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ye out for more popular offerings for the general public.

"The two primary criteria [for a SUNY Press book] are scholarly respectability and fit with the list," she said. "Fit with the list" basically means, do we publish in that area? Do people look to us for books in the field? Otherwise, we really have no business doing that run-off and to put the marketing dollars behind it. Scholarly quality is extraordinarily important. Everything we do here is purely viewed by scholarship in the field."

The scholarship in "Two in a Bed," despite the potentially sexually charged topic of bed sharing, was "definitely solid," she said. Rosenblatt did more research upon the recommendation of peer reviewers who saw the book after the first draft. Bunker said the big surprise for her was not the content or the quality of Rosenblatt's research, but that the idea had not been done before.

Rosenblatt, a professor at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, called the SUNY Press people he worked with on "Two in a Bed" "pros at every step of the way."

The first draft of the book "wasn't unambiguously a scholarly book," said Rosenblatt, who has published nine other books.

"I did that purposely, because I thought the material had the potential to attract a trade-book audience," he said. "They asked me to make it more scholarly, and I did, because I wanted to publish the book with them. But, obviously, the book still has appeal to the general public."

Rosenblatt said one of the things he has come to like about SUNY Press is its willingness to take chances on books that are potentially risky for them, because they break new ground."

## GOOD RETURNS

Caroline Joan S. Picart had her book on



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**Director Peltz and editor-in-chief Jane Bunker. "Everything we do here is purely viewed by scholarship in the field," says Bunker.**

another non-traditional scholarly subject, ballroom dancing and its sportier equivalent called "DanceSport," published by SUNY Press earlier this year. She had earlier published "Remaking the Frankenstein

Myth on Film: Between Laughter and Horror" with SUNY Press in 2003.

Picart, a dancer and an associate professor of English at Florida State University, said SUNY Press in general and the 42-

year-old Peltz in particular are both efficient and "extremely professional and cordial."

"I have worked with many presses, and

## TITLES: Some SUNY Press authors have made 'tens of thousands of dollars,' but those cases are very rare

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believe me, there have been times when I have wanted to add an imaginary layer to Dante's Circles of Hell because of how inefficient some editors are," she said. "But for James, I could only dream up a circle in Dante's heaven."

Her latest book is titled "From Ballroom to DanceSport."

Picart said SUNY Press is recognized in the college press world as being especially strong for its titles in film criticism, cultural studies and Continental philosophy, the branch identified with European philosophers like Heidegger, Nietzsche

**About 95 percent of SUNY Press authors are on college faculties or have other academic jobs.**

and Kierkegaard. The SUNY Press is also recognized as a leading publisher of Asian studies titles.

"It is not a large press and thus cannot command the publicity resources of some presses, and of course does not specialize in the production of textbooks, and so cannot give back huge revenues, typically," she said. "But it does carry its weight reputationally."

Increasingly, SUNY Press also wants to publish strong books of regional interest in Albany, New York state and the Northeast, Peltz said. That puts it in direct competition with other college presses including Syracuse University Press, which is an active publisher of books about upstate New York, and Yale University Press, a frequent producer of titles about New York City.

### A 'BANG-UP' BUSINESS

Peltz said independent booksellers give SUNY Press a crucial connection to general readers who are interested in regional and more esoteric books. The independents are also more apt to leave those regional books on shelves longer to attract readerships than the giant booksellers like **Borders** and **Barnes & Noble**, which tend to return books that do not sell immediately to the publisher within 90 days, he said.

Susan Novotny, owner of **The Book House** in Stuyvesant Plaza in Guelderland and of **Market Block Books** in Troy, said she



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**SUNY Press remains true to its mission even as it keeps an eye out for titles that will interest the general public, Bunker says.**

has more than two dozen other university presses as clients, including the Columbia, Cornell and Fordham.

### BENEFITS IN OTHER WAYS

The exception to digitally printed books are the large-format editions with plentiful photos and artwork that need to be printed with offset presses. Peltz said those are typically printed by Brodock Press Inc. in Utica and are usually underwritten by grants to help defray production costs. These are known as "title subsidies" in the business.

Bunker said other production functions, such as copyediting and design are also done by contractors, many of them in the Capital Region, and not the 33-member staff of the SUNY Press.

The SUNY Press farms out the warehousing and mail-ordering of its catalogue to Cornell University Press in Ithaca, Tompkins County.

Just as SUNY Press is a break-even proposition—it is a nonprofit that has not gotten