

CARTON 3:15

WILD TREES PRESS

BOOKSLINGER, INC.

1985-1989

2017/193
c

BOOKSLINGER, INC.
502 North Prior Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55104
(612) 649-0271

May 20, 1988

Dear Publisher,

Enclosed please find a copy of the May 1, 1988 inventory which was promised in our letter of April 30th. In many cases we have also enclosed orders so we will at least have minimal stock on titles which appear in the catalog. If titles are listed that are out of print or unavailable for some other reason, please let us know.

Also, if you have new titles which do not appear either on the inventory or the order, please send us a list so we may place an order for those titles as well.

In 99% of the cases, books on our inventories and orders are paperbacks unless otherwise noted.

We would also like to tell you our new policy regarding our reporting and payments. Effective with all sales after May 1, 1988 we will report and pay for all books 90 days after they are sold. (Books sold in May will be paid for in August.) Reports and payments will be made monthly on sales rather than quarterly on receipts as they were before. We hope this will allow all of us to keep more accurate sales figures. Please remember that we can only be responsible for the books that were transferred to us per the enclosed inventory. All sales prior to the transfer will be paid for by Bobbie Rix according to her arrangements with you.

Sincerely,

ROD & HANJE
Rod and Hanje Richards



BOOKSLINGER, INC.
502 North Prior Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55104

PUBLISHER: Wild Trees Press

May 1, 1988 INVENTORY

TITLE	QUANTITY
Escape from Billy's Bar-B-Que	67
A Piece of Mine	42+96=138
Condor and Hummingbire	71
Ready for Within	91



WILD TREES PRESS
 P.O. Box 378
 Navarro, California 95463

Bookslinger

213 East Fourth St.
 St. Paul, MN 55101

INVOICE No 1752

No.

DATE		COD	ACCOUNT NO.	P.O. NUMBER	TERMS	SHIP VIA	FOB	SALESMAN
10/31/86				Consignment				
QTY.	UNIT	DESCRIPTION				UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT	
100	case	READY FROM WITHIN Being shipped BOOK RATE						
						SUB TOTAL		
						SHIPPING		
						TOTAL		

PLEASE PAY FROM THIS INVOICE—NO STATEMENT WILL BE SENT.

5/19/86



Please send us
100 copies of
Ready From Within.
Thanks!

BOOKSLINGER
213 EAST FOURTH STREET
ST. PAUL, MN 55101
612-221-0429

Wild Trees
Press
P.O. Box 378
Navarro, CA
95463

JACK MYERS

As Long As You're Happy



As
Long
As
You're

II



BOOKSLINGER

213 East Fourth Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

612-221-0429

QUARTERLY PAYMENT

PAID TO:

Wild Trees

PAYMENT FOR QUARTER ENDING:

March 31, 1986

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>PRICE</u>	<u>DISC.</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Billy's Barbeque	6	8.95	55%	24.17
				5/19

QUARTERLY PAYMENT REPORT CHECK NUMBER: 3378 TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$24.17



WILD TREES PRESS
 P.O. Box 378
 Navarro, California 95463

Bookslinger
 213 East Fourth St.
 St. Paul, MN 55101

INVOICE

No.

DATE	COD	ACCOUNT NO.	P.O. NUMBER	TERMS	SHIP VIA	FOB	SALESMAN
11/13/			consignment				
QTY.	UNIT	DESCRIPTION				UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT
1	case	Escape from Billy's Bar-B-Que (80 copies)					
		Being shipped by 4th class mail					
		<u>Received OK</u>					
						SUB TOTAL	
						SHIPPING	
						TOTAL	

PLEASE PAY FROM THIS INVOICE—NO STATEMENT WILL BE SENT.

Called 12/11
 report due end
 of January 11/26

Called 4/19
 spoke to Robbie

Sent to ✓
 2/5

\$ 68.43

18 AYUM

1 ESC

Hello:

9-10-85

Please send me 100 copies of
ESCAPE FROM BILLY'S BAR-B-QUE



in paperback when it is published.

