

Honoring faculty

Book plates to celebrate faculty achievements

by Lisa German and Karen Schmidt

Achievement of tenure and promotion in rank may constitute the single most significant event in the professional life of a faculty member in a college or university. It is a singular honor that represents the culmination of focused effort in teaching, research and service, and the recognition of promise as a scholar and educator.

It is, quite simply, the rite of passage into a community of scholarly privilege and responsibility to the academy.

For many faculty who achieve tenure and promotion in rank, the library is their laboratory. At a minimum, the library and its collections and services represent a record of intellectual achievement in all disciplines and an archive of all that has collectively been attained. For a significant number of faculty, the library is far more than a compilation of ideas and a catalyst to intellectual creativity.

With this in mind, the University of Illi-

nois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Library, under the leadership of University Librarian Paula Kaufman and with the support of the provost's office, initiated a unique program of honoring

faculty who attain the honor of tenure and/or promotion in rank at UIUC.

Beginning with the 2000 academic year, this program allows the newly tenured and/or promoted faculty member to choose a book for the UIUC Library collection,

and to have a bookplate placed in the book to commemorate each faculty member's achievement.

Once the names of faculty who have achieved tenure or who have been promoted in rank are known (generally in the spring), the provost and the university librarian jointly send a letter to these faculty members, alerting them to the book plating opportunity and inviting them to a reception in their honor in the fall of the current year. The provost's office provides the library with a list of newly

To Read or Not To Read: Answers To All Your Questions About Dyslexia

By Daphne M. Hurford

"Our son, Dale, has dyslexia. I selected this book in honor of him and to recognize the hard work he has done to learn to read."

Brent J. Heuser, Department of Nuclear, Plasma, and Radiological Engineering

Illustration 1. Sample of selection statement from faculty member.

About the authors

Lisa German is acquisitions librarian and Karen Schmidt is associate university librarian for collections at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, e-mail: lgerman@uiuc.edu and karens@uiuc.edu

The History of Deaf People: A Source Book

By Per Erikson

"I selected *The History of Deaf People* to commemorate my promotion to Associate Professor. I am the hearing daughter of deaf parents. I grew up in the deaf community. My goal is to raise the 'hearing world's' awareness of this culture and their (sign) language through my scholarship, my teaching, and my commitment to improving the education of deaf children living in the United States."

Jenny Singleton, Department of Educational Psychology

Illustration 2. Sample of selection statement from faculty member.

tenured or promoted faculty so that a follow-up letter can be sent from the acquisitions librarian and the associate university librarian for collections, laying out the procedures that will guide the faculty member in selecting a book for the collections.

Guidelines for choosing books

The general guidelines to the faculty include the following instructions:

- books that are already in the library collections may be selected for a book plate, providing they have not already been book-plated in honor of anyone else;
- books cannot be selected from the Rare Book and Special Collections Library (because of policies against changing the artifacts in this collection in any way, including the addition of a bookplate); and
- new books should cost less than \$100 and should be in print or readily available from an out-of-print source.

Faculty are encouraged to select titles that represent something meaningful to them, either professionally or personally. Suggestions include books that shaped their thinking, books that inspired them to achieve success, children's books that have held a special place in their lives, or books that they authored or co-authored.

Faculty are asked to fill out a brief form detailing information about themselves (name,

department, e-mail address) and information about the books they select (author, title, publisher, publication date). Additionally, faculty are asked to provide a short statement of why they chose the particular book.

At the first reception for the faculty, both the books and these statements were displayed for everyone to view. These statements proved to be thoughtful and inspiring, and reflected many different experiences and feelings about this pivotal moment in their lives.

