

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
August 11-12, 2014  
Washington, D.C.**

**A&A List Working Group: Report and Recommendations**  
(Prepared by Matt Black, Christine Di Bella,  
Dennis Meissner, and Samantha Winn)

**BACKGROUND**

In response to ongoing concerns from many SAA members, the SAA Council appointed a short-term working group on June 26, 2014, to consider issues related to the administration of the Archives & Archivists Listserv (A&A). The working group was charged to gather feedback from SAA members and list participants, and to explore options to improve the list. The working group was also asked to review the list's Terms of Participation.

In addition to reviewing historic trends, statistics, and demographic information, the working group conducted a survey on the listserv from July 8 through July 22. The survey collected 1,285 completed responses. Approximately 80% of participants identified as current members of SAA. Approximately 84% identified as current subscribers to the A&A listserv. Thirty-four additional comments were received by e-mail. (See full survey report in **Appendix A.**)

What follows in the discussion below is a fairly broad summary of findings from the responses. In the interest of brevity, many raw numbers and percentages are omitted. The working group has also included a summary of the survey results as an appendix and will be happy to provide more detailed information as desired.

**DISCUSSION**

**Findings from the Survey**

- Although 84% of respondents indicated they were current subscribers to the listserv, less than 1% characterized their posting frequency as “regular” and only 11% characterized it as “occasional.” The remainder indicated that they infrequently or never post. The most common **barriers to listserv participation** were lack of time, lack of interest, concerns about behavior, and a preference for other venues or forms of online communication.
- A significant minority of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with **conduct on the listserv**, specifically identifying unprofessional behavior among participants and an environment that discourages dissent or disagreement. 20% of respondents indicated that they do not participate in the list as a result of this conduct; these individuals represent a broad spectrum

of professional cohorts, with more than two-thirds of this group identifying as mid- or late-career professionals. The results clearly indicate that generational differences are not solely to blame for perceptions of the listserv as unwelcoming or unsupportive.

- The behavior of listserv participants was the most prevalent deterrent to subscribing and posting to the listserv. Respondents frequently cited issues of hostility, unfriendliness, belittling, intimidation, “rants,” off-topic posts, and the volume of posts as reasons they did not participate. In a small number of cases, respondents reported that behavior on the listserv had **negatively impacted their view of SAA** or of the profession.
- Some respondents identified **accessibility and technical issues** as a barrier to their participation. Specific issues included difficulty navigating the digest, difficulty accessing or navigating the online archives, and general dissatisfaction with a listserv format. The volume of posts and the number of “out-of-office” replies were also frequently mentioned as deterrents.
- Regarding whether having a **listserv that serves the broader archival community** is of value, 71% of survey respondents indicated it was “Very Important” and 26% responded that it was “Somewhat Important.” Less than 3% deemed it “Not Important.” There were also 42 comments in response to this question, most of which indicated strong support for the list in principle or in its current form.
- Regarding whether **SAA should host the list**, 39% of the respondents said SAA hosting was “Very Important,” 38% said “Somewhat Important,” and 23% said “Not Important.” A small number of respondents suggested that SAA start a new general interest listserv to replace A&A.
- There appears to be little support for making the listserv an **SAA members-only forum**.
- **Moderation or firmer administration of the list** was mentioned frequently by respondents to many of the open-ended questions, with many comments representing the extremes on that continuum. Pro-moderation was weakly favored (60% vs. 56%) over no moderation. However, a significant percentage of respondents who do not currently subscribe indicated they would very likely or absolutely subscribe to a moderated list. Concerns about moderation included frequent claims that it would “limit free speech” or that it would “kill” the forum because people would stop posting if they felt their behavior was being regulated. Many respondents highlighted SAA roundtable and section lists, especially the Lone Arrangers List, as models for behavior and content management.
- Regarding **structure and format**, there is only very weak support for multiple lists or for a very structured general list (though the latter might appeal to many users if the technology were right). Threading Digest topics and requiring more robust subject lines were frequently recommended. Other association or field-specific listservs mentioned multiple times as models included RBMS, Ex Libris (both of whose firm administrators were cited several times as maintaining order on the lists), H-Net lists, PADG, RECMGMT-L, ARCAN-L, AMIA, AUTOCAT, EAD, Code4Lib, and MARAC lists. Although a listserv was the most popular format among respondents, 15% mentioned groups on social media platforms like

LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.

- Regarding most-valued **content**, respondents expressed a clear preference for (1) archival practice and policy questions (80% read regularly), (2) job postings (50%), and (3) announcements (45%). Less than 14% of respondents indicated they regularly read general interest posts not related to archives and many comments requested that these be removed from the list. Only 32% indicated that they read news items regularly, although news items have comprised more than 50% of posts on the list for a number of years. Although the solution of maintaining a separate list for news items received mixed feedback, a number of respondents indicated that the volume of news postings deterred them from participating and limited the utility of the listserv digest.
- Many respondents suggested **changes to the Terms of Participation**. The most common recommendations included banning discussion of the listserv or its participants on the list, defining unacceptable behavior and appropriate etiquette, providing clear guidelines as to what can and cannot be posted to the list, limiting the number of times per day a person can post to the list, specifying kinds of information to be included in subject lines or certain kinds of posts such as job announcements, and explicitly linking the Terms of Participation to SAA's Code of Conduct. Most of these suggested actions were mentioned in comments responding to other questions throughout the survey as well. Multiple respondents suggested that the Council make the Terms of Participation more visible by sending periodic reminders to the list.
- Survey responses generally did not trend along any particular demographic lines, as has been suggested by some in both comments submitted to the working group and on other forums. For example, there is no statistical evidence to suggest a generational divide in how respondents view the list.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the survey data leave us a lot to parse and chew on, a few findings emerge with enough strength to put forward as recommendations to the Council. They include:

1. Retain A&A as a general archives forum not restricted to SAA members.
2. A&A should continue in listserv form, although this might be a good time to investigate more robust technological platforms.
3. SAA should continue to host the list, since doing so confers some authority and provides a service to the archives profession.
4. List behavior should be guided by the SAA Code of Conduct and strengthened Terms of Participation (see suggested revision in **Appendixes B and C**). The strengthened Terms of Participation add additional categories of posts that are prohibited from the list, including discussion on the list of the listserv itself and the behavior of individual posters. Additionally, the new revision removes the exception for general humor posts.
5. The list should be administered more actively and transparently. A visible list administrator(s) should be present to ensure that list behavior meets these standards and

empowered to enforce appropriate consequences when it does not. List administrator(s) should be drawn from the SAA membership and supported by the SAA leadership and staff.

6. General interest posts (specifically virtual picnics, Friday Flowers, and general humor items) should no longer be allowed on the list. Those who want to post or read this type of content should be encouraged to seek alternate forums.
7. News items should not be posted to the list without relevant commentary that is intended to promote discussion. As was jointly decided by SAA and Peter Kurilecz in June 2014, links to news items should continue to be posted in a separate forum without duplication on the A&A list.
8. Certain technical improvements should be considered, including converting the Digest table of contents to hyperlinks.

**Support Statement:** Recent feedback regarding the list, including the survey outlined above, has made it evident that the *status quo* for A&A does not meet the needs of many SAA members or the profession at large. Additionally, the current environment on the listserv reflects poorly on SAA as an organization. The recommendations presented above are solidly grounded in findings from the survey and, as a package, they seem to address the most serious pain points in the least disruptive manner possible.