If it is easier to drop-ship from
the publisher by the carton, please
do so - in a quantity between 100 +
200.

Thanks,

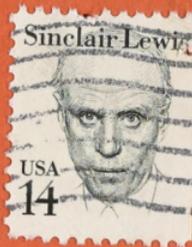
Laura Prall

Note sent 10/2
will back order

BOOKSLINGER

213 EAST FOURTH STREET
ST. PAUL, MN 55101

BOOKSLINGER
213 EAST FOURTH STREET
ST. PAUL, MN 55101
612-221-0429



Wild Trees Press
PO Box 378
Navarro, CA 95463



WILD TREES PRESS
P.O. Box 378
Navarro, California 95463

Books linger
213 East Fourth St.
St. Paul, MN 55101

INVOICE

No. 1186

DATE	COD	ACCOUNT NO.	P.O. NUMBER	TERMS	SHIP VIA	FOB	SALESMAN
4/13/85			Call	Wholesale	consignment		
QTY.	UNIT	DESCRIPTION				UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT
184		A Pucee of Mine (2 cases)				7.95	
						SUB TOTAL	
						SHIPPING	
						TOTAL	

PLEASE PAY FROM THIS INVOICE—NO STATEMENT WILL BE SENT.



BOOKSLINGER

213 East Fourth Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

612-221-0429

*called
4/8
2 boxes
ordered*

3-27-85

Robert Allen
Wild Trees Press
Navarro, CA 95463

Dear Robert Allen,

Thank you for your interest in Bookslinger. Yes, we are very interested in distributing your titles. I have enclosed: 1) a copy of our distribution terms, 2) a copy from the current (Mar/Apr) issue of **SMALL PRESS MAGAZINE** of a profile on us which will, hopefully, give you a sense of what we are trying to do here, 3) information on what you need to do to have your books represented at ABA trade show.

I would appreciate knowing when we can expect to receive books. I also need to know who else is carrying your books. We sell to B. Dalton and need to know if any other wholesaler or commission rep is presenting your books to them - Let me know when you decide if you would like us to carry your title.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Bobbi
Bobbi Rix

enc

Also 1 box to Califormie Coop

STRATHMORE BOND
25% COTTON FIBER USA

BOOKSLINGER :: DISTRIBUTION SERVICES

Bookslinger is an independent distributor of literary books from small presses and small publishers. Our efforts are primarily directed toward, but not limited to, sales to retail bookstores. We serve as a consolidated source for a wide range of books from a variety of publishers, allowing stores and other customers easy and efficient access to publishers' complete lists.

DISTRIBUTION TERMS:

Bookslinger (hereafter "Distributor") agrees to distribute the books of _____ (hereafter "Publisher") under the following terms and conditions:

Consignment Terms:

The Publisher agrees to consign books to the Distributor at a 55% discount from the retail price. The Distributor will then offer the books for sale to the retail trade at standard trade discounts, as described in the Distributor's most current catalog. Payments for books sold will be issued to the Publisher quarterly as described below.

Stock:

The Publisher will ship to the Distributor sufficient copies of all in-print titles to support active trade sales. Books not suited to the Distributor's activities (for example, certain limited editions, non-literary titles, etc.) may be excluded as mutually agreed. New titles shall be shipped as they become available, in quantities agreed by advance or standing order. Shipping to the Distributor will be paid by the Publisher.

Incoming Shipment:

Books must arrive in the Distributor's warehouse in clean, saleable condition. Upon receipt of books, the Distributor will promptly report damage in shipment. Returns of books damaged in shipment will be at the Publisher's expense. Damaged books not returned to the Publisher will be used as sales and promotional samples whenever possible.

Warehousing:

The Distributor agrees to store the Publisher's books in clean and safe warehouse conditions.