Faculty are given about two months to make their selections known to the acquisitions librarian, who makes arrangements in her office to get all the items ordered or retrieved from the collection. The cost of new books is borne by the library. In the first year of this program, 63 faculty took part in this program. Thirty-one new titles were purchased for a total cost of \$1,980. Thirty-two faculty chose books already held in the library. There were only a few cases in which the books that were chosen had not

Paul, The Apostle of the Heart, Set Free

By F. F. Bruce

"The summer that I began my graduate study was one of particular stress. Packing up a family, renting our house and driving across country to the University of Southern California for one year was taking its toll on me. Shortly after arriving and beginning study, I discovered this book, and it's refreshing to my soul and mind. It is a story of a man who turns his life 180 degrees around in the opposite direction and runs a race that benefits his entire person for eternity."

Michael E. Ewald, School of Music

Illustration 3. Sample of selection statement from faculty member

yet been published. If the book chosen had not been published, a card with the title of the book was used as a placeholder at the reception.

Public recognition

In the first year of this program, the honored
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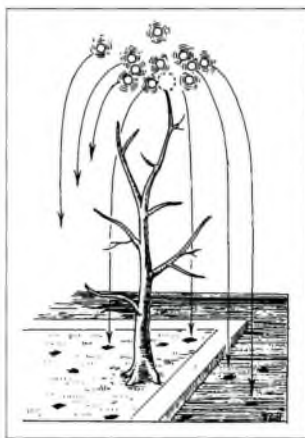
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series of catalogs of scientific anomalies, this volume covers odd atmospheric and marine lights. Included are aurora-like phenomena (auroral odors, transient sky brightenings, black auroras, and auroral displays correlated with thunderstorms, earthquakes, and meteors); ball lightning (rod-shaped ball lightning, materialization within enclosures, globes with spikes or diverging rays); diffuse electrical discharge phenomena (unusual St. Elmo's fire, earthquake lights, luminous aerial bubbles, and luminous patches on clouds); lightning anomalies (Crown



Neustadt, Germany, 1960s. Ball lightning hits a tree and fragments into many smaller balls. From William Corliss, *Remarkable Luminous Phenomena in Nature*.

flash, lightning figures, shadowgraphs, and neutron generation in lightning bolts); low-level meteor-like luminous phenomena; low-level and high-level nocturnal lights; and marine phosphorescent displays (marine light wheels, underwater lightning, moving and stationary phosphorescent bands, and milky sea). Each anomaly is rated for the quality of data supporting it and the degree to which it can or cannot be explained by current scientific laws. \$24.95.

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faculty and their families, as well as their deans and department heads, attended the reception. The reception was held on a Friday from 4:30–6:30, and included wine and hors d'oeuvres in the Grainger Engineering Library, an elegant campus setting.

The provost and the university librarian gave brief presentations, and the remaining time was spent reviewing the selections and talking to faculty about their choices, their academic careers, and their aspirations.

This proved to be the only event on campus where the promotion and/or tenure of all faculty members was recognized in a public way. Both the library and the provost's office received an overwhelming number of positive comments about the process.

The books, statements, and photographs of many of the faculty were displayed in bookcases for a month in the main hallway of the library.

The cards with the statements were then placed in a bound volume into which succeeding years of statements will be placed and which will be housed in the University Archives.

Faculty response

The faculty who took part in this ceremony were routinely enthusiastic about the event. One faculty member noted, "My initial im-

pression was that it would be a nice, but largely empty, gesture, but students and faculty alike mentioned that they had seen 'my' book when the lot of them were on display in the library. Their remarks were usually the beginning of a larger conversation about why that book and not something else, about how it related to others in the display, and so on. So I was wrong; the program clearly did strike a chord. Given the chance to pick only one book, many of us find it interesting to see what is chosen, to match it against the person or the field, and to wonder, Are they like us, wildly different, not what they appear to be, and why?"

Some of the colleges have indicated that they are discussing adopting a version of the event within the college, with books going directly to the appropriate departmental library.

In this coming year, the event will continue with most of the same features as before. It has been refined so that there will be a photographer available to obtain photographs of the honorees for later use in the library exhibit. The library and provost's office is considering how a keepsake book plate can be created for each faculty member participating. Based on the response to this program, the UTUC Library expects to sustain this tradition for many years to come. ■