**Impact on Strategic Priorities:** These recommended changes directly serve Strategic Priority #4, especially sub-priorities 1 and 2, in that they seek to facilitate effective communication with and among members and to enhance opportunities for member participation.

**Fiscal Impact:** The recommendations cause no immediate fiscal impact. Changing the listserv platform could entail additional software costs. Pivoting to a more actively administered forum may require significantly more time and labor from the A&A List Coordinator. The Council should request that the SAA staff review the A&A List Coordinator job description and adjust it accordingly.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

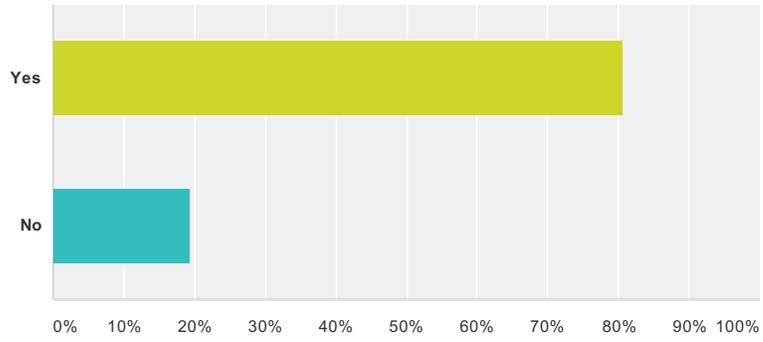
The Council may wish to consider the following questions as part of its discussion:

1. What is the future of SAA's relationship to the Archives and Archivists listserv?
2. Who would perform the additional work required to monitor the list and enforce the Terms of Participation?
3. What mechanisms could be put in place to collect feedback and concerns?

# A&A List Feedback 2014

## Q1 Are you currently an SAA member?

Answered: 1,276 Skipped: 9

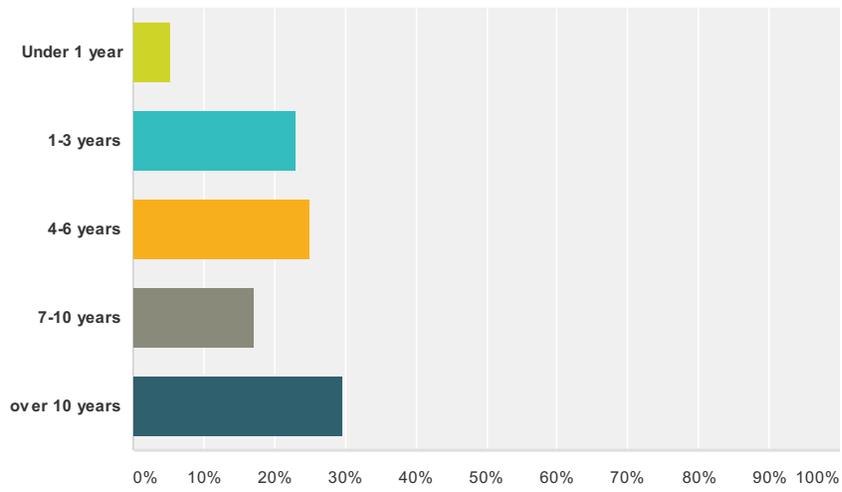


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	80.64%	1,029
No	19.36%	247
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,276</b>

# A&A List Feedback 2014

## Q2 If you are a current SAA member, for how long have you been a member?

Answered: 1,032 Skipped: 253

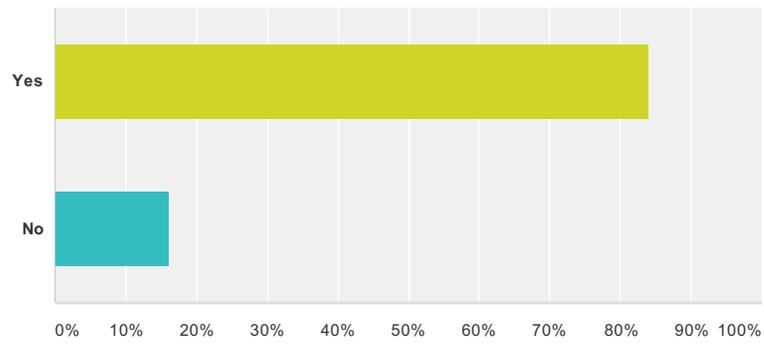


Answer Choices	Responses
Under 1 year	5.23% 54
1-3 years	22.87% 236
4-6 years	25.10% 259
7-10 years	17.15% 177
over 10 years	29.65% 306
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,032</b>

# A&A List Feedback 2014

## Q3 Are you currently a subscriber to the A&A listserv?

Answered: 1,263 Skipped: 22

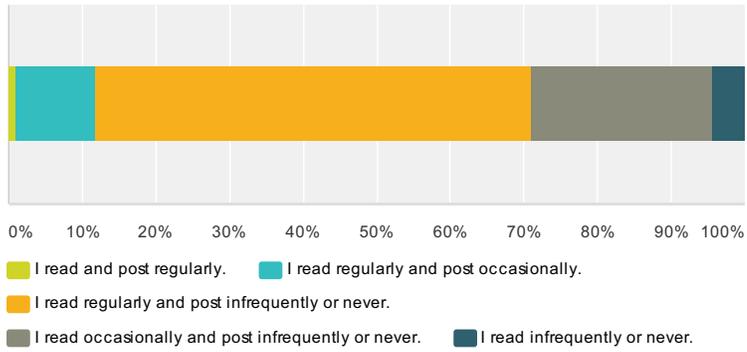


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	83.93%	1,060
No	16.07%	203
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,263</b>

# A&A List Feedback 2014

## Q4 If you subscribe to the A&A list, how would you characterize your participation?

Answered: 1,108 Skipped: 177

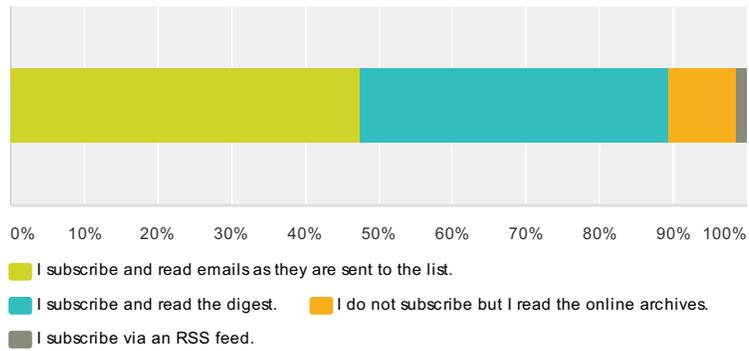


Answer Choices	Responses
I read and post regularly.	0.99% 11
I read regularly and post occasionally.	10.92% 121
I read regularly and post infrequently or never.	58.94% 653
I read occasionally and post infrequently or never.	24.82% 275
I read infrequently or never.	4.33% 48
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,108</b>