Distributor Sales Activity:

The Distributor will pursue trade sales through a combination of catalogs, direct mailings, telephone solicitation, convention and trade show appearances, and sales travel. The services of a commission sales group are also used to more effectively cover the midwest. These activities are undertaken to generate and improve trade sales, ultimately benefitting the Publisher; however, these efforts should in no way be viewed as replacing the advertising and promotion activities of the Publisher. The Distributor's activities are designed to complement those of the Publisher. The Distributor is not a marketing service, and advertising and promotion remain the responsibility of the Publisher. The Publisher is encouraged to list distribution outlets in all promotional materials.

Quarterly Payment System:

As the Distributor is paid on books sold, receipts are tallied. The Publisher will be paid quarterly for all collected sales, with reports and payments issued one month following the close of the quarter.

Sales 1 January - 31 March	Reports and payments issued 30 April
Sales 1 April - 30 June	Reports and payments issued 31 July
Sales 1 July - 30 September	Reports and payments issued 31 October
Sales 1 October - 31 December	Reports and payments issued 31 January

Information on Publisher Activities:

The Publisher will provide the Distributor with information on new and forthcoming titles as far in advance as possible. Also, the Publisher will be aware that the Distributor will require current title information, useful graphic materials and/or display advertising the Publisher wishes to place in the Distributor's catalogs, in January for the spring catalog and in August for the fall supplement. The Publisher should inform the Distributor of price changes, books out-of-print or indefinitely out-of-stock, and any other useful information immediately. The Distributor should be placed on the Publisher's mailing list.

Sales/Promotional Samples:

In the course of sales travel, briefings of commission reps, and/or appearances at trade shows, the Distributor may use ~~up to~~ 5 copies of any trade titles as sales samples for the purposes of generating sales. Whenever possible, the Distributor will make use of damaged or otherwise unsaleable copies.



BOOKSLINGER

213 East Fourth Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

612-221-0429

March 23, 1985

Greetings,

This years American Booksellers Association Trade Show in San Francisco is just 2 months away. We will not be driving this year which means we will be shipping all the titles we plan to display. Shipping the books will require greater planning, economy of space, and higher expenses. Because we are shipping, we will not be able to bring quite as many titles as in the past. We will need to know by the end of April what books we will be taking. This years fees to have books displayed face-out will be \$50.00 per face-out book and \$35.00 per face-out periodical.

Bookslinger will bring a representative cross-section of the books from the 175 publishers we carry but your reserving face-out space will ensure your books will be picked up and flipped through by thousands of bookstore buyers as opposed to glanced at spine-out on the shelf. Attending the ABA generates more business than any other form of marketing or promotion in the trade. We have found that as soon as we get your books into the hands of the booksellers the quality you have put into your book takes over and the book sells. Our task is grabbing the book and physically thrusting it at the bookseller; your reservation for a face-out book assures it will be much easier to do this and promote your title. This is your best opportunity to reach a massive, broad, and most importantly, buying audience. In terms of today's advertising costs, this small fee will go a long way toward generating sales of your books.

Remember, we will be packing the books to be ready to ship by April 25th and cannot accept reservations for face-out books after this date. Payment **must** accompany your reservation. We feel this year will be an excellent year for small press books at the convention due to the fact that San Francisco and the Bay Area serve as the home to many fine small, literary presses and will bring that awareness to the trade show.

All best,

Bobbi Rix / Bookslinger

BOOKSLINGER

The Distributor With a Literary Bent

BY LEONARD KNIFFEL

THE SHOP in the renovated warehouse on Fourth Street was spacious and bright, with high windows at the north end and colorful posters on the clean, exposed-brick walls. When I arrived, Bobbi Rix and her assistant, Laura Prail, were preparing the quarters for an open house. A large table of slightly damaged books, with near-giveaway prices, was temptingly placed near the coffee pot in the lounge area. In the center of the room, I browsed through rows of wooden shelving units neatly stocked with books. To my every inquiry, almost before I could say the words, "and do you carry. . .?" Rix, proprietor of this bibliophile's paradise, answered, "Yes, we do." I found this carefully selected, carefully arranged, carefully displayed collection at Bookslinger of St. Paul, Minnesota, a distributor that has, since its founding in 1976, grown into a major U.S. purveyor of small-press literature.

