

tive that those within the professional ranks accurately mirror the racial and ethnic composition of their communities.

Ethnic Diversity in Library and Information Science is a collection of seven essays written by ethnic minority authors active in the information professions. The book presents for its readers the struggles that people of color have endured in an effort to gain both an understanding of, and adequate representation in, the development and delivery of library services.

The Introduction, written by McCook, presents an overview of the efforts of the major ethnic groups to "develop services, identify important issues, foster leadership, and establish inclusive definitions of identity." She also describes programs (i.e., establishment of scholarships, ethnic caucuses, and grassroots leadership initiatives) implemented by the ALA to increase minority enrollment in library education and to improve minority recruitment for librarianship, with an eye toward the type of profession librarianship needs to become.

The contributing authors present the early history of library services to African Americans, Asian/Pacific Islander Americans, Chinese Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans. Each of the essays also looks at the achievements of minority librarians and the many contributions they have made to the profession. Another common topic is the history, role, and impact of professional associations such as ALA, the establishment and development of minority professional organizations (i.e., REFORMA, APALA, BCALA, CALA, etc.), and the pivotal role these organizations play in giving voice to our ethnically diverse heritage. These essays also present evidence of the changing demography of our nation and of the significant roles that libraries play with this evolving population through the provision of services and programs specifically geared toward ethnic minorities.

This book educates the reader about the key minority leaders in the profession and their contributions; many of these key figures have been excluded from the

mainstream research literature. Also emphasized is the creation of special institutes and conferences as a means of propelling issues related to ethnic diversity to the forefront. Each of the well-written chapters in *Ethnic Diversity in Library and Information Science* devotes considerable attention to the issues of recruitment and education for those future librarians who will serve in racially diverse communities.

Although these essays vary in the amount and kind of information presented, they all address issues of equity and equality of opportunity for ethnic Americans in the field of library and information science. Each concludes with a list of references that provides additional opportunity for exploration of the topic. For those individuals seeking to gain a better understanding of the contributions of minorities to the profession, this source will serve as a good starting point.

The lack of substantial numbers of minority librarians will only become more of a problem; librarians of color are essential to the development and implementation of services because their knowledge of ethnic language, culture, and values is crucial. As the demographics of the United States change and we experience the "browning" of America, ethnic diversity will remain an issue critical to the library profession. Librarians and library educators must respond to the needs of diverse populations by developing cultural competencies for all information workers and at all levels of the profession.—*Kelly C. Rhodes, Appalachian State University.*

Schiffrin, André. *The Business of Books: How International Conglomerates Took Over Publishing and Changed the Way We Read.* London, New York: Verso, 2001. 181p., \$23 (ISBN 1859847633).

In *The Business of Books*, publisher André Schiffrin describes how big business has "changed the way we read" by controlling what books get published, why they are published, how what gets published is distributed and marketed, and, in some

cases, even what gets written. An intimate, insider's account of the publishing industry over the past fifty-something years, this diary-sized gray tome—with cigar-chomping capitalist on the dust jacket leafing through his greenbacks while grinding a boot heel into the back of a reader struggling to save philosophy from under a wobbly table leg—is bound to infuriate anyone who values the life of the mind as it grapples with and shapes social life.

Schiffirin was born into the publishing world. His father, Russian-born Jacques Schiffirin, founded Edicions de la Pléiade in France shortly following World War One and began publishing what came to be a renown (and affordable) series of the world's classic literature. In 1936, Pléiade's success led to a merger with the firm Edicions Gallimard, and a few years later, at the grand age of six, André Schiffirin's life was redirected for the first time by economic expediency. On August 20, 1940, Gallimard sacked the elder Schiffirin, a Jew, under the pressures of Nazi occupation: "Though this act was committed under direct pressure of the German occupying forces, the Gallimard family understandably preferred to forget it, and for many years no mention was made of my father's role in bringing the Pléiade to Gallimard or of his subsequent departure . . . Gallimard continues to deny what happened during the war."

The stage is set. A highly regarded publishing house, playing an important role in the intellectual life of a country, succumbs to an anti-intellectual force bent on global domination, discredits and disowns a faithful member, abandons mission for money, and denies history—a pattern repeated too many times in the 181 pages of Schiffirin's book.