# A&A List Feedback 2014

## Q5 If you read the A&A list, even if you do not subscribe, how do you access postings?

Answered: 1,134 Skipped: 151

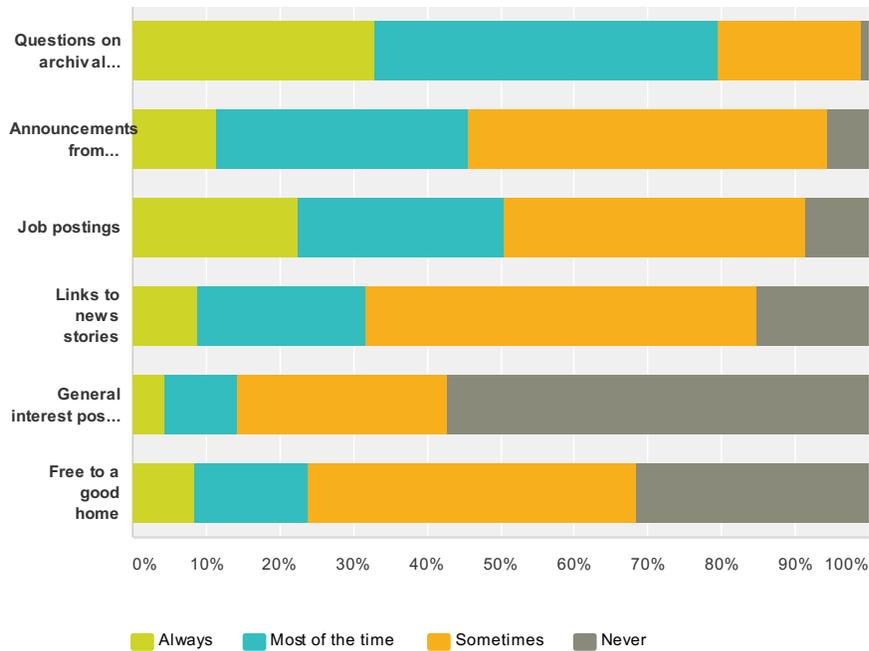


Answer Choices	Responses	
I subscribe and read emails as they are sent to the list.	47.44%	538
I subscribe and read the digest.	41.98%	476
I do not subscribe but I read the online archives.	9.26%	105
I subscribe via an RSS feed.	1.32%	15
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,134</b>

# A&A List Feedback 2014

**Q6 If you read the A&A list, how often do you read the following kinds of posts? (Understandably much depends on the specific content, but please characterize how likely, in general, you are to read these kinds of posts.)**

Answered: 1,198 Skipped: 87

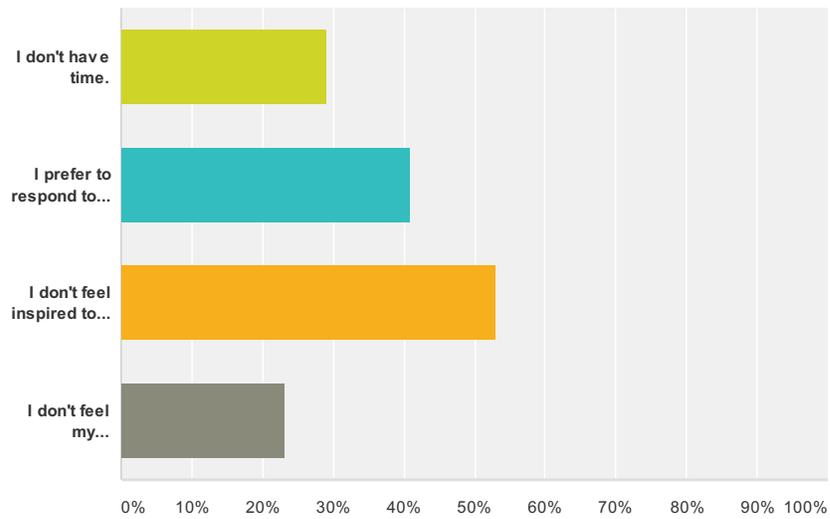


	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never	Total
Questions on archival practice and policy	32.78% 392	46.74% 559	19.57% 234	0.92% 11	1,196
Announcements from repositories and organizations	11.43% 136	34.03% 405	48.99% 583	5.55% 66	1,190
Job postings	22.39% 266	28.03% 333	40.91% 486	8.67% 103	1,188
Links to news stories	8.75% 104	22.81% 271	53.28% 633	15.15% 180	1,188
General interest posts not directly about archives (e.g. Friday flowers, virtual picnic)	4.47% 53	9.70% 115	28.50% 338	57.34% 680	1,186
Free to a good home	8.32% 98	15.62% 184	44.40% 523	31.66% 373	1,178

# A&A List Feedback 2014

## Q7 If you read the A&A list but do not post, why don't you post? (check all that apply)

Answered: 897 Skipped: 388

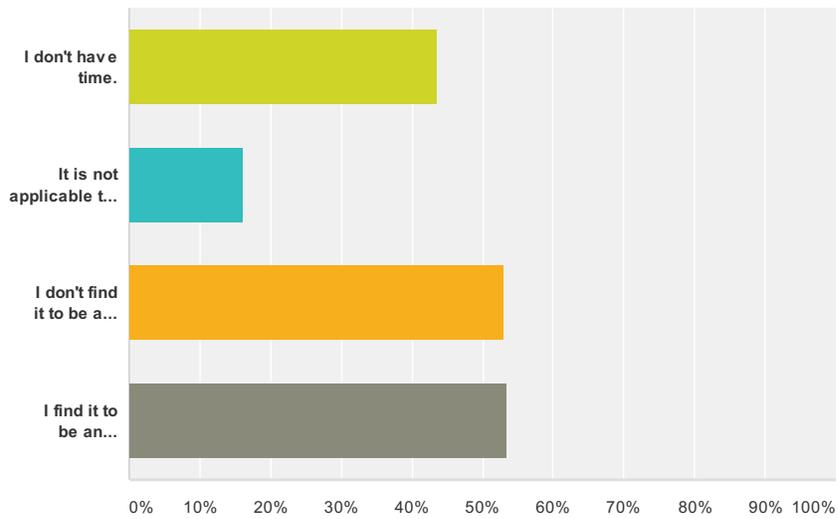


Answer Choices	Responses
I don't have time.	28.99% 260
I prefer to respond to posters offlist.	40.91% 367
I don't feel inspired to contribute based on the content of postings.	53.07% 476
I don't feel my contributions are welcome.	23.08% 207
<b>Total Respondents: 897</b>	

# A&A List Feedback 2014

## Q8 If you do not currently subscribe to the A&A list, why not? (check all that apply)

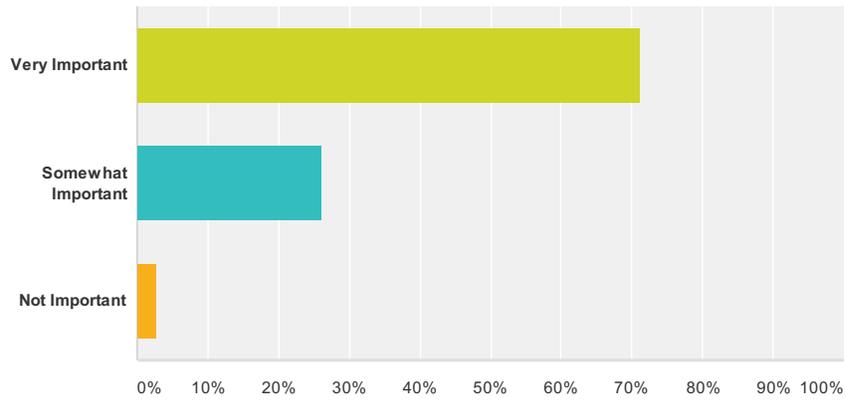
Answered: 204 Skipped: 1,081



Answer Choices	Responses
I don't have time.	43.63% 89
It is not applicable to my current work.	16.18% 33
I don't find it to be a useful forum.	52.94% 108
I find it to be an unfriendly or unsupportive environment.	53.43% 109
<b>Total Respondents: 204</b>	

