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19 February, 2013

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Open Letter to the Scholarly Community:

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We are the members of the Association of Canadian University Presses/ Association Des Presses Universitaires Canadiennes. As such, we represent most of the presses engaged in the publication of scholarship in Canada.

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As scholarly publishers, we are accustomed to criticism of our publishing programs from authors, readers, and librarians. We have noted with interest and concern the recent lawsuit filed by The Edwin Mellen Press against McMaster University and its associate university librarian, Dale Askey.

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We have read the published background material on this lawsuit, including Dale Askey's original blog posting, which triggered the lawsuit. Askey's opinions are clearly his own, but do represent the views of an experienced and professional university librarian.

We believe that Dale Askey's comments fall well within the range of fair comment, and thus we urge The Edwin Mellen Press to withdraw this lawsuit and, if it is not withdrawn, we support McMaster University in its resolve to defend Mr. Askey's academic freedom.

We find it distressing that a scholarly publisher such as The Edwin Mellen Press would use the courts to attempt to silence comment and criticism from our customers. Freedom to speak and comment is a core value to which all publishers owe their allegiance.

Respectfully,

Association of Canadian University Press /
Association Des Presses Universitaires Canadiennes

The Association of Canadian University Presses / Association Des Presses Universitaires Canadiennes exists to serve the interest of Canadian scholarship. By their publishing activity, ACUP / APUC members encourage the broadest distribution of the fruits of research and scholarship. The ACUP / APUC provides an organization through which the exchange of ideas relating to university presses and their functions may be facilitated.