

A-7 University of Texas Press Faculty Advisory Committee

During the 2017-2018 academic year, the University of Texas Press Faculty Advisory Committee met 11 times, including the summer; its final meeting will take place on Monday, 20 August 2018. Editors bring projects to the committee after a rigorous peer review process, and committee members review information about each one. The informational packets contain a summary of the book's content and the peer reviews, the full text of the peer reviews, and the responses from the authors. Following a brief presentation by an editor, the committee discusses the project, expresses concerns, offers suggestions, and votes to approve or reject. The committee almost always approves the projects, though approvals often come with suggestions to strengthen the book. We reviewed 60 projects at the first 11 meetings and expect to discuss 5 at the August meeting, for a total of 65. Altogether, the Press published 92 books this past year; another 10 were either distributed books or new in paper and did not require FAC review/approval.

Long a leader among university presses, UT Press enjoyed a banner year, winning 16 major prizes for its books. Among highlights include: the College Art Association's Avery Book Award for Harper Montgomery's *The Mobility of Modernism*; the American Agricultural Society's Wallace Award for Robert Wilcox's *Cattle of the Backlands*; the Latin American Studies Association's Best Book in the Humanities Award for Daniel Nemser's *Infrastructures of Race*; and the Middle East Studies Association Owen Book Award for Hanan Hammad's *Industrial Sexuality*. Added to these –and more—prestigious awards are the very high numbers of reviews and mentions of the press's books. These numbers are tracked by calendar year, and this year to date, the UT Press's recently published books received 512 reviews and mentions, compared with 239 last year. Among the most rewarding mentions came from Dwight Garner, *New York Times* book critic and longtime editor for the *New York Times Book Review*. After reading Jennifer Szalai's *NYT* review of Geoff Dyer's *The Street Philosophy of Garry Winogrand*, Garner wrote that “The University of Texas Press is becoming a (smart, flexible, unpredictable) powerhouse, a model academic press.”

(<https://twitter.com/DwightGarner/status/979342860330913793>)

This sort of public support from such a high-profile reviewer is the dream of any press director. The University of Texas Press is, indeed, a model academic press, one that brings great distinction to the larger university community. Despite significant cuts to its budget over the past several years, the Press continues to thrive, becoming a much talked about leader in the world of academic presses. It is certainly our hope that the Press receive the university support it needs to continue operating at the highest level.

Steven Hoelscher, Committee Chair