

University presses perform services that are of inestimable value to the scholarly world — researchers, teachers, librarians, and the rest of the university community — but also to the broader world of readers, and ultimately to society itself. University presses do things that wouldn't otherwise get done.

"When you look at university publishing as a totality, and consider that we publish 10,000 books a year, you realize that this is an impressive cultural entity," says Douglas Armato, Director at the University of Minnesota Press. Armato emphasizes that not just university decision-makers but society and cultural leaders, too, need to know more about the increasingly dynamic role of university presses.

University presses are, of course, highly complex institutions. Any attempt to express every one of their contributions will necessarily prove reductive. However, the following list, from a document called *The Value of University Presses*, is an effort to convey in clear terms (sometimes concrete, sometimes more abstract) something of the role of university presses in contemporary culture—on campus and off.

The Value of University Presses

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University Presses and Society

- 1) University Presses make available to the broader public the full range and value of research generated by university faculty.
- 2) University Press books and journals present the basic research and analysis that is drawn upon by policymakers, opinion leaders, and authors of works for the general public.
- 3) University Presses contribute to the variety and diversity of cultural expression at a time of global mergers and consolidation in the media industry.
- 4) University Presses make common cause with libraries and other cultural institutions to promote engagement with ideas and sustain a literate culture.
- 5) University Presses help to preserve the distinctiveness of local cultures through publication of works on the states and regions where they are based.
- 6) University Presses give voice to minority cultures and perspectives through pioneering publication programs in ethnic, racial, and sexual studies.
- 7) University Presses bring the work of overseas scholars and writers to English-language audiences by commissioning and publishing works in translation.
- 8) University Presses rediscover and maintain the availability of works important to scholarship and culture through reprint programs.
- 9) University Presses encourage cultural expression by publishing works of fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction and books on contemporary art and photography.

University Presses and Scholarship

- 10) University Presses sponsor work in specialized and emerging areas of scholarship that do not have the broad levels of readership needed to attract commercial publishers.
- 11) University Presses, through the peer review process, test the validity and soundness of scholarship and thus maintain high standards for academic publication.
- 12) University Presses add value to scholarly work through rigorous editorial development; professional copyediting and design; and worldwide dissemination.
- 13) University Presses are based at a wide array of educational institutions and thus promote a diversity of scholarly perspectives.
- 14) University Presses encourage and refine the work of younger scholars through publication of the first books that establish credentials and develop authorial experience.
- 15) University Presses make the works of English-language scholars available worldwide by licensing translations to publishers in other languages.
- 16) University Presses commit resources to longterm scholarly editions and multivolume research projects, assuring publication for works with completion dates far in the future.
- 17) University Presses add to the richness of undergraduate and graduate education by publishing most of the non-textbook and supplementary material used by instructors.
- 18) University Presses collaborate with learned societies, scholarly associations, and librarians to explore how new technologies can benefit and advance scholarship.

University Presses in the University Community

- 19) University Presses extend the reach and influence of their parent institutions, making evident their commitment to knowledge and ideas.
- 20) University Presses demonstrate their parent institutions' support of research in areas such as the humanities and social sciences that rarely receive substantial Federal or corporate funding.
- 21) University Presses help connect the university to the surrounding community by publishing books of local interest and hosting events for local authors.
- 22) University Presses generate favorable publicity for their parent institutions through news coverage and book reviews, awards won, and exhibits at scholarly conferences.
- 23) University Press staff act as local experts for faculty and administrators, providing guidance on intellectual property, scholarly communication, and the publishing process.
- 24) University Presses provide advice and opportunities for students interested in pursuing careers in publishing.