



THE KENT STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS AT FIFTY

HISTORICAL NOTE

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS began publishing before it actually existed, a neat trick if ever there was one and a harbinger of the Press's ability to conjure much with very little. The first book to carry the imprint of what was to be Kent State University Press is *Another Athens Shall Arise* by Lucien Price. Commissioned by KSU's fifth president, George A. Bowman, it bears a publication year of 1956. It was followed in 1960 by Philip R. Shriver's *The Years of Youth: Kent State University, 1910-1960*.

Following a feasibility study initiated by Bowman's successor, President Robert I. White, and conducted by Professors Robert Hill and Martin K. Nurmi, the Kent State University Press was established formally in 1965. Under the direction of a professional publisher and an editorial board, its first publication was *Renaissance Humanism, 1300-1550* by Frederick B. Artz (1966).

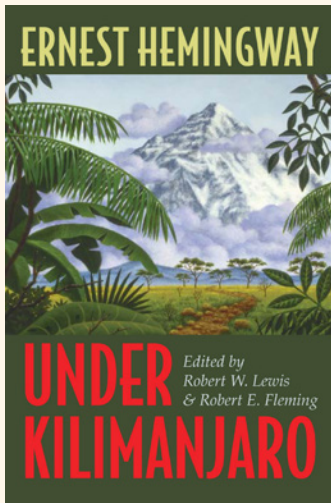
Since its founding the Press's mission has been "to advance knowledge through publishing." It carries out this mission by publishing groundbreaking humanities scholarship and singular books for non-specialists and distributing them throughout the world in print and electronic editions. Its publishing operation comprises five functional areas: administration, acquisitions, editorial, design/production, and marketing. Peer review and the University's imprint are governed by an editorial board of nine faculty and the director of the Press. Books for the general reader are published under the Black Squirrel Books™ imprint.



The first director of the Press was C. Howard Allen, who published mainly in University faculty strengths in literary criticism.

In 1972 Paul Rohmann became KSU Press's second director, having come to the Press as

Howard Allen (*left*), first director of the Press, with author Frederick B. Artz, *Renaissance Humanism, 1300-1550* (1966), and President White.



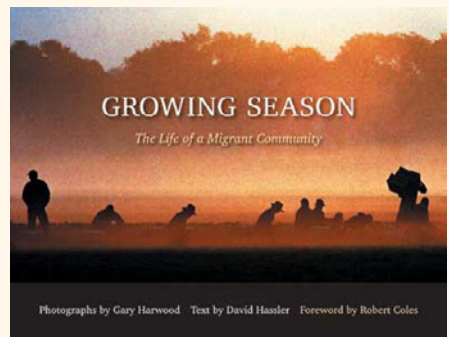
associate director in 1969 from the Antioch Press, where he was editor of *Writers Forum*. KSU Press continued to print and distribute the active backlist of books from Antioch Press for several years. Until his retirement in 1985, Rohmann expanded the Press's publishing program to include regional studies and ethnomusicology.

A professor of history and editor of the journal *Civil War History*, John T. Hubbell was the third director of the University Press. In 1985 the Press was publishing about twenty titles annually. Most were in the humanities, with an emphasis on literary studies and regional history, but also included an eclectic mix of titles in mathematics, music theory, business, and other topics. Under Hubbell the Press embarked on a period of growth and a change in

editorial direction to history, with a focus on the American Civil War and important regional studies, including critical editions of the papers of Salmon P. Chase and Robert A. Taft Jr. Hubbell launched several edited series including three published in partnership with KSU centers and institutes: the Wick Poetry series, the Diplomatic History series, and the Translation Studies series. By the time Hubbell retired in 2001, the Press had ten staff publishing about thirty new volumes annually with respected lists in U.S. history, literary studies, and books about Ohio and the Great Lakes region.

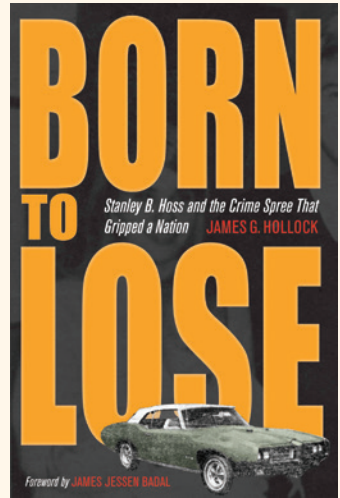
William Underwood is the current director of the University Press. He came to Kent State in 1989 as design and production manager from Syracuse University Press. Since becoming director in 2002, Underwood has launched fourteen edited series and taken on the Journal *Ohio History* when its publication by the Ohio Historical Society ceased after more than a century. Underwood has overseen the Press's evolution to a fully electronic publishing workflow and initiated the global availability of its books and journals in both electronic and print editions.