In 1941, the Schiffirin family arrived in New York City, which was rapidly becoming a haven for European exiles fleeing war and the Nazis. Jacques turned again to publishing for his livelihood and in 1942 founded Pantheon Books, which immediately began issuing works of the French Resistance. During the war years,

Pantheon published in French, German, and English, in translation, and in bilingual editions, the works of writers such as André Gide, Stefan George, Albert Camus, Herman Broch, and the first complete translation of the Grimm Brothers' fairy tales. Although Pantheon publications were avidly read by the exile community, the American reading public was not yet ready for these sometimes-demanding, new works and ideas. However, in the postwar years before his death in 1949, Jacques Schiffirin and his partner Kurt Wolff, introduced to American readers works that have left an indelible mark on U.S. culture.

Pantheon published the first books on Zen and Buddhism for an American audience, beginning with *Zen and the Art of Archery* by the German scholar Eugen Herrigel. Pantheon also published works by Simone de Beauvoir, André Malraux, Paul Valéry, Miguel Unamuno, and the first complete translation of the *I Ching*, and it established the Bollingen Series to issue the collected works of psychoanalyst C. G. Jung. "The very significant thing about Pantheon Books," wrote Helmut Lehmann-Haupt in his *The Book in America* "is the fact that it has not issued a single trivial or merely popular title."

Schiffirin describes this commitment to publishing books of value as a characteristic feature of many publishing firms in the first three-quarters of the twentieth century. He describes how new books would be selected for publication with popular ones often subsidizing short-runs of the more esoteric, and so long as the firm was in the black financially, nobody worried if it took twenty years to sell only 1,500 copies of a worthy title.

After his father's death in 1949, Schiffirin had no connection with Pantheon for twelve years, until 1961 when he was hired away from his college marketing job at New American Library by Wolff's successors to become the company's one full-time editor. Under his editorship, Pantheon's contributions to intellectual life and culture broadened

and deepened, helping to revitalize the American intellectual community after the stultifying years of McCarthyism.

Schiffirin looked to Europe for works to publish, introducing U.S. readers to social historian E. P. Thomson, literary theorist F. R. Leavis, feminists Juliet Mitchell and Shiela Rowbotham, philosopher Michel Foucault, novelist Marguerite Duras, sociologist Gunnar Myrdal, and filmmaker/scriptwriter Ingmar Bergman. He also sought out new American writers, and Pantheon's list came to include authors such as Eugene Genovese, Noam Chomsky, Studs Turkel, Joel Kovel, William Ryan, Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven, Ralph Nader and John Richardson, Eduardo Galeano, and John Dingus and Saul Landau.

One example of Pantheon's commitment to developing new audiences of readers was its publication of a school textbook in 1974 edited by James W. Loewen and Charles Sallis, *Mississippi: Conflict & Change*, which was rejected as too controversial by Random House's textbook division (by this time Pantheon was owned by Random House). It took a Supreme Court decision to force Mississippi school districts to permit the purchase of the book—the first nonracist textbook on Mississippi's history. Unfortunately, “the possibilities of enforcing the [Supreme Court's] decision were negligible. Our sales people discovered that when they called the Mississippi school

districts to pitch the book, the officials would simply hang up on them.” Fortunately, Loewen's subsequent book with Pantheon, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, and with Schiffirin's New Press, *Lies Across America*, met with considerable popular success.

In 1961, Schiffirin was hired as a direct result of a business deal, a deal, it is essential to note, *within* the publishing community. Random House had purchased Pantheon that year, along with Alred Knopf, and recognized that Pantheon needed a full-time editor. A few months after being hired, twenty-six-year-old Schiffirin was promoted to editorial director, in part because Random's owners feared losing credibility had they appeared to be closing down Pantheon after the older generation's retirement, and also because a show of support for Pantheon's young staff signaled “a renewal of Random's commitment to intellectual and cosmopolitan publishing.”

Pantheon thrived, but another business deal began the shift away from publishing good books to publishing profitable ones. In 1965, RCA bought Random House for its textbook division, which RCA believed would augment its new venture into the manufacture of “teaching machines.” However, Random's textbooks were weak and RCA's machines never caught on, so in 1980, Random was sold to the highest bidder—S.I. Newhouse, newspaper magnate and billionaire.

Throughout the late 1960s and 1970s, Pantheon made little profit, did not always contribute to Random's overhead, but always operated in the black. With RCA in charge of Random, every book, like every television set, had to pay for itself through contributions to overhead and profit margins. “These charges were not simply a percentage of the overall expenditures,” writes Schiffirin, “but also included non-existent services and inequitable percentages... For years I tried in vain to find out what these expenses were. It was only as I was about to leave [in 1990] that a friendly accountant confessed to me how exagger-

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ated the overbillings had been ... the warehouse charged more to ship [Pantheon] books than the books of other houses in the Random group ... I discovered that I had been billed over the years for a car, even though I do not drive."

