



Acoustical Society of America Books Committee

Mark F. Hamilton

The primary function of the Acoustical Society of America (ASA) Books Committee is to recommend new books on topics in acoustics for publication according to an agreement with a commercial publisher and bearing the imprint ASA Press.

The ASA Books Committee was formed in 2016 by the merger of the former Books+ Committee and the ASA Press Editorial Board. Books+ was created in 1983 and charged primarily with proposing reprints of out-of-print books on acoustical topics. The ASA Press Editorial Board, created in 2011, was charged with recommending new books for publication, including new editions or English translations of preexisting books, on topics in acoustics and bearing the imprint ASA Press.

The Evolution of Books+

The beginnings of Books+ traces back to a request made by Cyril Harris in 1979 to reprint the classic text *Acoustical Designing in Architecture* that he wrote with Vern Knudsen and that was published originally in 1950. In his request to the ASA Executive Council, Professor Harris wrote that “Since this book is no longer in print, I am eager that arrangements be made for reissuing it (preferably in paperback, so that it will be available to students at the lowest possible price) without significant delay. I will be pleased to turn over all future royalties earned by any reprint edition to the Acoustical Society.” His initiative set in motion events that led to the formation of Books+ just a few years later.



Books+ was enormously successful over the years, populating the bookshelves of junior and senior researchers alike through its sales of classic books in acoustics at very low prices. This was accomplished by publishing books with expired copyrights, those whose authors transferred the copyrights to the ASA, or those with permission otherwise granted for republication. The inventory of Books+ that appeared on the ASA website was a veritable Who’s Who of iconic authors in acoustics, the first of these being, following Knudsen and Harris (1980), books by Morse (*Vibration and Sound*, 1981), Hunt (*Electroacoustics*, 1982), Stevens and Davis (*Hearing, Its Psychology and Physiology*, 1983), Beranek (*Acoustics*, 1986), Tolstoy and Clay (*Ocean Acoustics*, 1987), von Békésy (*Experiments in Hearing*, 1989), and Pierce (*Acoustics*, 1989).

As the Books+ program grew, titles included translation books; books based on poster sessions covering topics such as theaters, worship spaces, and music education facilities; and an original publication on concert halls. The “plus” in Books+ was added in 1995 to recognize alternative publication formats such as CDs, DVDs, videotapes, and other means of archiving content. For example, the ASA produced a CD titled *Scientific Papers by Lord Rayleigh* containing the corpus of Rayleigh’s articles. A listing of

available books and other items that came through Books+ can currently be accessed at bit.ly/32MdO79.

The business model followed by Books+ is currently under review because the ASA is exploring means of transitioning away from the practice of preprinting and warehousing its inventory of books. Instead, ASA is transitioning toward a print-on-demand model to reduce costs, expedite fulfillment of orders, and ensure perpetual in-print status of all ASA book titles. Apart from these production matters, as fewer expired copyrights of classic books in acoustics have become available in recent years, the ASA has focused more on encouraging the publication of new books in acoustics.

ASA Books

Today, ASA Books functions primarily as the ASA Press Editorial Board, and in this capacity, it manages the ASA Press imprint. ASA Books is partnered with the commercial publisher Springer. By the end of 2019, the ASA Press imprint appeared on 30 books published by Springer. A listing of these books may be found on Springer's ASA Press webpage (see bit.ly/2wou42b). Approximately half of these books appeared in the Springer Handbook of Auditory Research (SHAR) series. The next largest technical area carrying the ASA Press imprint prior to 2020 was physical acoustics, with half a dozen books, and at least one book carrying the ASA Press imprint was published in each of the following areas: animal bioacoustics, architectural acoustics, engineering acoustics, musical acoustics, signal processing in acoustics, and underwater acoustics. Several of these books appeared in the Springer Modern Acoustics and Signal Processing (MASP) series. The ASA is working to expand its endorsement of new books to all areas of acoustics by reaching out to ASA technical committees and making them aware of this program.

Publishing with ASA Press

How does one propose a new acoustics or acoustics-related book with the aim of having it carry the ASA Press imprint? The process is straightforward, and it starts with downloading the book proposal form on Springer's ASA Press webpage. The completed form is submitted to Springer's representative on the ASA Books Committee. If Springer determines that the book is something they would like to publish, then a two-level approval process is initiated by ASA Books, the first involving review of

the book proposal, and if that is approved, then a second involving review of the completed manuscript.

Once Springer forwards a proposal to ASA Books for review, the decision on whether or not to approve the proposal is made at the following ASA meeting, provided there is adequate lead time to find a qualified reviewer with knowledge of the specific topic and who has time to complete the review prior to the meeting. Sufficient lead time in this regard is normally a few weeks before the upcoming ASA meeting. If there is insufficient time to have the proposal reviewed before the meeting, the decision on the proposal will likely be postponed to the next biannual meeting of the ASA.

