

Society of American Archivists
American Archivist Editorial Board
Virtual Meeting | June 29, 2023

MINUTES

In attendance: Amy Cooper Cary (*American Archivist* Editor and Editorial Board Chair), Rose Buchanan and Stephanie Luke (Reviews Editors), Sumayya Ahmed, Rebecca Hankins, Katharina Hering, Eric Hung, and Jessica Lacher-Feldman; Bree'ya Brown and Amanda Greenwood (early-career members); Joyce Gabiola (Council Liaison); and SAA staff Abigail Christian and Hannah Stryker.

Unable to attend: Shirley Franco, María Matienzo, Marlee Newman, Sylvia Welsh, and Stacie Williams (Publications Editor)

I. WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Amy Cooper Cary welcomes attendees. Cooper Cary introduces Amanda Greenwood, who has been appointed to a full term on the Board after serving as an early-career member; Bree'ya Brown, who is staying on for another year as an early career member; and Rebecca Hankins, whose term has been renewed.
- B. Cooper Cary thanks Board members who are rotating off for their years of service: Katharina Hering, who facilitated the hidden content project, and Sumayya Ahmed, who is guest editing the MENA Special Section for the Fall/Winter issue.
- C. Cooper Cary has been appointed by Council to serve another term as Editor from 2024 to 2026.

II. UPDATES

- A. Council – Joyce Gabiola
 - Section health assessment is a Council initiative that began many years ago. Gabiola shares that only a little more than 30 percent of members are part of at least one section. Council liaisons feel there is a gap preventing them from fully supporting sections. The current section health assessment group recently sent out a member-wide survey; the results will be shared in a couple of months. Council will be reviewing the status of sections outlined in SAA's governance manual to determine how to meet Sections' needs and challenges.
 - Phase 1 of the health assessment began with Council liaisons reviewing their assigned sections. Council liaisons are scheduling meetings with section leaders to determine if they should continue as a section, merge with another, transition to discussion group, or sunset completely. Council approved that there will be no new sections created until the section assessment is concluded (two years).
 - Council approved the Archival Worker Labor Taskforce responsible for analyzing archival worker labor issues that SAA can impact in hopes for equitable labor conditions for all.

- B. Hidden Content Project – Amanda Greenwood and Bree'ya Brown**
- In order to make *American Archivist* more searchable online, the project team is identifying content that should be highlighted, renamed, or republished to make it more discoverable. This is important work for the ongoing usability of journal. Brown and Greenwood picked up from where previous team left off (1930s content), and they are now up to 1970s content.
 - Hering helped with this project and is thanked for her work. Brown will be continuing the project until 2024. The Board will appoint another early-career member to work on the project.
- C. Theodore Calvin Pease Award Winner – Amy Cooper Cary**
- The 2023 Theodore Calvin Pease Award recipient is [Sony Prosper](#) for his article, “Conceptualizing Records: Black Bottom Archives, Detroit Sound Conservancy, Faulkner Morgan Archive, Hula Preservation Society, and History Project.” Prosper’s article will go through a double-blind peer review process, and then will be published in the Spring/Summer 2024 issue of *American Archivist*.
- D. Reviews – Rose Buchanan and Stephanie Luke**
- *American Archivist* issue 86.1 is published with a great slate of reviews. The seven reviews include works that focus on teaching with primary sources, AIDS archives, cultural humility, etc. Seven reviews are slated for issue 86.2.
 - Reviews Portal: Two microreviews have been published; twelve are in the pipeline. Buchanan and Luke also published a [microreviews introduction piece](#). Six reviews have been published to the Intergenerational Conversations series. The latest installment is Vina Begay’s review of John Fleckner’s “What Is a Tribal Archives?” and “Tribal Archives: Some Basic Archival Ideas,” in *Native American Archives: An Introduction* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1984).
- E. Issue 86.2 (Fall/Winter 2023) [Table of Contents](#) – Amy Cooper Cary**
- Take a look! Issue 86.2 will include the A*CENSUS II Administrator’s Survey, and a MENA Special Section. If Board members know people who are working on broad overviews of the profession or are interested in taking a deep dive into the survey results, have them reach out to Cooper Cary. Cooper Cary is currently gathering material for Issue 87.1.
- F. Middle Eastern and North African Archives Special Section – Sumayya Ahmed and Rebecca Hankins**
- The MENA Special Section is coming out in the 86.2 Fall/Winter issue. Ahmed and Hankins expect eight articles for the section. The content begins production in July.

