

Society of American Archivists
American Archivist Editorial Board
Virtual Meeting | January 14, 2022

DRAFT MINUTES

In attendance: Amy Cooper Cary (American Archivist Editor and Editorial Board Chair), Rose Buchanan and Stephanie Luke (Reviews Editor), Sumayya Ahmed, Katharina Hering, Eric Hung, Mark Matienzo, Marlee Newman, Sylvia Welsh, and Karen Gionet Zentek (early-career member); ex officio member Stacie Williams (Publications Editor); and SAA staff Teresa Brinati and Abigail Christian.

Unable to attend: Jessica Lacher-Feldman, Shadrack Katuu, Kate Puerini, and ex officio member Mario Ramirez (Council Liaison).

I. WELCOME REVIEWS EDITORS

Rose Buchanan and Stephanie Luke have succeeded Bethany Anderson as the [new Reviews Editors](#). They have already jumped into production for the Spring/Summer 2022 issue and are reviewing the website. The Board's next meeting in March will be focused on the reviews process and discuss ways to engage reviews more broadly with the Editorial Board and in the published journal (instrumental in DEIA).

II. DEIA — PEER REVIEW

- Reviewer identity “opt in”: This is a potential step toward the transparency of open peer review. A specific question could be added to the online form: “Do you wish for the author(s) to know your name as a reviewer? If so, please provide your name.” We can then frame that in our procedures and communications stating that reviewers have the option of sharing their identity in order to provide additional feedback.
 - Reframe question: “Are you comfortable being identified to the author(s) to respond to questions about your review or to provide additional feedback to the author(s).”
 - How will making this change improve our process? One way is that writing is often a collaborative process, and so it can benefit authors who may have a rougher draft and who may be submitting for the first time, may be less experienced writers, and do not work in an academic setting. This may also benefit non-native English speakers, who may require additional support in writing for publication in an English journal.
 - Anonymity can sometimes cause people to hide behind more severe or negative peer review, so this could help feedback be framed more constructively.
 - If an author would like to connect with a reviewer but a reviewer may not have time (in general or at that moment) or inclination to work with the author in a support capacity. Would a Board member step into the role?
 - We should also include an “opt in” option to the author: Do you wish to know the name of the reviewer? At what point is this asked?
 - We will also need guidelines in place before we implement this change, in case this service is not used as intended but evolves into something more negative or an attack. How will we protect peer reviewers?

- Gathering demographic information moving forward. Let's consider the type of data we would like to gather (race, gender, institution type, geographic region). In addition, because many peer reviewers are also authors in their own right, this may also give us some demographic information on authors going forward.

TO DO #1 (Amy Cooper Cary): Finalize language to share with the Board; send to SAA staff for implementation.

III. SPREADSHEET FOR PROPOSED SPECIAL SECTIONS

- In our previous conversations about special sections on focused content, we recognized that there are multiple interested groups, and that the planning and implementation for a special section takes extensive time.

TO DO #2 (All Board Members): [Please share information about potential special sections on spreadsheet](#) by February 15. This will help us prioritize potential focused content.

IV. ENGAGEMENT

- All Board members represent *American Archivist*, and members are a great way to increase the journal's outreach.
 - To which sections do you belong to and are most active? Is there potential content in section meetings, presentations, or projects that would be great for a journal article, case study, or review? Can you get on the agenda of a section meeting and share relevant information about *American Archivist*?
 - To which affiliated organizations do you belong?
- One small way to raise awareness, is to add "*American Archivist* Editorial Board Member" to your email signatures, if you're able to.
- If there's an article from the journal—particularly after an issue is published—that resonates with you, share it on social media.
- For archival instructors who are Editorial Board members, using *American Archivist* articles in class discussions both to talk about current trends as well archival history and thought leadership, and as a starting point for students in learning how to do a literature review.
- There's sometimes a perception from new or entry-level archivists that they need to check a certain number of boxes/experience before they can get involved. Peer-to-peer/collegial encouragement and the continued promotion of the message of how people can—and should—get involved is powerful and persuasive. The [Journal of Critical Digital Librarianship](#) has a great example of a code of conduct and submission policies that actively welcomes authors.
- Recognition that there is a concern for archivists from government institutions about publishing—they cannot speak for the agency. We can continue to prioritize the diversity of our membership, and de-emphasize the academic lens for authors of articles and/or reviews.

TO DO #3 (All Board Members): [Please fill out engagement spreadsheet by February 15.](#) This can help us see where there may be gaps in who we're reaching.

TO DO #4 (Cooper Cary, Hering, Hung, Lacher-Feldman, and Matienzo): Cooper Cary will connect with members to create a bibliography about what's been written about the journal's and SAA's history.

TO DO #5 (Cooper Cary): Provide Board members and especially peer reviewers with examples of solid peer reviews so that people know what to aim for.

TO DO #6 (Cooper Cary): Review formatting of the rubric so that visual clues encourage explanation rather than brief comments, and write an introduction for the rubric which stresses the purpose and value of the responses, especially for reviewers not on the Board.

TO DO #7 (Cooper Cary): Develop a draft set of questions for the readership survey.

V. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting will be **Friday, March 11, 2022, at 10:00 am CT.**

TO DO #8 (All): Send agenda or discussion items you would like to address at the March meeting to Cooper Cary (americanarchivist@archivists.org).