Review of the proposal by ASA Books serves only to determine whether the committee might be interested in endorsing the book with the ASA Press imprint. Approval of the proposal signifies that the committee will subsequently review the completed manuscript. Only following review of the completed manuscript does the committee determine whether the book will be approved to carry the ASA Press imprint in addition to the Springer imprint.

Taken into consideration during review of the proposal are mainly the credentials of the author(s) (or editor[s] in the case of collected contributions), relevance of the subject matter to acoustics, and significance of the proposed technical content. If ASA Books approves the proposal, then the author(s) works with Springer to agree on a schedule for submission of the final manuscript. In addition, approval of the proposal may be accompanied by general recommendations to the author(s), ranging from the manner in which the proposed material will be presented to possible inclusion of new material. If ASA Books does not approve the proposal, then the involvement of ASA Books in the project is concluded, and Springer is then free to pursue publication independently of the ASA. That said, the vast majority of proposals requesting the ASA Press imprint to date have been approved.

Provided the proposal has been approved, then after the completed (or nearly completed) manuscript is received by Springer, it is forwarded to ASA Books. In coordination with Springer, ASA Books then identifies and solicits the services of suitable reviewers. In-depth review of the

ASA BOOKS

completed manuscript requires at least several months of lead time prior to the ASA meeting at which the committee renders its decision. In this review, the focus of the committee is on whether the quality of the finished product deserves to carry the ASA Press imprint. On occasion, the committee may make suggestions to the author(s) or editor(s) of the book to improve the contents and then invite resubmission. The committee also considers whether the author(s) or editor(s) are perceived to be advertising a particular product or company, or whether the book advocates policies that could expose the ASA to public or legal difficulties if it were to carry the ASA Press imprint.

After approval of the final manuscript by ASA Books, a recommendation that a book carry the ASA Press imprint is submitted to the ASA Executive Council for final approval. Subject to the final approval by Executive Council, the book enters into production at Springer, the ASA Press imprint appears on the front cover, and text about ASA Books and about the ASA in general is included in the front matter of the book. Although it may be noted that the procedure for obtaining ASA endorsement of a new book can add months to the production time, potential authors should appreciate that the ASA takes its endorsement of new books very seriously. This requires, primarily, finding qualified reviewers who are willing to carefully vet the entire final manuscript. Also, final decisions are made only at the biannual meetings of the ASA, not between meetings. The ASA believes that any additional time its reviews add to the publication schedule is warranted to protect the reputation and significance of the ASA Press imprint appearing on books the ASA chooses to endorse.

Conclusion

The stated mission of the ASA is “To generate, disseminate, and promote the knowledge and practical applications of acoustics,” and the creation ASA Books, which incorporates the ASA Press Editorial Board, is the most recent major initiative of the Society in fulfillment of this mission. The solicitation and endorsement by the ASA of new books on topics related to acoustics benefits both the authors and scientific community by calling attention to outstanding books in the field. Anyone contemplating either writing or editing a new book on any aspect of acoustics is encouraged to contact the chair of ASA Books or Springer’s representative

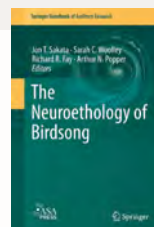
on the committee if they are interested in having their future book endorsed by the ASA.

Contact Information

Mark F. Hamilton hamilton@mail.utexas.edu
Walker Department of Mechanical Engineering
The University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas 78712-1063, USA

Book Announcements | ASA Press

ASA Press is a meritorious imprint of the Acoustical Society of America in collaboration with Springer International Publishing. All new books that are published with the ASA Press imprint will be announced in *Acoustics Today*. Individuals who have ideas for books should feel free to contact the ASA Publications Office, ASAPublications@acousticalsociety.org, to discuss their ideas.



The Neuroethology of Birdsong

Editors: Jon T. Sakata, Sarah C. Woolley, Richard R. Fay, Arthur N. Popper

Scaling the Levels of Birdsong Analysis – *Jon T. Sakata, et al.*
Neural Circuits Underlying Vocal Learning in Songbirds – *Jon T. Sakata, et al.*
New Insights into the Avian Song System and Neuronal Control of Learned Vocalizations – *Karagh Murphy, et al.*
The Song Circuit as a Model of Basal Ganglia Function – *Arthur Leblois, et al.*
Integrating Form and Function in the Songbird Auditory Forebrain – *Sarah C. Woolley, et al.*

Hormonal Regulation of Avian Auditory Processing – *Luke Ramage-Healey*
The Neuroethology of Vocal Communication in Songbirds: Production and Perception of a Call Repertoire – *Julie E. Elie, et al.*
Linking Features of Genomic Function to Fundamental Features of Learned Vocal Communication – *Sarah E. London*
Vocal Performance in Songbirds: From Mechanisms to Evolution – *Jeffrey Podos, et al.*