

Society of American Archivists
American Archivist Editorial Board
Zoom Meeting | August 17, 2020

Draft MINUTES

In attendance: Cal Lee (Chair), Bethany Anderson (Reviews Editor), Sumayya Ahmed, Carrie Daniels, Benjamin Goldman, Katharina Hering, Shadrack Katuu, Alison Trulock; outgoing members Adriana Cuervo, Joshua Schneider, Heather Soyka, and Karen Trivette; incoming members Eric Hung, Jessica Lacher-Feldman, Kate Puerini, Sylvia Welsh; early-career member Asa Espanto; incoming Editor Amy Cooper Cary; *ex officio* members Mario Ramirez (Council Liaison) and Stacie Williams (Publications Editor); and SAA staff Teresa Brinati and Abigail Christian.

Unable to attend: Outgoing early-career members Janna Bolton and Shannon Devlin; incoming early-career members Bridgette Hammond and Grace Moran.

I. Welcome and Introductions: The Editor thanked Cuervo, Trivette, Schneider, and Soyka for their service on the Board, including their instrumental feedback on reviews and Board processes. