TAA members will find a smooth transition. The old web address will work until next summer, he said. The new

address: taa.winona.msus.edu/TAA. Vivian said TAA decided to invest in its own servers after lapses from the previous service provider. "We'll save monthly service-provider fees and eventually recover the new equipment's cost." The computers, one a backup, ran \$3,000.

New journal. The Association of Literary Scholars and Critics, a splinter from the Modern Language Association, launched its new journal, *Literary Imagination*. The inaugural issue carries articles, poems and an essay on Homer and Virgil. Editor Sarah Spencer said she seeks creative pieces on classic and modern literature. The journal, she said, is distinctive from MLA's *PMLA*, which has shifted toward cultural studies.

2000 convention. The TAA Council, the governing board of TAA, will consider sites for the 2000 national convention at a June 24 meeting a day ahead of the Park City convention. Mike Sullivan, the association's site scout, was asked in January to develop a short list of sites. Ron Pynn, executive director, said the agenda also includes a report on the new TAA Council of Fellows.

Book report. The chief staff officer of the National Association of College Stores, Brian Cartier, said new forms of competition are surfacing in the book sales industry and the core products are undergoing change at a rapid pace. Cartier will look at the way new products and services such as electronic books and online bookstores will change the way bookstores do business in the new millennium with his TAA convention presentation, "Managing Permanent Whitewater."

Job offer. The University of Arkansas Press offered publishing consultant Lawrence Malley the job of director. Malley said he is considering the offer. He has been the editor in charge at the Duke University and University of Illinois Press.

End phantom-authoring. The executive director of TAA called on Pearson Education to hire knowledgeable authors with classroom experience to write its e-hi textbooks. It's the best solution to mounting criticism of the thousands of errors in Pearson e-hi textbooks. How did the errors occur? "Errors become more prevalent when in-house development teams mass write books," he said. "It is bad practice with evident bad results. When real authors write real books, there is less need of a fix." Pearson has promised to review all its texts for accuracy, but not adopted a policy against phantom authoring through development teams.

taa.winona.msus.edu/TAA/ARTICLES/99/05may/0505real.html

Author disappointed. Textbook author Fredric Martini said the U.S. Justice Department had its mind made up to approve the Pearson purchase of Simon & Schuster before inviting public comments. By the time comments were invited, Martini said, "it was probably too late to reverse the decision but not too late to amend it." Had more authors objected, he said, there might have been

Make a few calls, collect \$500 from TAA

For the second year of its campus workshop program, TAA conducted authoring sessions on five campuses with 140 enrollees. Over the two years, enrollment has totaled 350, said Ron Pynn, the association's executive director. The latest workshops were at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, the University of South Florida-Tampa, the University of North Alabama, California State University-Pomona, and the University of Tennessee.

"These workshops have proven very successful as our evaluation sheets demonstrate," Pynn said. "Faculty welcome the practical information on proposals contracts, and working with publishers."

Pynn said college-based members who organize campus authoring workshops can earn a \$500 honorarium: "Now is the time to start planning a TAA workshop on your

campus for 1999-2000," he said.

The association has developed four workshops: Authoring a Text or Professional Book, Negotiating a Contract, Writing a Successful Book Proposal and Self Publishing. Each is approximately three hours, so two workshops fit well into a day. Single sessions work in an afternoon and morning. "TAA members willing to contact their campus development office or academic affairs office and help arrange a workshop are provided a TAA honorarium of \$500. You make the contact, schedule a date, and TAA will take it from there. Help TAA grow into the new millenium, assist faculty on your campus, and collect \$500 as well. Call or e-mail TAA today to work out the details: 727-553-1195 or jtucker4@bayflash.stpt.usf.edu

enough pressure to amend the deal. As it is, the deal is done except for the fed-required sale of 55 titles by the combined companies. taa.winona.msus.edu/taa/ARTICLES/99/05may/0509martini.html

Think web. The National Institutes of Health is considering research projects it supports being posted on-line rather than in ink-on-paper scholarly journals. Harold Varmus, the institute's director, said millions of dollars could be saved because researchers would not need to include publication costs in their grant applications. The result could undermine the financial base of journals that cost both subscribers and contributors.

Contract talks. A mock contract negotiating session, role-played by an experienced attorney and a publisher, will be conducted at the TAA convention. Authoring and publishing attorney Michael Lennie will conduct the session. The publisher has not been announced.

Desktop how-to. Management author Patrick McKeown, of the University of Georgia, will provide a hands-on tutorial on desktop publishing with a concentration on Framemaker during a one-hour TAA convention workshop, "Desktop Publishing in General With the Use of Framemaker Specifically."

Book review. Professor Gene Murray, from Grambling State University, gave Frank Silverman's book, *Publishing for Tenure and Beyond*, published by Praeger in 1999, a thumbs up. "This book achieves its stated purpose of providing guidance for assistant professors and graduate students in the publication for tenure game. However, it includes much useful material for those who have achieved tenure but plan to continue playing the publication game," Murray said. taa.winona.msus.edu/taa/BOOKREVIEWS/99/silverman.html

Web locator. All Academic Press

scientific journal articles on the web are being coded for easy access by scholars, researchers and librarians, the company announced. The system uses a standard digital-object identifier with a finder developed by Academic Press.

Permissions help. Authoring and publishing lawyer Steve Gillen, from Frost and Jacobs, will show TAA convention participants how to recognize when they need permissions and when they don't. His presentation, "Rights and Permissions," will also give practical advice on how to negotiate with the publisher for support and reimbursement. Sample forms will be provided.

Writing advice. Ron Pynn, a political science writer, and Greg Vis, a senior editor for health and allied science at Jones & Bartlett, will conduct a three-hour evening workshop on writing a winning textbook proposal at the TAA convention. Pynn and Vis will discuss how to develop the idea, prepare, submit and review the proposal, and deal positively with negative responses. Participants who bring drafts of book proposals will receive a critique.

Havas purchase. French publisher Havas sold regional newspapers and advertising agencies in France to buy troubled Candant Software of California and strengthen its Havas Interactive Division. Eric Loeoys, Havas president, said the acquisition will increase the company's 28 percent share of the U.S. electronic educational market. The Havas strategy is to create global educational web portals.

iWadsworth acquisition. An independent social science publisher whose history goes back to 1909, Nelson-Hall, has been bought by Wadsworth Publishing. The deal includes Nelson titles in communication, criminal justice, history, political science, psychology, public administration and sociology. Wadsworth plans to upgrade the line with on-line supplements and more presentation tools for adopters. Terms were not announced. Meanwhile, Nelson-Hall continues with its trade titles.

Make plans for the 1999 TAA Convention

Title: "It's a Different World Out There: Authors and Publishing in the New Millennium"

here: Park City, Utah

When: June 24-26, 1999

Hotel: Shadow Ridge Resort Hotel and Conference Center.

Reservations: 1-800-451-3031

Rates: \$69-\$250

Rooms: Eleven different room options, from twin, king or queen hotel rooms to a one, two or three bedroom condominium. Most rooms offer a jetted tub and/or fireplace.

Airport: Fly into the Salt Lake City International Airport.

Car Rentals: All Resort Car Rentals 800-457-9457. Budget Rent A Car 435-645-7555.

Directions from airport: I-80 Eastbound to Exit 145. Six miles into Park City turn right at the third traffic light, and then a right onto Empire Avenue. Follow Empire Avenue around a semi-circle until you see Shadow Ridge on your right.

Amtrak Service: To Salt Lake City. Reservations: 800-872-7245.

To register for the TAA convention, call TAA headquarters at 727-553-1195. You can also register online at taa.winona.msus.edu/CONVENTIONS/1999.html#reg

[CONVENTIONS/1999.html#reg](http://taa.winona.msus.edu/CONVENTIONS/1999.html#reg)

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Visit TAA online for more valuable information on textbooks and academic authoring at taa.winona.msus.edu/taa Full versions of these stories, and more, are available online.

Convention workshop program

taa.winona.msus.edu/TAA/ARTICLES/99/02feb/0205proposals.html

Detailed convention program

taa.winona.msus.edu/TAA/CONVENTIONS/1999.html

To register online:

Convention registration:

taa.winona.msus.edu/TAA/CONVENTIONS/1999.html#reg

Hotel registration:

taa.winona.msus.edu/TAA/CONVENTIONS/1999hotel.html

Updated regularly, usually daily, TAA's online newsletter offers archival coverage of TAA business and news. If you don't have access to the Internet you can request a mailed or faxed printout of full stories and features of the online newsletter from TAA headquarters at (727) 553-1195.