



BALTIMORE CITY PAPER | 1/9/2008

Print

## BOOKS

# University Press

Loyola College Students and Teachers Forge a Publishing Partnership

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**MAKING BOOK:** Kevin Atticks oversees Loyola's student-run publishing house.

In the basement of Loyola College's Dorothy Day Hall, a quiet revolution is gaining momentum. There, in the Communication Department's computer lab, students are publishing books. These are not the mimeographed manifestos of Vietnam-era activists or the samizdat texts of Soviet dissidents. They are trade-quality paperbacks, just like the others on bookstore shelves.

And yet they are also very different. These books have been produced by Apprentice House, the nation's only campus-based, student-staffed publishing house. By simply existing, the books defy the ruling logic of the publishing world. That logic bans undergraduates from publishing their scholarly work. That logic stipulates that professors drive, control, and often take credit for the work produced by their students. That logic reserves the right to judge a book's merit for editors at university presses and New York

publishing houses. Each day, the faculty and students in Loyola's Communication Department quietly mount their revolution--not by criticizing the status quo, but by ignoring it.

Both defiance and joy show in the faces of the Apprentice House affiliates meeting for an interview in the basement of Dorothy Day Hall. Publisher Kevin Atticks sits casually at the table in the computer lab where students in his course talk about their book designs. "Tenured members of our faculty work with undergraduate students to create these books," Atticks says. "It's groundbreaking, this kind of collaboration."

"We're not just publishing books," adds Gregg Wilhelm, director and editor in chief of Apprentice House. "We're creating cultural artifacts."

It is clear that the four students who sat at the table with Atticks and Wilhelm are used to working with the professors as peers. "When we work on these books, professors and students see eye-to-eye," jumps in senior Christina Ramos. "Instead of interacting as 'teacher' and 'student,' we're interacting as equals."

Andrew Ciofalo, a professor in the Communication Department, says he has always believed in experiential learning, and he incorporates real-world work into all of his curricula. He had been teaching publishing courses at Loyola for over a decade when, in 2004, he founded Apprentice House. Until that time, publishing actual books had been cost-prohibitive, as the average paperback book cost \$10,000 to print. "But with advances in technology that allow us to print on-demand, those financial barriers were lifted, and we could start doing what I had always wanted to do," Ciofalo explains.

Atticks and Wilhelm studied under Ciofalo as undergraduates. When they took over as publisher and editor in chief of Apprentice House in 2006, they began to promote it as a viable option for writers and scholarly projects. Already, they've published 15 books. Three more are in the final stages of production, and another three are slated for publication in 2008. Along with Ciofalo, Atticks and Wilhelm teach three courses that support the activities of Apprentice House: book publishing (which includes acquisitions), book design and production, and book marketing and promotion. Each course contains some theory but is firmly grounded in the demands and frustrations of the publishing world.

Those frustrations are real. Loyola junior Katie Giblin had two book projects fall through before she worked on one that materialized. Her first project was cut because of content issues; the author pulled out of the second. Senior Elizabeth Watson declared her last project "done" a dozen times before it went to press. Counterbalancing these frustrations, however, are pride and a sense of accomplishment. Amanda Merson, a sophomore, had worked on her high school's yearbook, but she was surprised by the high quality of the book she produced for Apprentice House. "Making a book here was much more professional than anything I'd done in the past," she says.

Ramos called the books she's produced during her four years at Loyola "portfolio pieces." "I plan to work for a year after college," she says. "Going into interviews knowing I've made these books will really help my confidence."

One of the books recently published by Apprentice House is *Prayer for the Morning Headlines* by Baltimore-based photographer Adrianna Amari. Her project includes selected poems by Nobel Peace Prize nominee, poet, and Jesuit priest Daniel Berrigan. Each of Berrigan's poems is paired with one of Amari's photographs--images of monuments and statues from Baltimore's cemeteries. The book is introduced by Howard Zinn.

*Morning Headlines* is a work driven by social-justice concerns, and its unique form allows it to contain messages from both the past and the present. Berrigan has been an active protester since the 1960s. He and his brother Philip were two of the Catonsville Nine, the group that stole draft records from a government facility and burned them with homemade napalm. Father Berrigan escaped arrest, and went into hiding but was eventually arrested by the FBI and served prison time. Nothing deterred him from his mission, though, and he later founded the Plowshares Movement, a group of eight activists who vandalized the General Electric nuclear missile facility in Pennsylvania in 1980. Throughout his life, Berrigan has opposed the hawkish policies of the U.S. government, worked to promote world peace, and written poems.

