

BOOKNOTES

THE OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WASHINGTON BOOK PUBLISHERS

DECEMBER 2007

www.washingtonbooks.org

The Washington Book Publishers, an informal, all volunteer group of editorial and publishing professionals in the Washington, D.C., area since 1976

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The Washington
Book Publishers 

WBP HOLIDAY PARTY and BOOK EXCHANGE!

Thursday, December 6, 2007, 6:30 PM
Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
One Woodrow Wilson Plaza
1300 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, D.C.

Directions noted on p. 2 and map available online at
www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=about.directions
Look for WBP “holiday helpers” to guide you into the Center.

The Washington Book Publishers cordially invites you kick off the holiday season at its festive 2007 Holiday Party and Book Exchange.

Bring yourself,
Bring a guest,
Bring a colleague,
AND, whatever you do,
BRING A BOOK.

JOIN THE PARTY

Plan now to attend this evening of refreshments, relaxation, book talk, and books. Members enter FREE and should bring one unused book each for the exchange. Nonmembers pay \$10 and one unused book each.

BRING A BOOK

Share a book from your press—or enlighten or amuse colleagues with a new or classic favorite! WBP’s first-ever party book exchange is your opportunity to show off one of your own books or just be a literary guide. Bring one UNUSED book of any binding, size, shape, or topic to the party. We’ll gift-bag the book on arrival. Once we’re in full swing, everyone will pick a book, open the bag, and keep or try to swap their “present.”

LET US KNOW YOU’LL BE THERE

So we know how much eggnog to concoct, be sure to RSVP your attendance to Christine Hauser, Hospitality Coordinator, at hospitality@washingtonbooks.org by NOVEMBER 30TH.

See you there!

—Laura C. Lawson
WBP President 2007–2008

Directions to the WBP Holiday Party, December 6, 6:30 PM

Woodrow Wilson International
Center for Scholars
Ronald Reagan Building and
International Trade Center
One Woodrow Wilson Plaza
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20004-3027
T 202/691-4000

To reach the Center by Metro: Take the blue or orange line to "Federal Triangle" station. At the top of the escalator at street level, cross Woodrow Wilson Plaza. Enter the Center's lobby at the left (southeast) corner of the Ronald Reagan Building. The entrance doors are around the corner behind the large bronze sculpture by Martin Puryear ("Bearing Witness").

From Pennsylvania Avenue at 13th Street: Walk down Woodrow Wilson Plaza, the north-south extension of 13th Street beside the Ronald Reagan Building. Enter the Center's lobby through the entrance at the far end of the plaza—the southeast corner of the building, around the corner, behind the large bronze sculpture.

From 14th Street: Go through the Ronald Reagan Building along the right (south) side of the atrium and continue past it. At the hall's end, turn left and enter the Woodrow Wilson Memorial. At its far end, turn right into the Center's lobby.

To reach the Center by car: Underground public parking is available underneath the Reagan Building at Pennsylvania Avenue and 13 1/2 Street. Take the elevator up to the ground floor and follow signs to the Woodrow Wilson Center. All vehicle occupants must have photo identification and the vehicle will be subject to a 100% inspection.

Due to heightened security, please allow extra time to enter the building. A photo I.D. is required for entry. Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held in the Joseph H. and Claire Flom Auditorium on the 6th floor of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. The Center is in the Ronald Reagan Building, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004-3027; tel. (202) 691-4000; fax (202) 691-4001.

Offshoring Opportunities and Challenges

The program year for WBP kicked off on September 13, 2007, with a wide-ranging panel discussion of the benefits and challenges of sending book work "offshore" to vendors and partners outside the U.S. Joe Brinley, former WBP president and Director of the Woodrow Wilson Center Press, moderated a panel that included both customers and providers of offshore printing, production, and editorial services. In addition to offering tips and lessons learned from their individual perspectives and experiences, the panel members responded to questions and requests for advice from program attendees.