**Q9 How important is it to you that there be a forum like the A&A list that serves the broader archives community?**

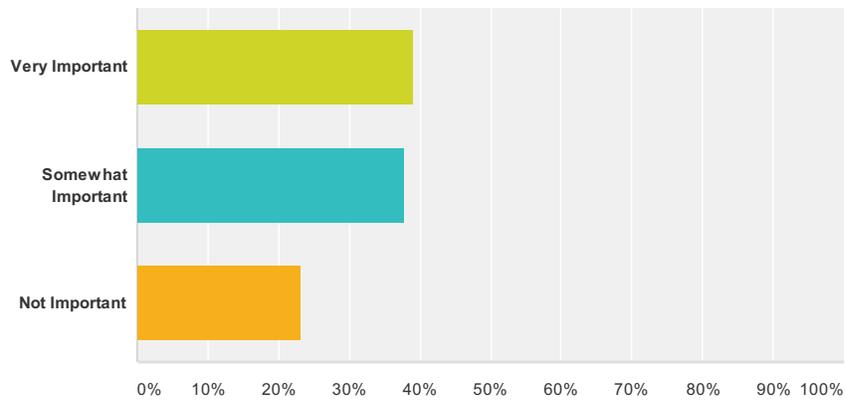
Answered: 1,262 Skipped: 23



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Very Important	71.24%	899
Somewhat Important	26.15%	330
Not Important	2.61%	33
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,262</b>

**Q10 If you answered anything other than "Not Important" for the last question, how important is it to you that SAA host the forum serving the broader archives community (including non-members)?**

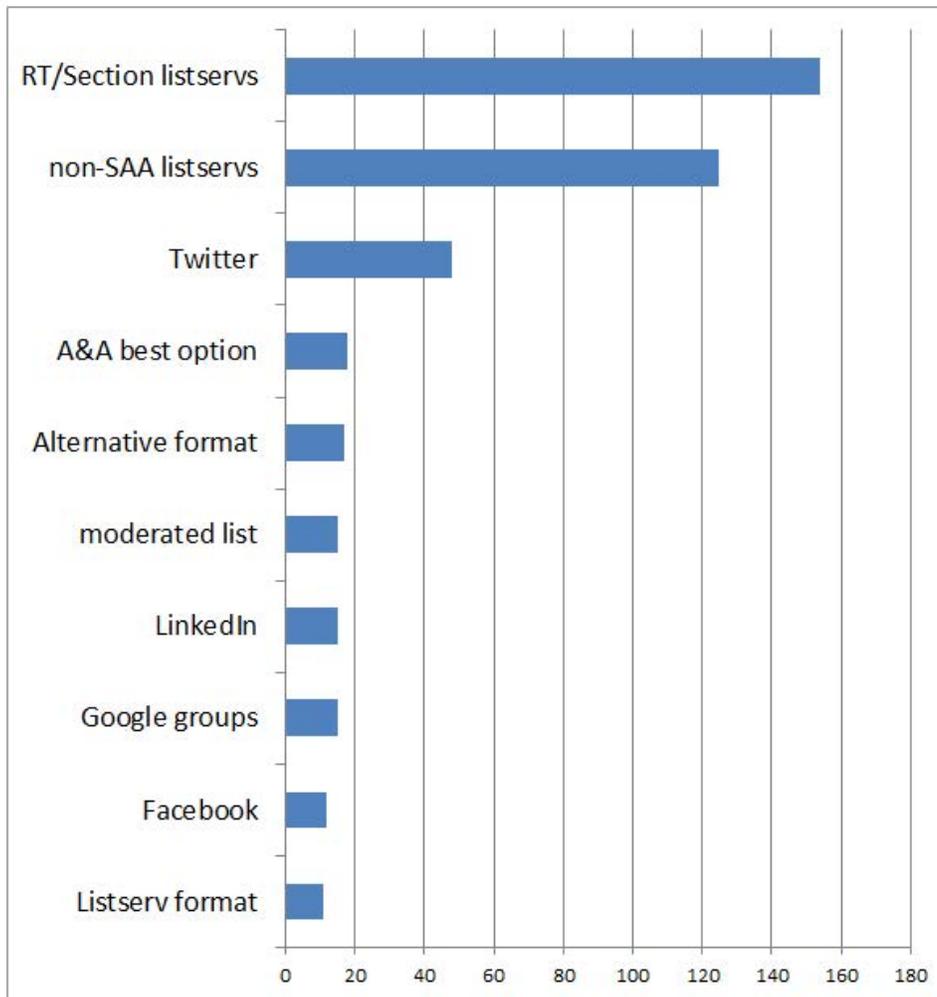
Answered: 1,075 Skipped: 210



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Very Important	38.98%	419
Somewhat Important	37.77%	406
Not Important	23.26%	250
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,075</b>

**Q11 Are there other professional communication forums you use besides A&A that you would recommend the A&A List should emulate? (for example, other association listservs, listservs for specific sections and roundtables in SAA, Twitter, specific Google groups)**