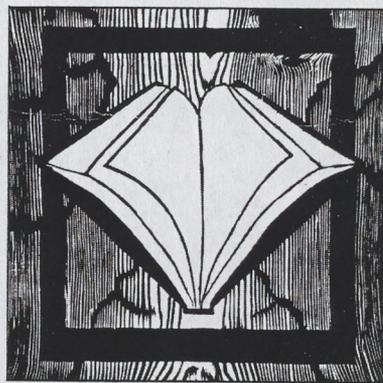
Bookslinger distributes "small-press poetry and prose," and Bobbie Rix emphasizes that it is "a distributor as opposed to a wholesaler." The firm contracts with publishers for a complete line of books, not individual titles. As a result, some "deviants" (cookbooks, self-help titles,

LEONARD KNIFFEL is a librarian in the Language & Literature Department of the Detroit Public Library and proprietor of *Fallen Angel Press*.

etc.) do creep in. Bookslinger currently represents 175 presses and 15 literary magazines, each press with an average of about a dozen titles. Initial inventory begins with 25 copies of every title. The company is eager to represent more publishers, but will do so only after giving careful consideration to what Bookslinger can do for a particular list.

"Publishers should give us a call," says Rix. She adds that "it helps to look at the books," explaining that her decision to work with publishers finally rests on the quality of the books they produce. But Bookslinger is guided by no special creed, and the titles it stocks represent a wide range of aesthetics. Within the focus of the company, Bookslinger selects publishers largely on the basis of whether or not it can sell their books with conviction. "We look for books that read well and look good. If we can talk a book up, it will move and keep moving," says Rix. "Booksellers will keep recommending it and reordering it."

Bookslinger almost never represents the one-book publisher, even though, as Bobbi Rix admits, pointing to a legal book that just arrived in the mail, it may be very good. "We're not the distributor for them. I try to direct them to an-



The Bookslinger logo.



Taking care of business:
Laura Prail and
Bobbi Rix.



JAMES DUSSO (2)

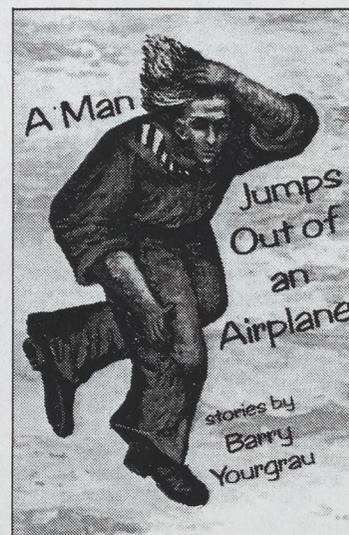
other company when the material is good," she adds.

Bookslinger expects a 55 percent discount from publishers, though arrangements vary. Books are accepted on consignment. Therefore, publishers are paid quarterly, when Bookslinger's customers pay. Rix thinks it is very important for small presses to have at least one distributor. "Many publishers have a good sense of what they want to publish but not of how to get the books into stores. It doesn't mean they shouldn't be publishing."

The 15 magazines that Bookslinger carries have been carefully selected and purposely kept to a manageable number. Magazines are "labor intensive," says Rix, with "constant shipping" as new issues appear. Therefore, "we're really choosy about magazines," Rix says. "We base our judgment on format, editors, and contributors, and some journals like *Ironwood* and *Ploughshares* consistently produce high-quality issues that have an incredible shelf life—we still get orders for 1982 issues." Magazine publishers must provide the same 55 percent discount as book publishers, but "because the return rate for magazines is generally assumed to be high," explains Rix, the standard discount to bookstores for magazines is 25 percent. New issues are automatically sent to customers as they are published and, says Rix, Bookslinger's magazine return rate is actually very low. Some 85 percent of Bookslinger's customers are bookstores, largely in the Midwest but also in New York and California. "The Twin Cities is a strong literary area," says Rix, who makes fre-

