

Hello, this is John from VJ Books, and we're talking books.

There seems to be a lot of interest in book publishing. As you explore your hobby, you wonder what publisher came from where, or what book comes from what publisher. Publishing of modern fiction goes back to the early 19th century. In the last several decades, most of the books, while there are hundreds and hundreds of publishers, most books are produced by the Big Six publishers, and that was the case until 2012, when two of the majors, Penguin Putnam and Random House, merged, now controlling a lion's share of book publishing in the English language.

Let's start looking at them for a moment. We'll start with Hachette. Little, Brown and Company, an American publisher, was founded in 1837 by Charles Coffin Little and his partner, James Brown. For close to two centuries, they published fiction and nonfiction by many of America's finest authors. Early lists featured *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott, Emily Dickinson's poetry, and Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*. The imprint of Little, Brown was purchased by Time Inc. in 1968, and was made part of the Time Warner Book Group when Time and Warner merged to form Time Warner in 1989. In 2006, the Time Warner Book Group was added and sold to the French publisher Hachette. Following this, the Little, Brown imprint is used by Hachette U.S. publishing, Hachette Book Group USA. In 2011, Little, Brown launched an imprint devoted to suspense publishing, Mulholland Books. The company received Publisher of the Year Award three times. On April 1, 2013, Reagan Arthur became the publisher of Little, Brown. Hachette either owns or distributes imprints of Disney; Grand Central; Hyperion; Little, Brown; Mulholland Books; Orbit; and Warner Books.

Now let's talk for a minute about HarperCollins. One of the world's largest publishing companies, part of the Big Five English-language publishing companies, its name is a combination of several publishing companies: Harper & Row, an American publishing company acquired in 1987, whose own name was a result of an earlier merger between Harper & Brothers, which was founded in 1817, and Row, Peterson & Company. Together, joined with the U.K. publishing company of William Collins, Sons, which was founded in 1819, they became HarperCollins. Today, HarperCollins has several imprints: Amistad Books, Avon, Ecco Press, HarperCollins, Harper, HarperCollins in the U.K., Harper Perennial, HarperTeen, Katherine Tegen Books, Regan Books, and William Morrow. There are several other imprints, but these are the major ones for HarperCollins.

Following with our theme of looking at different publishers, we'll talk now about Penguin Putnam Publishing Group. Penguin Books Ltd. was established in 1935 in the United Kingdom. The different Penguin companies used to be many different imprints, which used to be independent publishers until they were acquired along the way. In October of 2012, Pearson entered into talks with rival conglomerate Bertelsmann over the possibility of combining their respective publishing companies, the Penguin Group and Random House. The houses were considered two of the Big Six publishing companies prior to the merger, which is now the Big Five. The European Union approved the Penguin Random House merger on April 5, 2013. The Penguin Group is part of Penguin Random House. It is owned by Pearson PLC, the global education and publishing company, and Bertelsmann, the German media conglomerate. After this merger, they became the largest publisher in English-speaking books. Penguin Putnam now has several imprints that they distribute or own. They include Ace, Blue Rider, Dudson Street Press, Dutton, Gotham, Gusset & Dunlap, the New American Library, Prentice Hall, Puffin, Putnam, Riverhead Books, and Viking Press.

Next, let's take a look at Macmillan Publishing, also known as MPS. Macmillan Publishers Ltd., occasionally known as Macmillan Group or MPS, is an international publishing company owned by

Holtzbrinck Publishing Group. Macmillan was founded in 1843 by Daniel and Alexander Macmillan, two brothers from Scotland. They established an office in New York City, and sold its American division in 1896, which became the Macmillan Company. After retiring from politics in 1964, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Harold Macmillan became the chairman of the company, his family's company. The company was one of the oldest independent publishing houses until 1995, when 70% share of the company was bought by the German media giant Holtzbrinck Publishing Group. Holtzbrinck purchased the remaining shares in 1999, ending the Macmillan family's ownership of the company. Macmillan has several imprints that include Flatiron Books, Forge, Henry Holt, Minotaur, the aforementioned St. Martin's Press, Thomas Dunne, Tom Doherty, and Tor Books.

Now we'll go through Random House. Random House was founded in 1927 by Bennett Cerf and Donald Knopf. Cerf is quoted as saying, "We just said we were going to publish a few books on the side at random," which suggested the name Random House. In 1934, they published their first authorized edition of James Joyce's novel *Ulysses*. American publishers Alfred A. Knopf and Pantheon Books were acquired by Random House in 1960 and 1961, respectively. In 1965, RCA bought Random House, followed in 1998, Bertelsmann AG bought Random House, and it became a global company. On July 1, 2013, Random House merged with Penguin, and the new company is now known as Penguin Random House. Penguin Random House now comprises nearly 250 imprints and brands on five continents, with more than 15,000 new titles and 800 million books in print, clearly dominating book publishing worldwide. Random House imprints include Ballantine, Bantam, Crown Publishing, Delacorte, Del Rey, Dial Press, Doubleday, Knopf, LucasBooks, Modern Library, and, of course, Random House.

Finally, completing our tour of the Big Six publishing houses, we'll talk a little bit about Simon & Schuster. Simon & Schuster, Inc., is a division of CBS Corporation, a publisher that was founded in New York City in 1924 by Richard L. Simon, curiously, he is the father of singer-songwriter Carly Simon, and M. Lincoln "Max" Schuster. It's one of the largest English-language publishers, publishing over 2,000 titles a year under 35 different imprints. In 1990, the *New York Times* described Simon & Schuster as the largest book publishing entity in the United States with sales of \$1.3 billion. Here's just a few of Simon & Schuster's different imprints: Atria, Emily Bestler Books, Gallery, Howard Books, Pocket Books, Scribner, Simon & Schuster, and Touchstone. A curious side note about Simon & Schuster: Their division Pocket Books was one of the first companies to publish the dime store novel, the pocket book that would fit in your pocket. This invention, bringing books to a lower price and wider distribution, probably one of the single events that moved book publishing forward and readership to new heights. That's Simon & Schuster. That completes our tour of the Big Five publishing houses.

This completes our overview of the top six publishing houses, now known as the Big Five: Hachette, HarperCollins, Macmillan, Putnam, Random House, and Simon & Schuster.

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