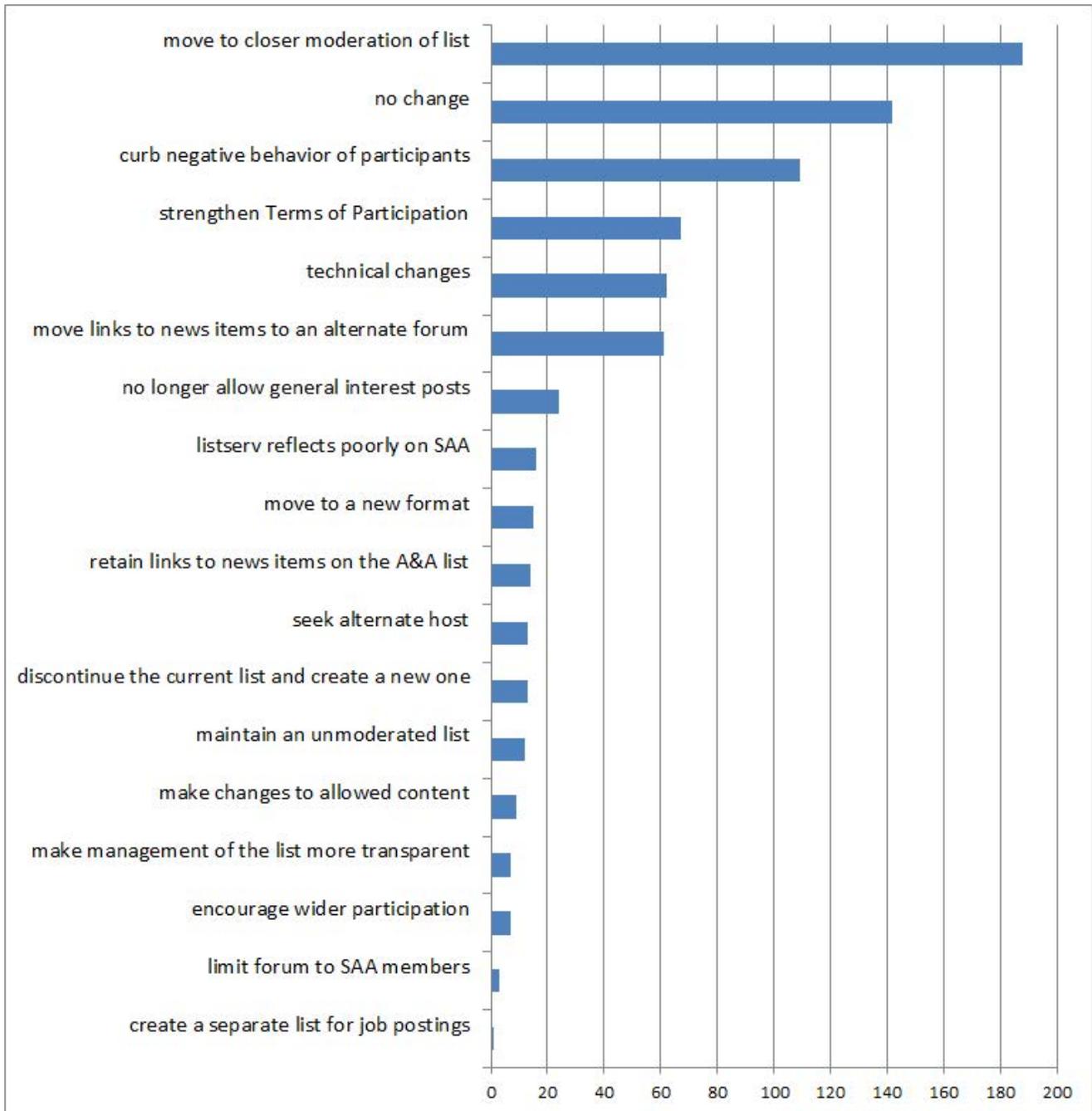
Answered: 445 Skipped: 840



# A&A List Feedback 2014

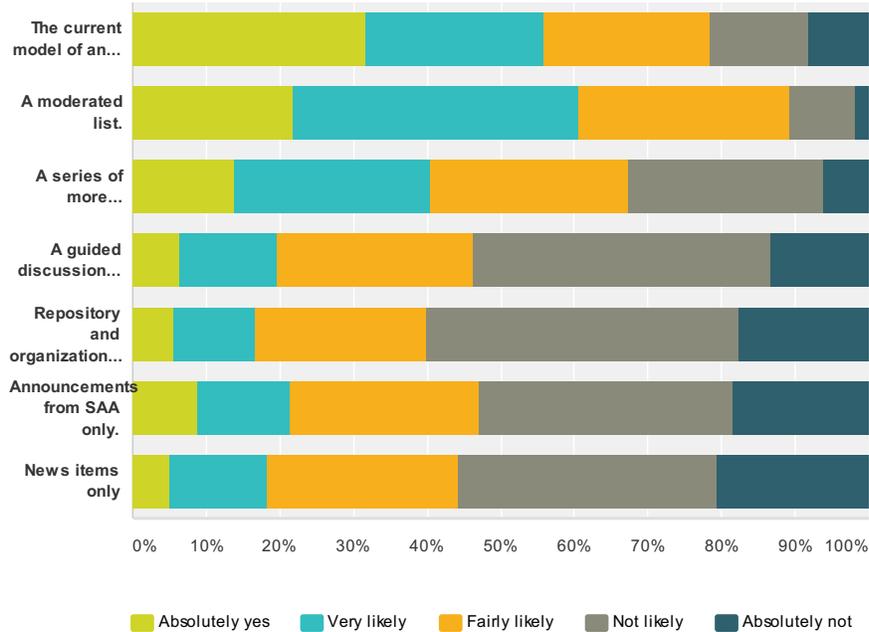
## Q12 What changes, if any, would you suggest for the structure and/or management of the A&A List?