quent sales calls to local bookstores. Library sales constitute another 10 percent of Bookslinger's business, while the remaining 5 percent is made up of direct-mail sales to individuals. To open an account, customers must pay the first order pro forma, and a second order should be paid before placing a third order. Thereafter, terms are net 30 days, with discounts of 40 percent on 14 or more books, 30 percent on 6 to 13, and 20 percent on 2 to 5 books. Bookslinger accepts returns after 90 days and before one year from the date of the invoice. "Stores use us because of the discount," says Rix. "They can buy 15 different titles and still qualify for the maximum 40 percent discount."

Bookslinger was founded by David Wilk



(now of Inland Book Company in East Haven, Connecticut) as one of the original recipients of a project grant from the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines. At that time, the firm was called Truck Distribution and served primarily the Twin Cities area in Minnesota. In 1978, Jim Sitter bought the company, renamed it, and aggressively acquired distribution rights to 100 presses and magazines. In 1983, Sitter went on to become director of the Minnesota Center for the Book Arts, and Randy Jennings (Wilk's former employee) took over the company, revamped much of the business end of the operation, and acquired the present quarters. In 1984, Jennings became a sales representative for Random House, and Bobbi Rix became the new owner-director. She and her assistant handle the entire operation with the help of one part-time packer. This year, they hope to acquire interns from local colleges.

Rix and Prail do virtually all the selling. They have one commission sales rep in Chicago—Abraham & Welch—which carries the Bookslinger catalog, a handsome 48-page stock list.

"There has been a great improvement in the quality of small-press books over the years," Rix says. "Small presses are more sophisticated than they used to be. The books have gotten so good that all we have to do is put them in the hands of the booksellers. They sell themselves." She says sales of 400 to 500 copies constitute best-seller status at Bookslinger. Rix and Prail reflected on titles that have sold best: *Matters of Life and Death*, a Wampeter Press (Green Harbor, Massachusetts) fiction anthology, has done exceptionally well; *Everyday Stories: Norwegian Women's Fiction*, another anthology, from Seal Press (Seattle, Washington), has sold well in Minnesota "because of the ethnic connection—there are

a lot of people of Scandinavian descent in this area." Other best-sellers have been *Makeup on Empty Space* by Anne Waldman, published by Toothpaste Press (West Branch, Iowa); *Willingly* by Tess Gallagher, from Graywolf Press (Port Townsend, Washington), and the Feminist Press's *Ripening* by Meridel LeSueur.

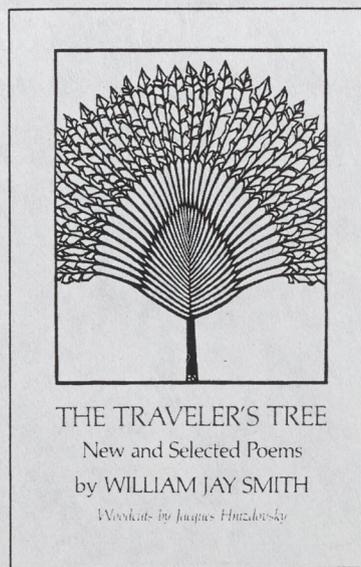
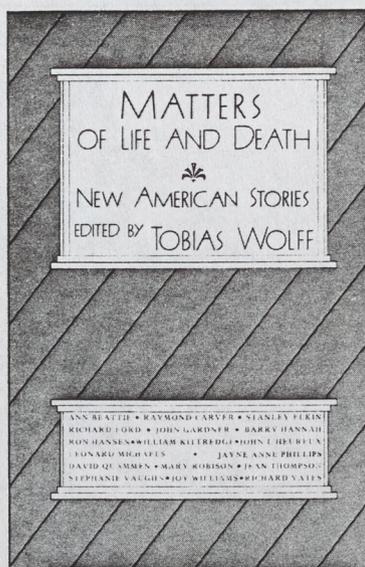
DENYSE WYATT, who does marketing and promotion for the Feminist Press in Old Westbury, New York, says that Bookslinger accounts for approximately 15 percent of the press's sales. "What they take, they sell," she says. "They spend a lot of time with our titles, making sure that the books get out there. They are very attentive to us. If they weren't, we wouldn't have them."

