

Addition to ASAO Monograph/Book Series History

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I served as editor of the ASAO book series between 2004 and 2007. Michelle Dominy and Rena Lederman had just drawn up an agreement with Peter Agree, an editor at University of Pennsylvania Press, to begin a new series in Pacific ethnography that was to be composed of ASAO edited volumes. The contract was for 5 volumes in 5 years. From the beginning Agree seemed ambivalent about the monograph series, and we did not receive a sufficient number of high-quality manuscripts during that period to comply with our end of the contract. At that time, the editor in conjunction with an editorial board made series decisions. My board consisted of Rena Lederman, Bruce Knauff, and Suzanne Falgout. Manuscripts were sent to me and I read them along with the board; this review usually lasted a few weeks to a month. I summarized my own and the board's reaction to the volume and took appropriate action on this basis. I attended ASAO every year to give my report on the series and to scout possible series volumes.

The first year I was editor, John Barker sent me a very interesting prospectus for a festschrift, a tribute to Kenelm Burridge's work in Melanesia, which I forwarded to Agree with my praise and encouragement. Agree wrote back that Penn did not publish festschrifts. I forwarded this email to Barker and told him that he might want to give the volume a different slant. When I got the volume in 2005 it was still identifiable as a festschrift. It was a great volume, the board and I loved it, Rena insisted that Penn *did* publish festschrifts, and so without identifying it as such I forwarded it to Agree. Agree did not respond and was not reachable through the phone number he had given me nor did he return calls. I emailed frequently and called periodically. Finally, months later, Agree responded saying Barker's volume was a festschrift and Penn did not publish

festschriften. Soon thereafter Barker published the volume (*The Anthropology of Moralities in Melanesia and Beyond*) with Ashgate.

In 2004 and 2005 the series received two more submissions. The first was a book on Pacific myths, edited by Serge Dunis. The chapters were ethnographic; the introduction was theoretical in intent but unclear in exposition. The board thought the book would be better published as a special issue in a journal. We gave feedback and suggestions as to where the editor and contributors might place their work. The next volume we got was Jocelyn Armstrong & Juliana's Flinn's *Grandparenting*, a fertile and deserving topic. Unfortunately, these ethnographic chapters were without clear theoretical dimensions and the board anticipated Penn would not be interested in a volume without obvious theoretical impact. Again we felt this work might be better published in a Pacific journal and gave feedback on the volume along with several suggestions for publication. On September 14, 2006, we got a really promising volume, *Young People in the Global Pacific: Culture and Agency*, edited by Christine Jourdan and Jean Mitchell. The board and I liked it very much and I sent it on to Agree with my strong recommendation and that of the board. Agree again did not respond. After a few weeks, I began emailing frequently and finally, out of desperation, calling weekly. My calls were not returned. Finally, after four or five months Agree emailed that Penn had decided to discontinue the series and later sent us a formal letter of cancellation. I spoke to Michelle Dominy, my predecessor several times during my editorship. She was always supportive. When I told her Penn decided to discontinue the series she remarked, "I was afraid of that!" I volunteered to approach other presses and the board discussed a number of possibilities but decided to temporarily suspend the series until an appropriate press could be found.