Answered: 600 Skipped: 685



## Q13 How likely would you be to subscribe to an A&A-like forum under the following scenarios?

Answered: 1,259 Skipped: 26

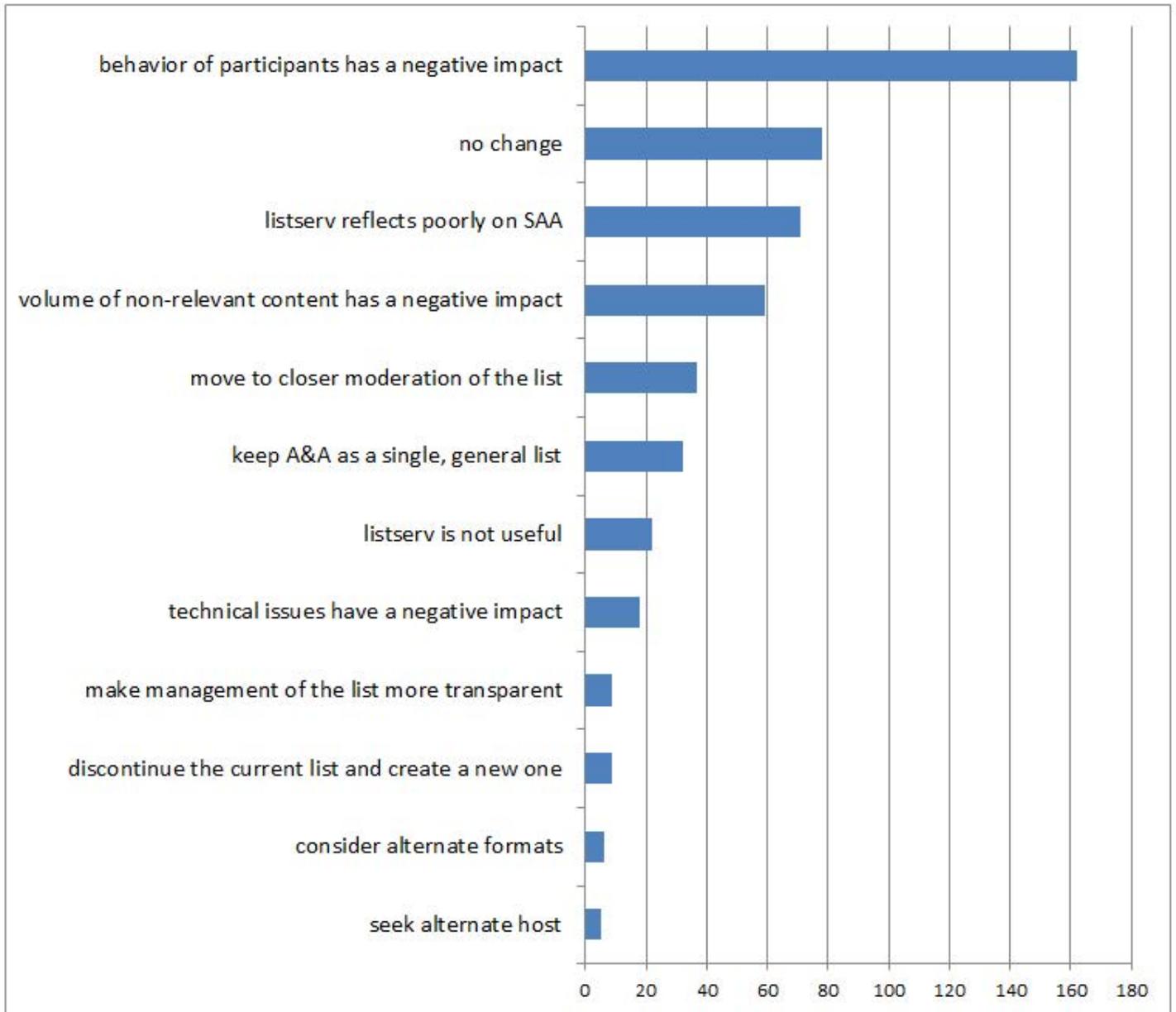


	Absolutely yes	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not likely	Absolutely not	Total
The current model of an unmoderated list.	31.71% 391	24.17% 298	22.38% 276	13.46% 166	8.27% 102	1,233
A moderated list.	21.85% 271	38.71% 480	28.55% 354	9.03% 112	1.85% 23	1,240
A series of more specialized lists centered on varied topics, such as values and policies, functions and procedures, and current professional/political issues.	13.87% 172	26.53% 329	26.85% 333	26.45% 328	6.29% 78	1,240
A guided discussion list, featuring specific discussion topics proposed by the list administrator.	6.37% 79	13.23% 164	26.77% 332	40.24% 499	13.39% 166	1,240
Repository and organization announcements only.	5.61% 69	10.97% 135	23.23% 286	42.57% 524	17.63% 217	1,231
Announcements from SAA only.	8.91% 110	12.56% 155	25.61% 316	34.44% 425	18.48% 228	1,234
News items only	5.07% 62	13.15% 161	25.98% 318	35.21% 431	20.59% 252	1,224

# A&A List Feedback 2014

**Q14 Please share any other comments you have about the A&A list or professional communication forums in general.**

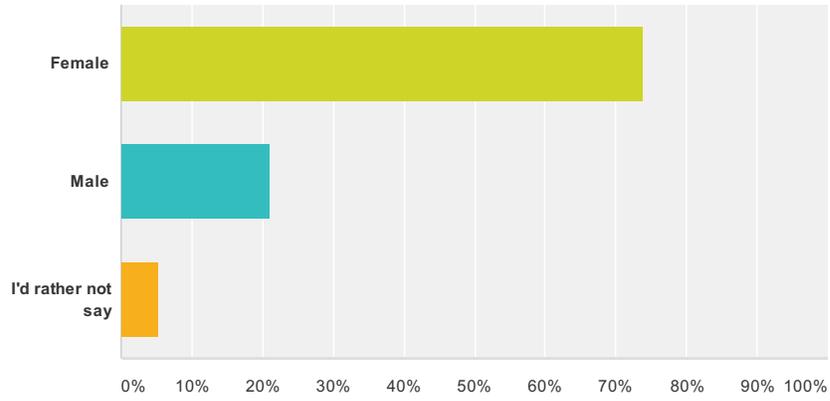
Answered: 519 Skipped: 766



# A&A List Feedback 2014

## Q15 Gender

Answered: 1,251 Skipped: 34

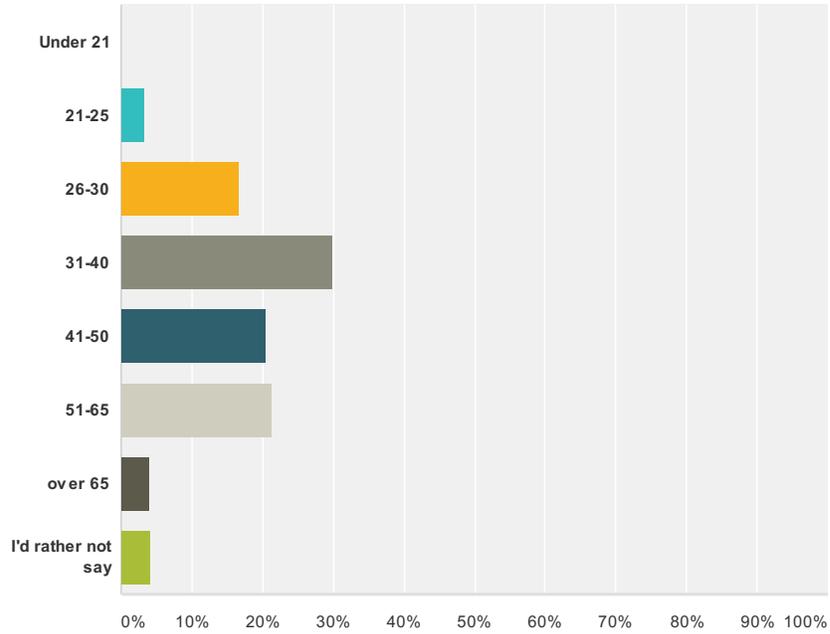


Answer Choices	Responses	
Female	73.86%	924
Male	21.02%	263
I'd rather not say	5.12%	64
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,251</b>

# A&A List Feedback 2014

## Q16 Age

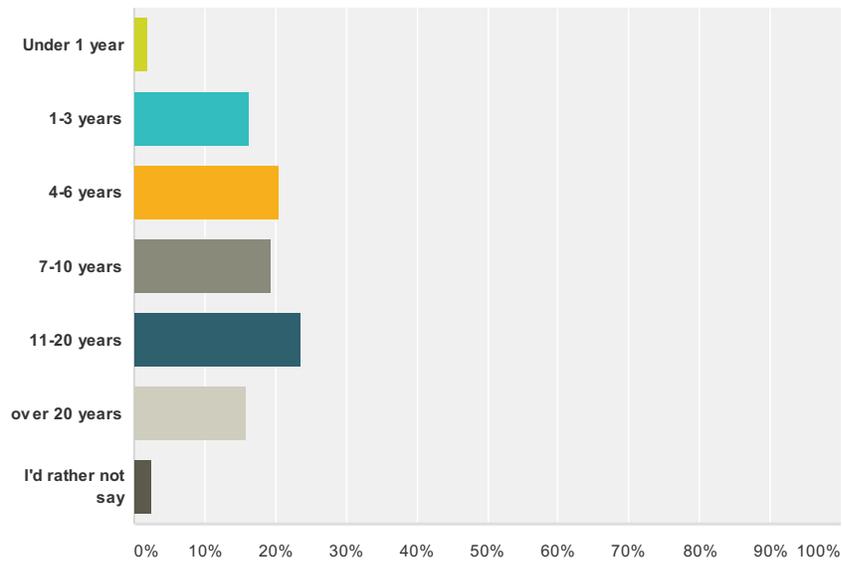
Answered: 1,253 Skipped: 32



Answer Choices	Responses
Under 21	0.00% 0
21-25	3.43% 43
26-30	16.76% 210
31-40	29.85% 374
41-50	20.43% 256
51-65	21.39% 268
over 65	3.99% 50
I'd rather not say	4.15% 52
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,253</b>

**Q17 For how long have you been in the archives field?**

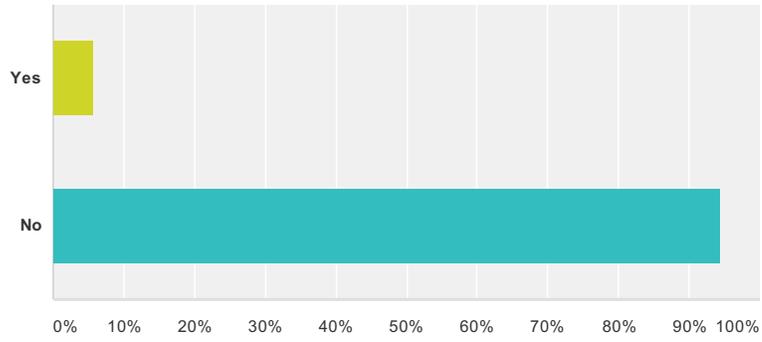
Answered: 1,227 Skipped: 58



Answer Choices	Responses
Under 1 year	1.96% 24
1-3 years	16.30% 200
4-6 years	20.37% 250
7-10 years	19.48% 239
11-20 years	23.63% 290
over 20 years	15.81% 194
I'd rather not say	2.44% 30
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,227</b>

Q18 Are you currently a student?