"We're not doing all their marketing," says Rix about the presses currently represented by Bookslinger. She thinks that aggressive promotion along with author appearances accounts for the largest part of a book's sales.

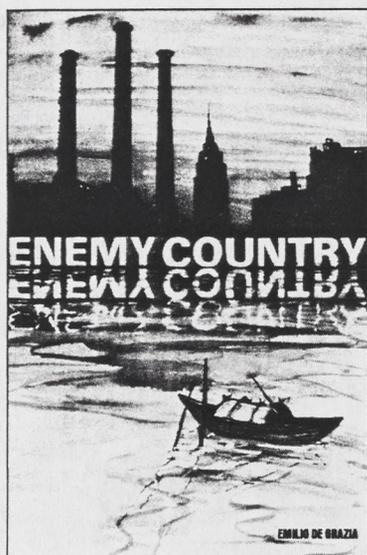
"We do a quarterly mailing to a 750 mailing list which is always increasing," says Prail. "Publishers share with us and help us build the list. It's the kind of thing that can only be acquired over time."

Bill Truesdale's New Rivers Press (St. Paul, Minnesota) has 135 titles in print. Truesdale says Bookslinger is responsible for 20 percent of all his sales. "They are very very responsible. I've had other distributors carry my books for over two years and they never paid a thing. Bookslinger pays every quarter."

New Rivers's most effective sales technique is direct mail, but "that's because I do it all myself—handle all the bookstore accounts, the publicity. Many publishers don't want to be bothered with all that."



Opposite page,
Sun Books
(New York
City). Left,
Wampeter
Press (Green
Harbor, Mas-
sachusetts);
right, Persea
Books (New
York City).



Paul Feroe of Ally Press (St. Paul) is one of those publishers. "Time is *the* factor," he says. "I tried to make all the personal contacts myself, but doing large amounts of that gets old fast, along with the trouble of billing and orders." Feroe, who holds down a full-time job with a printing firm and publishes for the satisfaction it gives him, says almost all of his sales come through distributors. "I feel a real camaraderie for them and what they do," he says. Feroe has six titles in print and lets Bookslinger and five other companies handle the aspects of publishing that he has neither the time nor the desire to do.

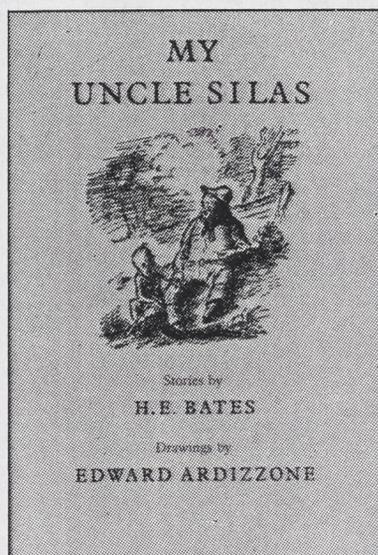
Rix has observed that the larger the publisher and the more backing it has, the less effective it seems to find the services of a specialized distributor like Bookslinger. Ardis Press of Ann Arbor, Michigan, says that Bookslinger sells "very few" books for them, "almost zero," ac-

ording to Ardis employee Ron Meyer, who also finds the quarterly payment practice (compared to invoice payment) "inconvenient and hardly worth the paperwork."

Susan Winton at Capra Press in Santa Barbara, California, is satisfied with her relationship with Bookslinger: "They are very nice to work with and always interested in the press, and very good about sending reports and checks on time. They make an effort to put publishers and booksellers together. Randy [Jennings] used to have a party at the American Booksellers Association convention and introduce them to one another." But Bookslinger sells only "a very small portion—perhaps 20 books a month—of the 70 titles Capra has in print" and as an exception to its practice, does not carry some of Capra's regional nonliterary titles which are limited to a Southern California audience.