As of 2015, the Kent State University Press annually publishes thirty-five new volumes for scholars and general readers alike in a variety of subjects, including books about Ohio and the surrounding region, history, literary studies, sports, and true crime. Press books are available worldwide in English, and several titles have been published in translation in Japan, Italy, France, Switzerland, and Saudi Arabia.



Book series published by the Press in 2015 include:

- American Abolitionism and Antislavery
- Civil War History* Readers
- Civil War in the North
- The Civil War Era in the South
- Civil War Soldiers and Strategies
- Classic Sports
- Interpreting American History
- Literature & Medicine
- New Studies in U.S. Foreign Relations
- Reading Hemingway
- Sacred Landmarks
- Symposia on Democracy
- Teaching Hemingway
- Translation Studies
- True Crime History
- Wick Chapbook
- Wick First Book

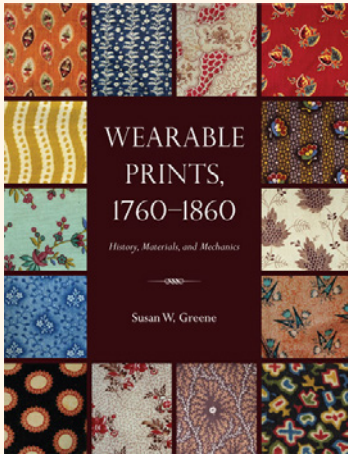


The Press published several journals during its first half century. These include *Civil War History*, *Explorations in Economic History*, *Explorations in Entrepreneurial History*, *Extrapolation*, *Kent State University Research Papers in Archaeology*, *Kirtlandia*, *Latin American Studies*, *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology*, *The New Ray Bradbury Review*, *Ohio History*, *The Serif*, and *Studies in American Jewish Literature*.

In its 50th year the Press publishes the journals *Civil War History* and *Ohio History*. Launched in 1955 at the University of Iowa, *Civil War History* moved to Kent State University Press in 1968 when editor John Hubbell joined KSU's Department of History. Hubbell edited the journal from 1965 until 2000 when the editorship passed to William Blair of Pennsylvania State University. In 2010 Lesley Gordon (University of Akron) became the journal's sixth editor, and 2016 will see Brian Craig Miller of Emporia State University assume the editorship.

Kent State University Press books, authors, and staff have received numerous awards and recognitions over the Press's first five decades. A few recent highlights follow:

- The Carter G. Woodson Award for *Growing Season: The Life of a Migrant Community* by Gary Harwood and David Hassler
- PROSE Award for *Wearable Prints, 1760–1860: History, Materials, and Mechanics* by Susan W. Greene



- The Costume Society of America's Millia Davenport Award for *Wearable Prints, 1760-1860: History, Materials, and Mechanics* by Susan W. Greene
- The Northern Ohio Live Prize for *Under Kilimanjaro* by Ernest Hemingway
- Independent Publisher Awards Gold Medal for *Born to Lose: Stanley B. Hoss and the Crime Spree That Grippped a Nation* by Jim Hollock.
- Foreword magazine Gold Awards/True Crime for *House of Horrors: The Shocking True Story of Anthony Sowell, the Cleveland Strangler* by Robert Sberna and *Nameless Indignities: Unraveling the Mystery of One of Illinois's Most Infamous Crimes* by Susan Elmore
- The Outdoor Writers of Ohio Outstanding Media Achievement Award for *Poachers Were My Prey: Eighteen Years as an Undercover Wildlife Officer* by R. T. Stewart and Chip Gross
- Center for Archival Collections Local History Publication Award-winner Independent Scholar Award for *Rust Belt Resistance: How a Small Community Took on Big Oil and Won* by Perry Bush
- First Place National Association for Interpretation Media Award for *Cuyahoga Valley National Park Handbook* by Carolyn Platt

As the Press begins its second half-century, it is positioned as an essential component of the scholarly communication ecosystem and a valued contributor to the cultural and intellectual essence of Ohio. KSU's twelfth president, Beverly Warren, has challenged the Kent State University community to "Be Bold." In accepting her challenge the University Press is proud to announce the launch of *Flash Points*, a new initiative designed to highlight for the intellectually curious the wonderful and innovative research happening at Kent State University. Written by professional journalists, *Flash Points* is a series of short digital books highlighting for all readers the trailblazing research being conducted at the Kent State University.



The Kent State University Press has been a full member of the Association of American University Presses since 1970.