Matters grew worse with the Newhouse takeover. Newhouse did not like Pantheon's books or its politics, but for a time Pantheon received protection from Random's CEO Bob Bernstein. In 1989, Newhouse fired Bernstein and brought in Alberto Vitale, an Italian banker with no interest in books except as sources of revenue. Along with a two-thirds cut in staff and publication list, Vitale demanded that Pantheon stop publishing "'so many books on the left' and instead publish more on the right."

A campaign, fueled by rumors, raged against Pantheon in 1990, leading eventually to Schiffrin's resignation, along with those of much of his staff. The news media, many owned by conglomerates themselves, assisted in the campaign to discredit Pantheon. "The line given to the *New York Times* and other papers was that publishing was too serious a business to be left to intellectuals ... [who] were not tough enough to meet the needs of the modern corporation, allowing all sorts of books that did not make money to be published."

Publishers, editors, and writers around the globe voiced support of Pantheon, but Vitale, playing hardball, went so far as to threaten to pull all future Random House advertising if *Publishers Weekly* continued to support Pantheon. Also at this time, about forty Random House editors signed what amounted to a loyalty oath, publicly stating "that there was no conflict between meeting the company's profit goals and the publication of good books." Random even withheld the pension funds owed Schiffrin for six months after his departure to keep him silent while it issued attacks against him personally and against Pantheon. Just as soon as he was gone, Schiffren's successor "announced in his opening statement that Pantheon would no longer publish political works."

Throughout his book, Schiffrin makes it clear that Pantheon's experience was not unique—the *New Yorker* magazine, Times Books, and the Book-of-the-Month Club are all cited as examples of the deleterious effects of corporate policies that prioritized profit over worthiness.

In two chapters, Schiffrin describes the multifaceted nature of censorship in today's publishing world. The picture is distressing. Every book must make a profit, so must every editor. So they look for books that will sell. And although the conglomerates will not tolerate a book that does not carry its own weight, they obligingly tolerate celebrity authors whose books fail to cover enormous advances. In 1997, for example, Newhouse wrote off \$80 million in unearned advances, and Random's profit for that year was a mere 0.1 percent, "a figure so low," writes Schiffren, "that many thought the *New York Times* had made a typographical error reporting it." HarperCollins, owned by media mogul Rupert Murdoch, wrote off \$270 million in unearned advances at about the same time.

Politics, too, enters the scene with Murdoch, for example, refusing to allow HarperCollins to publish a book by the former governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten, because it was critical of the Chinese government, which Murdoch did not want to rile in order to protect his lucrative cable television business there. Schiffren also writes about a 1996 *Publishers Weekly* survey of forty new books on politics, "all backing Gingrich and the right and just one dissenting title, which [Schiffrin's] New Press published." Even university presses are not left untouched by the corporate model of publishing for profit. Schiffrin found many university press directors reluctant "to speak for attribution" about the pressures they face.

Schiffrin looks to increased support for independent publishers as a counterforce to the dictates of the conglomerates. Citing Bowker, he notes the existence of 53,000 publishers in the United States, but adds that only twenty firms control 93 percent of annual sales, with another 2

percent controlled by 100-plus university presses, leaving the remaining 42,800-something publishers in control of the remaining 5 percent of sales. The final chapter describes The New Press, which he founded in 1993. He sees hope for the future of independent publishers in anti-trust suits against the media monopolies, in technology, in public subsidies, in the development of new reading audiences poorly served by the conglomerates, and in libraries making a commitment to provide users with "a far wider choice than is now available."

Schiffirin realizes that among all the new century's pressing problems, those of the publishing world seem small. "But," he warns, "if the domain of ideas is surrendered to those who want to make the most money, then the debate that is so essential for a functioning democracy

will not take place. To a large degree it is silence that has overtaken much of American intellectual life."

The Business of Books should be read by every librarian in the country and should inform our practice. Moreover, it should be read by every person who cares about the role that intellectual life plays within society. Big business is making a mockery of First Amendment guarantees of a free press by prioritizing profit over ideas. Multiple copies of *The Business of Books* should be purchased by every public and academic library in the country, with one copy displayed alongside Oprah's latest pick. No need to worry about shelf space, three copies of Schiffirin will displace only one of Steele or King.—*Elaine Harger, W. Haywood Burns School.*

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