Carolyn Gleason (Director, Smithsonian Books) has printed color books overseas for a number of years for different publishers, including publishers of coffee-table books. She advised that books on a short turnaround schedule or with reprints needed on a tight schedule would not be ideal candidates for printing overseas. For large print quantities and four-color printing, she recommends exploring and pricing out printing in Asia or elsewhere to compare costs with domestic printing. Smithsonian regularly builds in extra time for printing books overseas, including four weeks for transit of shipments and one week for customs. Carolyn mentioned that printers in China may have scheduling challenges around Chinese New Year (near end of January), so she advised learning as much as possible about the holidays and festivals in particular countries where your printers are located, whether it be India, Italy, or China. Smithsonian Books has realized significant savings from printing overseas, up to 50% or 100%.

Kate Mertes (sole proprietor, Mertes Editorial Services) provides indexing, information retrieval, and editorial expertise for complex projects in law and the humanities. She has worked for UK, Canadian, and European companies for many years, and most of her business is indexing. Kate described herself as the "offshoree," for example working with production editors based in Singapore who are providing publishing services to publishers offshoring from the UK or Canada. In deciding whether to send a project overseas for editorial services, Kate advised carefully considering the needs of the specific book and whether language challenges might complicate an already complex project in the humanities, for

example. She has built in a final review of the typeset index to reduce chances of language or formatting problems on offshoring projects.



Nancy Lammers (Publishing Officer, The World Bank) has led efforts at her large print and electronic publishing program to increase offshoring of production work during the past several years. Nancy provided a helpful list of "do's and don'ts" that included advice to thoroughly investigate the history and work practices of prospective offshoring partners; check references; begin with a small project when working with a new firm; make sure your instructions are clear (and free of American slang); and realize that cultural differences will influence working styles and communications. The World Bank produces 200 books and electronic products per year, and their business model is based on outsourcing. Most of the typesetting and XML creation on their products is now done offshore, but they are not yet offshoring abstracting, editorial work, or indexing. The World Bank has realized amazing savings on typesetting overseas. They have found it particularly beneficial to offshore typesetting of books in series formats that have basic design templates. Printing (except for digital printing) is still primarily contracted for in the U.S.

Byron Laws (VP of Sales, Aptara—formerly TechBooks) manages a team of sales executives at a publishing services organization that is primarily an offshoring company. His company provides content services, not printing. Byron advised that certain types of projects are more easily sent offshore and suggested carefully evaluating a project's needs before deciding to contract for offshore services. He mentioned scientific-technical-medical (STM) books and journals as projects that often go

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Continuing Ed for WBP Members: Printing

On Wednesday, October 17, WBP members experienced the first of a series of professional enrichment excursions aimed to provide greater exposure to the various components of book making. This inaugural field trip focused on printing, and brought a group of curious publishers to Kirby Lithographic Company, a specialized book printing firm located in Arlington, Virginia. After coffee and introductions, participants were taken on a tour of Kirby's facilities, where we learned all about the printing process, from start to finish. The most fascinating aspect was getting to see how much the printing industry has changed over the past few decades, evolving from a cumbersome, highly laborious process involving bulky cameras and huge sheets of film, to a process that now relies increasingly on digital book files and cutting-edge machinery—in Kirby's case, a high-speed laser etching device.

Technological innovations have enabled more efficient communication between publishers and printers, which in turn has led to a dramatic reduction in the turnaround time needed for printing. At Kirby's plant, we observed offset plates being laser etched directly from digital files. We also saw one-, two- and four-color presses working in simultaneous action. At the end of the tour, we were able to see how printed sheets are folded, gathered, and trimmed into a book block, and how the pages are then collated and the covers attached. Thanks to the knowledgeable staff at Kirby, and the insightful questions raised by our participants, the event was a huge success, allowing us all to walk away with a better understanding of how a finished book product actually comes to fruition.

—ERIN MOSELY

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smoothly offshored. One tip he offered was to ask for a sample edited chapter from a prospective partner. Aptara works with clients to decide whether domestic U.S. or offshore editors might be the best fit for a specific project. In general, the growth of call-center businesses in India has led to a more American-friendly editorial ability in that country over the past several years.