Answered: 1,244 Skipped: 41



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	5.55%	69
No	94.45%	1,175
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,244</b>

## Proposed Revisions to A&A List Terms of Participation (With Revision Markup)

### Archives & Archivists (A&A) List Terms of Participation

Please read the *Terms of Participation* below before subscribing to A&A. By subscribing, you agree to these terms.

#### Background and Mission

The Archives and Archivists (A&A) List was established in 1989 by Donna Harlan and John Harlan as an open forum for all topics relating to archival theory and practice. Over the years, A&A has had various homes. In late 1993, the list was migrated to Miami University. In 1998, the Society of American Archivists (SAA) assumed sponsorship of the list as a service to the archives profession. It remained hosted at Miami University under the stewardship of Robert M. Schmidt until September 2006, at which time SAA assumed full ownership of the list and responsibility for its ongoing maintenance.

#### Audience

The principal audiences include archivists, archival educators, and students enrolled in graduate archival education courses and programs. The list is open to all individuals with an interest in the archives profession and in the preservation and promotion of archival materials. SAA membership is not required for participation in the list. Participants are required, however, to “register” with the Society of American Archivists. Please see “Responsibilities of Participants” below.

#### Scope of the List

The purpose of the list is to foster discussion of archives and archives issues. Subjects that are appropriate to the list include all aspects of the theory and practice of the archives profession.

*Messages that are unrelated to the archives profession are off topic and are prohibited. ~~Other~~ Specific ff-topie- prohibited subjects include:*

- General interest posts unrelated to archives.
- Discussion of the listserv itself or the behavior of individual posters. (Complaints or concerns about the list or individuals on the list should be directed to the list administrators for consideration.)
- Unsolicited commercial advertisements for goods and/or services (a.k.a. spam)\* (Commercial vendors are not prohibited from posting *responses* to list messages, but such postings should contribute in a useful way to an existing discussion or line of inquiry.);

- Messages directed to specific individuals (please contact them directly);
- Flames (personal attacks);
- Political speech unrelated to archival issues, including, but not limited to endorsing or attacking a particular political candidate or party, or the views of any candidate or party;
- Virus warnings (generally, such messages are hoaxes);
- ~~General humor (see below).~~

~~\* Excluding those nonprofit archives and allied associations listed online at <http://www.archivists.org/assoc-orgs>.~~

~~Links to external content (such as articles, news, blog posts, announcements) should not be posted without relevant commentary that is intended to promote discussion. Merely posting a link and/or excerpt of external content without comment is discouraged.~~

~~For those interested in following archives-related news content, we recommend Peter Kurilecz's "Archives in the News" list: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/archives-in-the-news>~~

~~Regarding humor: The posting of humorous anecdotes (a.k.a. "Friday Funnies"), especially as they pertain to archives and/or a current thread, has a long tradition on the A&A List. General humor, however, is off topic. Participants are especially encouraged to label Friday Funnies for the benefit of colleagues who may wish to filter these messages and to be mindful of the professional nature of the A&A List at all times.—~~

## Netiquette

Participants are expected to follow the core rules of netiquette. See an excerpted version from the book, *Netiquette*, by Virginia Shea at: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>. Some key points are summarized below (1):

- Messages should trigger discussion through a question or observation, or should further a discussion by adding something new.
- Participants should remember that other readers receive messages in a different context from the author.
- Messages, especially responses, should be long enough to be understandable, including enough of the original message (by quoting or paraphrasing) to provide context. When replying to a message, avoid including the full text of long messages.
- Avoid inflammatory remarks of a personal nature. Similarly, when reading a message, be slow to take offense. In general, assume that an individual had good intentions when posting a message, but the rapidity of the medium, the lack of visual cues, and other factors may make an otherwise innocent message seem insulting. Countering with insults on the list is considered off topic.
- Participants should consider whether their reply is of interest to the list as a whole or only to the individual making the posting. Do not automatically use the reply key (which usually responds to the whole list). The best and most experienced participants will occasionally make this mistake, which is entirely forgivable.

- Avoid posting styled text (messages formatted with html code) to the list, as many email readers and the digest readers are unable to read these messages easily.

*Footnote 1: Taken from the SAA Visual Materials Section list Terms of Participation.*

## **Blog Postings**

~~Due to the high volume of list messages, participants are discouraged from advertising blog postings and other content that is frequently updated elsewhere on the Web. Blogs offer the option of subscription through RSS, which enables those who wish to follow the updates to do so. Similarly, participants should consider the medium when posting frequent updates or long expository messages to the list. A blog may be a more appropriate forum for such content.~~

## **Companion Forums**

~~Guided by participant feedback, at times the list administrators will identify content that works best spun off into a separate forum, which may be independently administered or administered in conjunction with SAA. As of June 2014, a separate forum has been established for links to news stories about archives, available at [ ]. List administrators will evaluate on an ongoing basis whether there is other content for which this is appropriate.~~

## **Copyright**

~~The A&A List is managed in accordance with SAA's copyright policy (*TK: move deleted section below to a more general SAA copyright policy*).~~

~~As a professional association concerned with protecting intellectual property rights of authors whose works are held in archival repositories, SAA expects participants to set a high standard of respect for copyright. Copyrighted material beyond brief quotations should not be posted to the A&A List without appropriate permissions. Participants wishing to direct others to copyrighted text are encouraged to post a link to the copyrighted materials.~~

~~**PARTICIPANTS ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL MATERIALS THEY POST TO THE ARCHIVES & ARCHIVISTS LIST.**~~

## **Copyright and License Agreement**

~~Participants retain copyright to their individual postings ("the Work"). By posting a message to the list, participants grant to the Society of American Archivists and its agents a nonexclusive, royalty free, irrevocable, perpetual, worldwide, and fully sub-licensable license to use, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, translate, create derivative works from, incorporate into other works, distribute, publicly perform, publicly display, and otherwise exploit such content, in~~

whole or in part, in any form, media, or technology now known or later developed for the benefit of the archives profession. Nothing in this license is intended to reduce, limit, or restrict any rights arising from fair use, first sale, or other limitations on the exclusive rights of the copyright owner under copyright law or other applicable laws. Posted messages are retained in the list archives and are publically accessible. SAA will delete messages from the list archives in cases of copyright infringement. Otherwise, SAA's general practice is to decline requests to remove messages from the list archives.

### **Copyright Infringements**

As a professional association concerned with protecting intellectual property rights of authors whose works are held in archival repositories, SAA expects participants to set a high standard of respect for copyright. Copyrighted material beyond brief quotations should not be posted to the A&A List without appropriate permissions. Participants wishing to direct others to copyrighted text are encouraged to post a link to the copyrighted materials on the Web as long as: a) such links do not circumvent any fees charged by the site and b) the URL is not to a site that is itself in violation of copyright.

### **PARTICIPANTS ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL MATERIALS THEY POST TO THE ARCHIVES & ARCHIVISTS LIST.**

It is SAA's policy to respond to notices of alleged copyright infringement that comply with the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA). The agent designated to respond to reports alleging copyright infringements, in accordance with the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, is Nancy Beaumont, SAA Executive Director.

