

American Archivist Reviews Report to the Editorial Board Annual Meeting, 2013

American Archivist Reviews

In May of 2012, Amy Cooper Cary agreed to serve a second two-year term as Reviews Editor. She will continue until August of 2014.

In August of 2012, we brought Alexandra Orchard (whom you've now met!) on board as our SAA Reviews Portal Coordinator for a one year trial period. In June of this year, in discussion with Greg and Teresa, we decided that, with a truly successful launch of the (newly reconceived) Reviews Portal site, to ask Alexandra to continue for a 3 year appointment. Alexandra has agreed, and will continue to act as Review Portal Coordinator until August 2015.

With the overlap of a new Reviews editor in 2014 and the Review Portal Coordinator in 2015, we will ensure the consistency in the online reviews area as it continues to grow.

Reviews Portal Report August 2012 - July 2013 [Alexandra Orchard]

As noted on the Reviews Portal site, the Portal seeks to "complement the textual reviews found in The American Archivist. Specifically, the Reviews Portal is envisioned as an extension of the reviews section found in the journal, but with a more specific focus: digital (and digitized) archival content, and its related sources." The Portal provides a Resources and Tools list, with categories including copyright and intellectual property, data, digital materials and social media, digital preservation, and web tools and technologies to assist archivists when working with digital archival materials. Additionally, this list serves as a starting point for reviewers, many of whom have chosen tools from this list to review.

Since November 2012, the Portal has published 10 reviews and contributed three reflections on John Fleckner's "Dear Mary Jane" to the Reflections on Your Favorite "American Archivist" Articles section.

To thematically tie the Reviews Portal to current SAA discussions and trends, the initial reviews featured discussed notions from John Voss' 2012 SAA plenary and how these ideas are reflected in the reviewed sites and projects. Reviews covered resources and projects across the globe, ranging from America to Australia, and most recently France. Topics included digitization projects, digital libraries, copyright, publishing platforms, and digital archival projects including SAA's Hurricane Sandy: Record, Remember, Rebuild. See <http://www2.archivists.org/reviews>

By building upon its first-year successes and focusing on the goals below, the Reviews Portal is poised for continued growth as it begins its second year:

- * Collaborate with current SAA initiatives to write timely reviews on current topics
- * Increase readership and awareness through outreach efforts (Contact SAA Roundtables, listservs, above collaboration, etc.)

* Increase review output to consistently publish 2 reviews per month

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We continue to publish reviews at roughly 6 per issue. These are published in the “Reviewed in *The American Archivist*” as well as in the journal (see <http://www2.archivists.org/reviewedinaa>). We’ve had some extremely well written reviews this year. I also find it interesting that I’ve had a couple of unsolicited reviews – that is, submissions by members who read a book and wanted to review it. It’s not a common model (most of the time, I’m the one knocking on e-doors and begging for reviewers!), but I have found a couple of terrific reviews this way!

Three segments of our online presence need review in the coming year:

- Resources and Tools – Alexandra did a wonderful job in compiling a list of tools, but I’d like to be sure this is updated and pertinent.
- Written by our Members – This is a segment we haven’t updated regularly. I still like the idea of keeping a list of books written by our members, but struggle with the best way to do this. Perhaps an online submission form?
- Purchase Reviewed Monographs – Again, a segment we haven’t updated regularly. For publishers outside of SAA, this is done as a service to our membership. I wonder if it’s a useful service or if members default to Amazon....

The need is to determine the utility of these segments to our membership (perhaps using Google analytics? A brief survey?) and determine the next best steps going forward.