"Bookslinger is undercapitalized," says Rix.

Clockwise from top: New Rivers Press (St. Paul, Minnesota), Theatre Communications Group, Inc. (New York City), Minnesota Historical Society Press (St. Paul), Graywolf Press (Port Townsend, Washington).





JAMES DUSSO

Bookslinger's warehouse, abundant with small-press literary titles.

"I need a sales staff that could attend all regional trade shows." She regrets that there isn't enough time to do all the office work and attend trade shows and conventions the way she would like to. "We do receive a small annual grant, through our local fiscal agent, from the National Endowment for the Arts. The NEA decided that this was a special situation. After all, it doesn't do much good to fund publishers if they can't get the books into stores. So even though we are not nonprofit, the NEA Literature Program has offered special assistance to help with operations." Rix sees the company growing slowly, as it takes on more and more commercially viable literary presses and more bookstore accounts.

Both Rix and Prail trained in bookstores

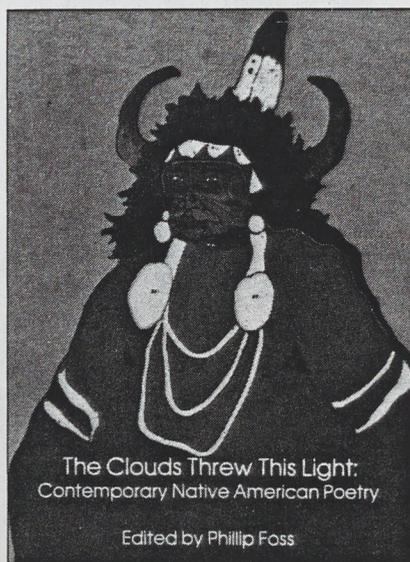
before coming to Bookslinger: Rix with B. Dalton and Prail with The Hungry Mind, a St. Paul bookstore. "We really like what we're doing—making difficult-to-obtain books more accessible," says Prail.

ASKED WHY they don't retail every day, Rix says, "I don't see us operating as retailers. We are a catalyst between publishers and bookstores." Asked why they distribute by publisher rather than by title, Rix explains, "It is more cost-time effective. If we took on single titles, we'd have 175 books from 175 presses. This way, we have 175 books from three publishers—and only three quarterly reports to send. Also we want to discourage self-publishing. The books are usually not very good, and we just can't sell them." Bookslinger recently dropped two university presses that were "picked up for distribution by a major publisher," says Rix, because Bookslinger's mission does not include "writing checks to Harper & Row."

Bookslinger recently acquired an IBM Personal Computer that is being programmed to handle all inventory, bookkeeping, and billing procedures. The computer will free Rix to spend more time with customers and with publishers.

During my visit to Bookslinger, I heard nothing that smacked of "sales pitch," and as I left loaded down with books I had not intended to buy, I realized that Bobbi Rix was right: The books *had* sold themselves. □

Institute of American Indian Arts Press (Santa Fe, New Mexico).



*The Clouds Threw This Light:
Contemporary Native American Poetry*

Edited by Phillip Foss

Bookslinger
213 East Fourth Street, St. Paul, MN 55101

Bobbi Rix
BOOKSLINGER
213 East Fourth St.
St. Paul, MN 55101

March 21, 1985

Dear Ms. Rix:

Under separate cover I am sending you a copy of A PIECE OF MINE, the first book published by Wild Trees Press. This book has been very well received by reviewers, and the first printing of 3,000 copies sold out in three months. We have now ordered a second printing and are trying to expand our distribution network.

Is it possible that Bookslinger would be interested in distributing this book? If so, please advise.

In the Fall we will publish our second book, ESCAPE FROM BILLY'S BAR-B-QUE, a wryly humorous novel about a young Southern white woman coming of age in Boston in the late 1960s. This title will be published in both hardcover and paperback editions.

Please send us your terms and contractual information.

Sincerely,

Robert Allen