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act specifies that all infringement claims must be in writing (either electronic mail or paper letter) and must include the following elements:

1. A physical or electronic signature,
2. Identification of the infringed work,
3. Identification of the infringed material,
4. Contact information for the complainant, e.g., address, telephone number, electronic mail address,
5. A statement that the complaining party has a good faith belief that use of the material in the manner complained of is not authorized by the copyright owner or the law, and
6. A statement that the information contained in the notification is accurate, and under penalty of perjury, that the complaining party is authorized to act on behalf of the copyright owner.

### *DMCA Agent Contact Information*

Nancy Beaumont, Executive Director  
Society of American Archivists  
17 North State Street, Suite 1425  
Chicago, IL 60602

Email: [nbeaumont@archivists.org](mailto:nbeaumont@archivists.org)  
Phone: 312/606-0722  
Fax: 312/606-0728

~~On receipt of a conformant complaint of copyright infringement, SAA's response may include removing or disabling access to material claimed to be the subject of infringing activity and/or terminating the participation of the infringer. If material is removed or access is disabled in response to a DMCA notice, SAA will make a good faith attempt to contact the participant who posted the content so that he/she will be able to make a counter notification pursuant to sections 512(g)(2) and (3) of that Act. It is our policy to document all notices of alleged infringement on which we act.~~

### **Responsibility of Participants**

Participants agree to restrict their messages to the scope of the list; to follow [SAA's Code of Conduct \(http://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-code-of-conduct\)](http://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-code-of-conduct) and generally accepted principles of netiquette; to respect the interests and rights of other participants and of the Society of American Archivists; and to respect the law. ~~A&A is an un-moderated forum.~~ Participants are solely responsible for their postings.

~~Due to certain technical requirements, subscriber information for all SAA hosted discussion forums is must be stored in SAA's central database of member and nonmember contacts.~~  
~~B~~Therefore, by subscribing to the A&A List, participants also grant SAA permission to record essential contact information (e.g., name and email address) in its central database. Personal contact information will be administered in strict accordance with SAA's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy (<http://www2.archivists.org/privacy>~~http://www.archivists.org/privacy.asp~~).

The Archives & Archivists List is a professional forum. SAA reserves the right to block or permanently remove participants if off-topic or abusive messages threaten to disrupt the functioning of the list. SAA may also block or remove participants for violating the copyright of others or for any other actions that do not conform to these Terms of Participation. Punitive action is rare and generally follows wanton and/or persistent disregard for these Terms of Participation. In order to ensure due process, punitive action shall take place only after formal notification of an infraction and initiation of a 90-day probation period. Upon additional misconduct within the 90 days, an individual may be banned by approval of the Council. Misconduct after the 90 days will result in a one-year probation. (Upon misconduct within this longer probationary period, an individual may also be banned by approval of the Council.) A banned subscriber may petition the Council for reinstatement after one year. Such appeals must be accompanied by a written and signed statement agreeing to comply with the Terms of Participation.

### **List Ownership**

The Archives & Archivists List is owned by the Society of American Archivists. The SAA Council is charged with setting policy on the list. Two Council members are assigned the

responsibility of monitoring the list and making recommendations for responses on behalf of the Council when issues arise. The A&A List Coordinator, reporting to SAA's Executive Director, oversees the daily operations of the list, including assisting participants with their subscriptions and enforcing the Terms of Participation.

*A&A List Coordinator:* Melanie Mueller ([mmueller@archivists.org](mailto:mmueller@archivists.org))

### **Disclaimer**

The opinions expressed on the Archives & Archivists List do not necessarily represent those of SAA and are not endorsed by the Society.

*Revised and approved by the SAA Council, August 1, 2006. Revised August 10, 2009; May 16, 2013.*

*This version proposed to the SAA Council on August 4, 2014.*

## **Proposed Revisions to A&A List Terms of Participation** (Final Copy, No Markup)

### **Archives & Archivists (A&A) List Terms of Participation**

Please read the *Terms of Participation* below before subscribing to A&A. By subscribing, you agree to these terms.

#### **Background and Mission**

The Archives and Archivists (A&A) List was established in 1989 by Donna Harlan and John Harlan as an open forum for all topics relating to archival theory and practice. Over the years, A&A has had various homes. In late 1993, the list was migrated to Miami University. In 1998, the Society of American Archivists (SAA) assumed sponsorship of the list as a service to the archives profession. It remained hosted at Miami University under the stewardship of Robert M. Schmidt until September 2006, at which time SAA assumed full ownership of the list and responsibility for its ongoing maintenance.

#### **Audience**

The principal audiences include archivists, archival educators, and students enrolled in graduate archival education courses and programs. The list is open to all individuals with an interest in the archives profession and in the preservation and promotion of archival materials. SAA membership is not required for participation in the list. Participants are required, however, to “register” with the Society of American Archivists. Please see “Responsibilities of Participants” below.

#### **Scope of the List**

The purpose of the list is to foster discussion of archives and archives issues, including all aspects of the theory and practice of the archives profession.

***Messages that are unrelated to the archives profession are off topic and are prohibited.***

Specific prohibited subjects include:

- General interest posts unrelated to archives.
- Discussion of the listserv itself or the behavior of individual posters. (Complaints or concerns about the list or individuals on the list should be directed to the list administrators for consideration.)
- Unsolicited commercial advertisements for goods and/or services (a.k.a. spam). (Commercial vendors are not prohibited from posting *responses* to list messages, but such postings should contribute in a useful way to an existing discussion or line of inquiry.)

- Messages directed to specific individuals (please contact them directly).
- Flames (personal attacks).
- Political speech unrelated to archival issues, including, but not limited to, endorsing or attacking a particular political candidate or party, or the views of any candidate or party.
- Virus warnings (generally, such messages are hoaxes).

Links to external content (such as articles, news, blog posts, and announcements) should not be posted without relevant commentary that is intended to promote discussion. Merely posting a link and/or excerpt of external content without comment is discouraged.

For those interested in following archives-related news content, we recommend Peter Kurilecz's "Archives in the News" list: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/archives-in-the-news>

## **Netiquette**

Participants are expected to follow the core rules of netiquette. See an excerpted version from the book *Netiquette* by Virginia Shea at: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>. Some key points are summarized below (*I*):

- Messages should trigger discussion through a question or observation, or should further a discussion by adding something new.
- Participants should remember that other readers receive messages in a different context from the author.
- Messages, especially responses, should be long enough to be understandable, including enough of the original message (by quoting or paraphrasing) to provide context. When replying to a message, avoid including the full text of long messages.
- Avoid inflammatory remarks of a personal nature. Similarly, when reading a message, be slow to take offense. In general, assume that an individual had good intentions when posting a message, but the rapidity of the medium, the lack of visual cues, and other factors may make an otherwise innocent message seem insulting. Countering with insults on the list is considered off topic.
- Participants should consider whether their reply is of interest to the list as a whole or only to the individual making the posting. Do not automatically use the reply key (which usually responds to the whole list). The best and most experienced participants will occasionally make this mistake, which is entirely forgivable.
- Avoid posting styled text (messages formatted with html code) to the list, as many email readers and the digest readers are unable to read these messages easily.

*Footnote 1: Taken from the SAA Visual Materials Section list Terms of Participation.*

## **Copyright**

The A&A List is managed in accordance with SAA's copyright policy (*TK: Move deleted section to a more general SAA copyright policy*).

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