Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
November 20, 2020
Virtual Meeting

American Archivist Editor
(Prepared by Amy Cooper Cary)

Work of Outgoing Editor

American Archivist Editor Cal Lee stepped down as of November 1, 2020. During his tenure, Lee made significant efforts to improve both process and content for the journal:

- He began the Hidden Content Project, which drew attention to material in the journal's back issues that was not easily discoverable, and will continue to help inform the critical process of "breaking out" material in digital issues going forward.
- Improvements were made in adding metadata to our back issues.
- Improvements were made in supporting the use of metrics to evaluate our content.
- Lee began significant work to refine the classification of articles. We will establish an internal working group with a goal of highlighting classification terms focused on diversity and inclusion.
- Lee developed a relationship with the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science, which will support the Committee on Research, Data, and Assessment in developing a data repository, and will assist authors with resources to support high-quality statistical research.

Lee's tenure was also marked by significant growth in numerous aspects of the journal:

- The journal has seen a steady increase in both the number of submissions and the number of peer reviewers. We have received more than 40 submissions/year, and we have more than 300 peer reviewers.
- Reviews both in the print journal and in the Portal have been re-imagined and improved under Bethany Anderson's work as Reviews Editor.
- Lee invited and encouraged international voices on the Editorial Board and in the journal.
- He supported the <in-context> podcast, which highlights the voices of our colleagues, and has increased the Editorial Board's involvement with Sections.

Editor Transition

In mid-October, Lee made the decision to step down from the Editor position as of November 1, and Cary transitioned to the position as of that date. Cary agreed to undertake the position on this accelerated timeline, rather than the previously established January 1 start date. This compressed the training needs.

Transition activities have included conversations to orient Cary as incoming editor, beginning in late August. Cary has attended all meetings of the Editorial Board since then, and has met regularly with outgoing editor Cal Lee, as well as with Publications Director Teresa Brinati, Production Coordinator Abigail Christian, individual members of the Editorial Board at their request, and the technical staff at PeerTrack (the manuscript submission and peer review platform used by the journal).

The Publications Team put together an extensive training agenda and devoted 10 hours of intensive training compressed into a two-week period. Lee, Brinati, and Christian were all present at each training session and provided a thorough orientation to all aspects of *American Archivist*. Executive Director Nancy Beaumont joined the transition discussion related to challenges and opportunities that the journal faces. During meetings, the following areas were addressed:

- Editor's roles and responsibilities
- Governance and collaborations with Council and membership
- Communications with the Council, the Editorial Board, membership, SAA, and all interested stakeholders
- Working with SAA staff and independent contractors
- Working with Allen Press
- Timeline for all aspects of publishing an issue of *American Archivist*
- Timeline for the production process
- Outreach, including SAA Awards programs, the "Archives in Context" podcast series, conference activities, outreach to Sections, and general outreach to the broader archives community
- Considerations for the use of social media to raise awareness about content
- Ongoing considerations for the Editorial Board, Peer Review, and the Reviews Portal
- Considerations of challenges and opportunities; the Board's engagement with SAA's Core Values
- Engagement with membership and other interested parties

Cary and Beaumont also attended a listening session for the Editorial Board, called by Council Liaison Mario Ramirez on October 29, 2020. This session focused on the proposal before the Council (now 1120-IV.A.). In particular, it addressed the ongoing desire for improved communications within the Editorial Board and with membership; improved processes for the Editorial Board; and the Board's ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Working with Matt Black, Cary has assumed management of the americanarchivist@archivists.org email address and officially took over communications as of November 1. Lee remains available to assist in answering questions as necessary. Cary is currently working effectively to acquire the expertise to address outstanding issues and continue the important work of the Editorial Board and of the journal.

On a personal note, Cary would like to say this: This successful transition was only made possible by the hard work of Cal, Teresa, and Abigail. Had any one of these individuals not been

fully committed to a successful transition of the position of Editor on a compressed timeframe, the journal would have been in a much more precarious position. As it stands, their hard work has enabled me to take the first steps to becoming an effective part of the team. Teresa and Abigail have made every effort to smooth this process and help me gain confidence. In particular, Cal has invested tremendous time and energy in making sure that as much outstanding work as possible was completed prior to November 1. Cal's generosity with his time, his personal commitment to the success of this transition, and his concern for the success of the journal as a whole are exemplary. I am grateful for his work, as well as for the work of the SAA staff.

Issue Update

SAA is currently in production on *American Archivist* **Vol. 83, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 2020); the table of contents is below**. This is the issue that includes the volume index and takes approximately a month longer to produce as a result. The goal is to have it available before the year is out. This will be the last *print* issue of the journal published. Beginning in 2021, the journal is pivoting to digital-only. A new [journal website](#) was launched last month. Hope you have the occasion to visit it often!

From the Editors: Christopher A. Lee and Amy Cooper Cary

Articles

Copyright and Preservation of Born-Digital Material: Persistent Challenges and Selected Strategies / Katherine Fisher

Becoming an Imagined Record: Archival Intervention in Autofiction / Richard Minkyu Cho

Reimagining Instruction in Special Collections: The Special Case of Haiti / Kellee E. Warren

Maintaining Records in Context? Disrupting the Theory and Practice of Archival Classification and Arrangement / Ciaran Trace

Providing Restricted Access to Mental Health Archives within Government Archives: The Subject Stakeholder / Patricia Galloway

The Autologic Archive: Appraisal, Institutional Motives, and Essentializing Identity in Refugee and Asylum Application Narratives, In and Out of Fiction / Alison Turner

Preservation and Access for Born Digital Electronic Records: The Case for an Institutional Digital Content / Kyle R. Rimkus, Christopher J. Prom, Karl Germeck, Tracy Popp, Bethany Anderson, and Cameron Nielsen

From Datum to Databases: Digital Humanities, Slavery, and Archival Reparations / Robert Nowatzki

Forum

Letter to the Editor / Katy Lockard

Reviews

"No Refuge in Complacency" / Bethany Anderson, Reviews Editor

Shadow Archives: The Lifecycles of African American Literature / Jean-Christophe Cloutier
Reviewed by Kathryn M. Neal

Trusting Records in the Cloud / Edited by Luciana Duranti and Corinne Rogers
Reviewed by Mike Shallcross

Teaching Undergraduates with Archives / Edited by Nancy Bartlett, Elizabeth Gadelha, and Cinda Nofziger
Reviewed by Anna Trammell

Advocacy and Awareness for Archivists / Kathleen D. Roe
Reviewed by Jessica Bitter

Participatory Archives: Theory and Practice / Edited by Edward Benoit III and Alexandra Eveleigh
Reviewed by Siham Alaoui

Viral Networks: Connecting Digital Humanities and Medical History / Edited by E. Thomas Ewing and Katherine Randall
Reviewed by Deborah A. Garwood

Working: Researching, Interviewing, Writing / Robert A. Caro
Reviewed by Dan Harper

Responsible Operations: Data Science, Machine Learning, and AI in Libraries / Thomas Padilla
Reviewed by Rachel MacGregor

Partners for Preservation: Advancing Digital Preservation through Cross-Community Collaboration / Edited by Jeanne Kramer-Smyth
Reviewed by Krista Oldham

Editorial Policy

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