Berrigan's monumental identity accompanies each of the poems selected for Amari's collection. Though some of the pieces are formal elegies--poems written to honor the life of a person after his or her death--many of them are elegies to us all (from "Obit"):

We die  
showing like frayed pockets, space within  
without, for loss.

Pain in eyes, a ragged  
animal before the gun;  
muzzily -  
*can death do any harm  
life hasn't done?*

This is half of Berrigan's poem, and the question lingers long enough for the eye to seek out the image on the opposite page. A black statue rises above a twilight tree line. Through storm clouds stream rays of light. The photo's message is one of both darkness and hope, and the end of Berrigan's poem complements it.

*maybe  
(dreamily) death  
turns old dogs  
into fish hillsides butterflies  
teaches a new*

Even when Berrigan writes about the loss of his brother, he is writing about every brother ever lost. From "To Philip":

Death keep you intact, dear brother.  
Death's finger cross your lips -  
not a word, a syllable, a sigh  
escape.  
I mourn,  
I accede, the absolute  
dictum; chafed bones,  
skull put to silence, the slow  
diurnal surrender of flesh to earth.

Amari's accompanying photograph is one of a headstone in the figure of a cross; it reads, simply love one another.

This may be the message of both Berrigan's lifework and Amari's project. As *Morning Headlines* was published in 2007, it stands in protest to the Iraq war. As it contains gravestones from different periods in Baltimore's history, it forces associations with wars fought in the past. And it suggests an alternative to imperialism and violence--Berrigan's alternative. "Seed hope. Flower peace."

Amari's project resonated with the publishing staff at Apprentice House for many reasons. Wilhelm, Atticks, and the students believed in the artistic merit of the book and were excited about the support it had already received. Not only had Zinn written the book's introduction, but Martin Sheen and Kurt Vonnegut had read and praised the manuscript. "In fact," Wilhelm says, "we think it may have been Vonnegut's very last book endorsement."

Apprentice House staff members were also impressed by the work Amari had done to prepare the manuscript for publication. Amari had meticulously paired the poems and photographs, and she had created a model layout for the text. "We worked hard to design a great cover for this book," says Amanda Merson, who was responsible for the book's design. "But the interior pages look a lot like the ones Adrianna originally submitted." The book also reflected Loyola's core values--Jesuit teachings and social justice.

But Apprentice House in no way restricts its publications to books that uphold or promote Loyola's philosophical position. Its book list is incredibly eclectic. Student teams have published the previously undiscovered plays of Zora Neale Hurston, a new translation of the prison diary of Perpetua, a third-century Christian martyr, and a book about investigative reporting on the environmental movement, among others. Upcoming titles include *Eager Street: A Life on the Corner and Behind Bars*, a memoir by an inmate at a Maryland prison who is serving a life sentence for murder, and *Reading Lips . . . and Other Ways to Overcome a Disability*, a collection of winning essays from the First Annual Helen Keller Foundation Essay Writing Competition.

Each book published by Apprentice House has its own story of creation. Students enrolled in book publishing investigate and pitch book ideas for consideration. Those selected by Apprentice House are designed and marketed by students. Some of Loyola's students join the "publishing club" and continue to work on book projects after they complete Wilhelm's and Atticks' course work. Roughly 40 students are involved at any time.

Apprentice House was founded on the principle of student-faculty collaboration, and its collaborative networks extend far beyond Loyola's Communication Department. Loyola Classics Department chair Joseph J. Walsh had included Perpetua's *Passion* in his curricula for decades, but he had never been satisfied with the existing English translations of the Latin text.

"When the Humanities Steering Committee decided to use the *Passion* for our Humanities Symposium, I

suggested that the students create a new translation," Walsh says. He designed a course and required each of his eight undergraduate students to translate the text. The students compared their translations--word by word--until they could agree on the final draft.

"Sometimes, there was disagreement on a word or phrase, and four students came down on either side," Walsh says. "But I refused to break the tie. This was their translation."

The students also annotated the text; Walsh edited the book and wrote its introduction. In the final version, titled *What Would You Die For? Perpetua's Passion*, the Apprentice House staff also included poems by four contemporary women writers responding to the theme of martyrdom. This book is the first in the Aperiio Series: Loyola Humane Texts. Students in the English Department are now working on the second book in that series, a modern-English edition of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. That book, slated for publication this month, will be the next quiet coup in the Apprentice House revolution.