

Introduction

One hundred years ago, in November 1905, Princeton University Press began as a printer and publisher in Princeton, New Jersey. With the name Alumni Press, it was the printer of the *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, acquiring the name Princeton University Press in 1911. It published its first book in 1912¹ and then, over the subsequent decades, gradually expanded into its current form: a privately owned and controlled nonprofit company, with strong ties to Princeton University, publishing books under the supervision of an editorial board and a board of trustees. The Press has grown alongside Princeton University, which had been transformed from a college into a university in 1896, just a few years before the founding of the Press. As its charter states, the main purpose of Princeton University Press was and continues to be “the promotion of education and scholarship, and to serve the University.” Having shed its printing facilities entirely in 1993, the Press today functions solely as a publisher of books, issuing approximately 225 new titles a year. Transcending its humble beginnings one hundred years ago atop a drugstore in a small New Jersey town, the Press has acquired a justified reputation as one of the most prestigious and important scholarly publishers in the world.

In celebration of its one hundredth anniversary, the staff of the Press and I have chosen to present to our friends in the publishing and university community the small book that you hold in your hands, both as a tribute to our authors and as a commemoration of our publishing over the past century. We have chosen to focus rather closely on the books themselves, selecting one hundred of the nearly eight thousand we have published since that first one in 1912, to represent the history of our publishing program. With this approach to this important anniversary, we are underscoring the fact that, in the end, a publisher is the sum of the books it has published.

Immediately, I hasten to caution readers that the group of books celebrated here does not purport to be an exhaustive list of our

¹A new edition of John Witherspoon’s *Lectures on Moral Philosophy*. Witherspoon was the eighteenth-century president of Princeton University’s predecessor, the College of New Jersey.

“important” or even our “best” books. Prize-winners, million-sellers, and even some household names have been left off. For better or for worse, we have chosen the books that we believe best typify what has been most lasting, most defining, and most distinctive about our publishing, and what distinguishes our cumulative list from those of other publishers.

The selection of these one hundred titles was not simple or easy. We began by asking our current staff of approximately one hundred employees for nominations. From there we solicited the opinions of Princeton faculty as well as friends and former employees of the Press. We have excluded from our selection books that did not originate at Princeton University Press (that is, reprints, copublications, abridgments, and other such derivations, though we have chosen to include exemplary translations). We have not included books published in Bollingen Series before 1967, the year we acquired it in its (past and future) entirety from Paul Mellon and his Bollingen Foundation. (We have included an essay on Bollingen later in this volume.) Even with these self-imposed constraints, the resulting list numbered many more than one hundred, and we faced the difficult job of winnowing it down, trimming what is truly our embarrassment of riches. The list you have before you is the effort of human beings and their requisite limitations. In the end, the final decisions have been my own. What you have here is a heartfelt attempt to celebrate everything that Princeton University Press has done for one hundred years through a selection of representative examples. From this list one can understand the contours, the range, and the importance of Princeton’s publishing.

As I review the final list of books, a few things catch my eye. The first is the extraordinary collection of books published by the Press in the 1940s. Nearly 20 percent of our selections here are from this decade, more than any other decade—a fact all the more meaningful when you remember that at that time the Press was publishing on average only forty-five books a year. One clear reason for this concentration was the tragic effects of the buildup to World War II in Germany and the subsequent flight of so many intellectuals from German universities. The Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, another institution to which the Press owes a great deal, hired many of the best mathematical minds in the 1930s, including Albert Einstein, and from the cross-fertilization of this group and the Princeton University mathematics department grew Princeton’s extraordinarily fine math list. By gathering together some of the most important mathematicians in the world,

the math list has proved to be a solid foundation for our publishing program, spreading outward to plant deep and important roots in biology and in the social sciences as well, especially economics. It was and remains singular among American university presses.

The influence of European refugees on Princeton's list is not, however, limited to the math list. Fifteen percent of the authors included here fled, by choice or by necessity, from intolerable circumstances in the thirties or forties. From film critic Siegfried Kracauer to historians Ernst Kantorowicz and Hans Baron, from literary critic Erich Auerbach to art historians Erwin Panofsky and Richard Krautheimer, Princeton University Press, and American intellectual life generally, gained immeasurably from the devastation visited upon Europe by Nazism.

One other unavoidable observation, and a particularly pleasurable one for me, is the great variety of the books represented here. It is often thought that university presses publish only specialized monographs by individual scholars. Whereas the monograph has come to dominate university press publishing, many notable exceptions pepper this list, and they are among our most successful books. We find here a reference book, two books of poetry, anthologies of collected texts, a government report, high-level textbooks, course notes turned into books, field guides, transcripts of lectures, introductory essays, and even that reviled category, the collection of essays by multiple authors. These exceptions, I believe, prove the rule: that this variety of genres has always been part of Princeton's publishing program. Original scholarly work takes many forms, as do books, and this list does an excellent job of reminding us all of the diverse forms that scholarly work takes.

In addition to our presentation of each of the one hundred books, readers will find interspersed throughout the volume a number of essays by prominent writers whom Princeton University Press has the good fortune of enjoying as friends. We have chosen them for their expertise on subjects that have been of particular importance in our publishing program over time: Michael Wood on the humanities; Sylvia Nasar on economics; Anthony Grafton on history and politics; Daniel Kevles on Einstein, a figure of special importance to Princeton; and Robert May on math and science. We are very grateful to them for their continued interest in the Press and their generous contributions in helping us to celebrate our accomplishments. Their essays, read in conjunction with the entries we have provided for the individual titles, will help readers to see how the history of Princeton University Press

reflects much of the richness of intellectual life in the twentieth century, not just in America but in Europe as well.

During the nineteen years I have been director of the Press, three titles have had especial meaning for me. Robert Putnam's *Making Democracy Work* has had an even greater impact outside the academy than it had within it, more than any other professional title I have acquired in my almost forty years of involvement with the field of political science. *The History and Geography of Human Genes*, by Luca Cavalli-Sforza, Paolo Menozzi, and Alberto Piazza, is the only Princeton book to have won the R. R. Hawkins award from the American Association of American Publishers (for the best scholarly or professional book in a given year) since my arrival at the Press. And, finally, I had the privilege of bringing to its culmination a twelve-year publishing venture initiated by former Princeton editor Joanna Hitchcock in 1990, the *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*. Compiled by more than seventy scholars under the editorship of Richard Talbert, this volume, for me, captures the scholarly commitment and unremitting quality that I believe characterize the publishing accomplished by the Press in these one hundred years.

Book publishing is a long and complicated process, which involves many talented people. After the author's unstinting labors have resulted in a manuscript, it takes teams of people—editors, designers, publicists, salespeople, marketers, warehouse staff, all working together and not necessarily in perfect harmony—to bring a book to its intended audience. A great many people made these one hundred titles and Princeton University Press a success over the century. It has been a deep personal honor for me to inherit the responsibility of carrying on the work of the Press, work that I consider a great service to society, and I believe the Press's achievements are well represented in the books you will find described here. My greatest thanks are due to the two former Princeton students who founded the Press those one hundred short years ago, Whitney Darrow (class of 1903) and his patron and partner Charles Scribner (class of 1875).

Walter H. Lippincott, Jr. (class of 1960)

Princeton, New Jersey

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