The panelists offered these additional tips and advice to publishers considering offshoring:

- Seek out companies that have U.S.-based customer service representatives. This arrangement keeps time zones and cross-cultural differences from seriously affecting a project. Your U.S. sales rep can help explain and mediate throughout the process.
- One-color printing will probably never be economical overseas. Likewise, book projects you need to have printed fast will not be good candidates for offshoring.
- If you publish fewer than 50 titles a year, consider fostering two offshore contacts to explore options for savings on either typesetting or printing. If you publish more than 50 titles per year, you would likely need three vendors.
- Increased competition for staff and cultural and economic conditions in India and other countries can lead to high turnover and possible disruptions in customer service. Ask what systems or programs a vendor has in place to ensure continuity in work flow and customer service in the event of staff departures.
- If you can spare the time to start up a process for offshoring, it can be worth the effort and investment. Be aware that your electronic and technical tools need to function flawlessly in order for offshoring to go smoothly and efficiently. For example, if your email system or FTP site do not function effectively 24/7, it will impact the quality of your work with offshore partners.
- As with most of our work and day-to-day lives, communication is key! Go through every step of the process with a potential offshore vendor to ask how long various production and printing steps typically take. Schedule regular calls, communicate via email and telephone, ask questions in several different ways to ensure clear understanding, and establish a single point of contact.

—CLAIRE REINBURG



WASHINGTON BOOK PUBLISHERS

Bookmark WBP.ORG!

The Washington Book Publishers website is posting up-to-date information to meet your needs! Please review the website periodically at www.washingtonbooks.org for information on upcoming events and recent job postings. If you have any information for posting or suggested improvements, please email Margot Ziperman at mziperman@cqpress.com.

Winners of the 2007 National Book Awards Announced

Fiction: Denis Johnson, *Tree of Smoke* (FSG)

Nonfiction: Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* (Doubleday)

Poetry: Robert Hass, *Time and Materials* (Ecco/HarperCollins)

Young People's Literature: Sherman Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (Little, Brown)

Finalists for fiction included:

Mischa Berlinski, *Fieldwork* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

Lydia Davis, *Varieties of Disturbance* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

Joshua Ferris, *Then We Came to the End* (Little, Brown & Company)

Jim Shepard, *Like You'd Understand, Anyway* (Alfred A. Knopf)

Finalists for nonfiction included:

Edwidge Danticat, *Brother, I'm Dying* (Alfred A. Knopf)

Christopher Hitchens, *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (Twelve/Hachette Book Group USA)

Woody Holton, *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution* (Hill and Wang/Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

Arnold Rampersad, *Ralph Ellison: A Biography* (Alfred A. Knopf)

SEE INSIDE FOR INFO ON THE
WBP HOLIDAY PARTY AND
BOOK EXCHANGE!

WBP 2008 BOOK DESIGN & EFFECTIVENESS AWARDS

We're looking for volunteers to do many different tasks:

- Writing and proofing entry form and other materials
- Setting up for judging
- Setting up for the award program
- Receiving entries
- and more...

Email: M35589@toadmail.com and place **WBP COMPETITION** in the subject line.
Please see the Awards Competition link for up-to-date information.



Literary Losses

8/23/07 — Grace Paley, 84, short-story writer and social activist. Her *Collected Stories*, published in 1994, was a finalist for both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book award. Her stories dealt with the “struggles of everyday women muddling through everyday lives.”

9/8/07 — Madeleine L'Engle, 88, author of books for both children and adults, whose output included childhood fables, religious meditations, and science fiction. She was most well-known

for the children's book *A Wrinkle in Time*, which won the Newbery Award in 1963.

11/10/07 — Norman Mailer, 84, American novelist, journalist, playwright, screenwriter, film director, innovator of creative nonfiction, and winner of both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award. His World War II novel *The Naked and the Dead* was considered by some as one of the best American wartime novels and named one of the “one hundred best novels in English language” by the Modern Library.

Job Bank

Job postings are run at no charge and are included at the discretion of the newsletter coordinator. Submissions should no more than 100 words. To submit a posting, please contact yamile.kahn@wilsoncenter.org, and cc mziperman@cqpress.com. More complete listings can be found at the WBP Web site at www.washingtonbooks.org.

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Variety of job openings through EEI Communications, www.eecom.com/jobs/