III. [Proposal for Special Section on Accessioning](#) led by Rosemary K. J. Davis – Amy Cooper Cary

- A.** Davis is interested in drawing on work in SAA to discuss accessioning as a practice. She has proposed a Special Section topic for the Spring/Summer 2025 issue of

American Archivist. The Board will provide feedback to Davis who will then send a revised proposal.

- While the proposed section gives the Board breathing room between the Fall/Winter Special Section and the A*CENSUS Special Section, some Board members feel that the topic is a bit vague. Some suggestions include tying the topic to the problematic nature of provenance, original order, and prioritization of processing. Davis might also consider where/how accessioning fits into the cycle of work from acquisition through accessioning to prioritization and processing. Other Board members feel the timing of the Special Section is off and that it would make more sense for this to be released prior to receiving reflections on the past based upon new best practice. It is also possible that this discussion may not generate a lot of interest in the Journal beyond those in accessioning.

IV. **ChatGPT Usage in Articles** – Rose Buchanan, Stephanie Luke, Amy Cooper Cary

A. Case of a Reviews Portal submission

- The Reviews Portal recently received a piece that used ChatGPT for editing. The person who submitted the piece was transparent about this.

B. Gather Examples of Journal Policies & Board Concerns

- Many science journals are concerned about ChatGPT and have put out statements that authors cannot publish if they use ChatGPT. Buchanan and Luke have been gathering policies and published thoughts as they believe it may be good for the Board to create a ChatGPT policy.

C. Develop Proposed Policy for *American Archivist*

- There are interesting ethical issues involved. How are we to know if people use ChatGPT? Should the Board ask them to disclose usage? Can it be considered a coauthor? ChatGPT has been compared to the use of Grammarly and Microsoft Word tools (spellcheck and grammar checks), but it can also be an issue of copyright if it uses other publications. One idea is to create a question in the submissions process asking if AI tech was used in writing or editing of the submission to at least give authors a chance to acknowledge potential use.

TO DO #1 (Buchanan, Cooper Cary, Luke): Develop draft of a ChatGPT policy to share with the Board.

V. **Readership Survey** – Amy Cooper Cary

A. SAA [Archival Outlook article](#) – Amanda Greenwood, Eric Hung

- [The Readership Survey article](#) was published in the 2023 July/August issue of *Archival Outlook*. It provides a rounded perspective on our discussion about the survey. Please share it widely!
- While reflecting on the survey, one suggestion from a member of the Board is that we should focus on leadership opportunities and advocacy for members. Since the survey was specifically about the Journal, we did not ask members about encouraging engagement. We can talk about this as a group.

B. Conversation Lounge on July 28, 5:30 pm ET, during *ARCHIVES*RECORDS 2023*

C. Potential Calls and Special Sections on [Topics Readers Would Like to Read](#)

- One Board member said it could be interesting to have the work of Council on sections addressed as a historical article.

- There are opportunities for potential calls everywhere. Pay attention to topics that people would like to see addressed.

VI. Fall Preview – Amy Cooper Cary

A. Revisiting and moving forward on previous conversations. If you'd like to work on any of the below, or if you would like to suggest other topics, let Amy know.

- Editorial Board Engagement and Shepherding Articles
- Pros and Cons of Continuous Publishing
- Reformatting and Revising Peer Review Rubric
- Opt-in Language for Peer Reviewer Identification
- Bibliography for Articles that Have Been Written about the Journal
- Positionality Statement: Offering Examples for Authors
- Fostering Engagement with the Reviews Portal

TO DO #2 (Cooper Cary): Finalize language for opt-in on reviewer identity in Editorial Manager to share with the Board; send to SAA staff for implementation.

TO DO #3 (Cooper Cary, 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. [Goal for 86:2]

TO DO #4 (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. Board members can send examples of other good rubrics or suggestions for additional/revised questions to Cooper Cary.