Naomi B. Pascal
1926-2014

Naomi Brenner Pascal, the longtime editor-in-chief at the University of Washington Press, died peacefully in her sleep in the early hours of December 5, 2014, at the age of 88.

Naomi was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1926. After graduating from Wellesley College in 1946, she began her publishing career at Vanguard Press in New York, moving to the University of North Carolina Press in 1948 and then the University of Washington Press in 1953, when her husband, Paul Pascal, was hired by the UW classics department. She was promoted to editor-in-chief in 1974 and acquired the additional title of associate director in 1994. Naomi developed distinguished lists in Native American art and culture, Asian American studies, Jewish studies, and architecture. Among the authors she worked with were Nobel Prize winners Julian Huxley, Fred Hoyle, and Francis Crick. Among the hundreds of books she acquired and edited were such influential titles as *Northwest Coast Indian Art*, by Bill Holm; *Market Sketchbook*, by Victor Steinbrueck; *Art and Intimacy: How the Arts Began*, by Ellen Dissanayake; *The Natural History of Puget Sound Country*, by Arthur Kruckeberg; *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, by Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi; and *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture*, by Gary Okihiro.

Naomi’s achievements as an editor were legendary in the scholarly publishing community. Throughout her long and productive career, she was an active member of the Association of American University Presses, serving as a member of its board of directors and on numerous committees and frequently delivering papers and talks at meetings. In 1991 she was the recipient of the first AAUP Constituency Award, given to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to university press publishing, demonstrating their continuing commitment to excellence in publishing and to the enrichment of American scholarly and cultural life. She was one of the founding editors of the journal *Scholarly Publishing* as well as one of its most prolific contributors. She worked as a panelist and reviewer for the National Endowment for the Humanities, served as a nonfiction judge for various conferences and competitions, and worked with the library community, often as a copyright consultant. She shared her knowledge of scholarly publishing worldwide, traveling to work with university presses in China and Latvia. In 2007 she was awarded the Native American Art Studies Association’s Lifetime Achievement Honor Award.

Following her retirement in 2002, the UW Press Editor’s Endowment, which provides a fund for the editor-in-chief to use at his or her discretion in support of deserving projects, was renamed the Naomi B. Pascal Editor’s Endowment. Naomi continued to work part time as an acquiring editor at large until 2007. She and Paul then settled in to a relaxed life in a retirement community.
near downtown Seattle. Naomi had broad interests and was widely read in a variety of subjects. She especially loved beaches, gardening, cooking, fine arts, music, and ballet.

Colleagues at UW Press remember Naomi as a model of grace, good humor, and high standards. Her wide-ranging knowledge, integrity, and commitment to diplomacy were critical to the success of the press, and many recall her generosity of spirit and promotion of collegiality locally and in the publishing community. She mentored by example, cared deeply about her work and colleagues, and was beloved by authors. She motivated and supported those with whom she worked, and she treated all with patience and dignity. She will be best remembered, both by the many authors whose work she believed in, developed, and encouraged and by the publishing professionals she mentored, for her extraordinary ability to discover and nurture talent. At her retirement party, UW Press director emeritus Pat Soden called her “the finest editor in the history of American scholarly publishing.”

Naomi is survived by her husband Paul, daughter Janet, son David, and daughter-in-law Susan.

Condolences may be sent to the Pascal family at Janet’s address:

Janet B. Pascal  
88 East 3rd St. Apt. 13  
New York, NY 10003

Gifts in Naomi’s honor may be made to the University of Washington Press Naomi B. Pascal Editor’s Endowment.

A celebration of Naomi’s life and work is planned for February 20, 2015.