



The History of Springer Publishing Company

Ursula Springer PhD

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This is a unique and intimate insider's account of the founding and growth of a small New York science and medical publishing company over the first 57 years. Bernhard Springer, the Berlin-born great-grandson of the founder of Springer-Verlag, started his own publishing company in 1950. For the next 20 years, he slowly but surely grew his company from the ground up, demonstrating a preternatural ability to foresee areas where quality publishing was needed and answering that need. Beginning modestly with books like the *Livestock Health Encyclopedia*, he published his first nursing title, *Handbook of Cardiology for Nurses* in 1952. The company would soon branch into other fields, but nursing remained (as it remains today) Springer Publishing's signature subject, the quality and depth of which list having cemented Springer's reputation as one of the major publishers in the field.

In the 1960s, Springer again recognized a nascent field in need of quality research-gerontology--and became one of the first publishers to commission books extensively on the topic, again establishing an international reputation as a industry leader in that field. The company continued to build its programs in other areas, including psychology, where its publication of the controversial psychologist Silvan Tomkins's *The Picture Arrangement Test* established a reputation for risk-taking.



Bernhard Springer's untimely death in 1970 left the company in the hands of his wife Ursula, a teacher by trade, who went on to run the company for 34 years. Dr. Springer oversaw in that long turbulent period many changes in the publishing industry but continued to build on her husband's innovations while establishing an identity of her own as a book and journals publisher to reckon with.

This book is Dr. Springer's story of the Springer Publishing Company, from its inception to its sale to Mannheim Holdings, LLC, in 2004, and beyond. Dr. Springer tells a fascinating first-hand tale of the joys and travails of starting and maintaining a small publishing business, the delicate art of courting and signing good authors (and books), and other tricks of the trade. She is particularly vivid in conveying the spirit, special character, and accomplishments of the company, which has had its share of successes and disappointments, as well as colorful personalities, among both its authors and its employees. Today, Springer Publishing Company remains a thriving concern and this book is not only enlightening reading to anyone interested in publishing, business history, or Springer Publishing, but also serves as a fitting tribute to two people of unusual vision and intrepidity.



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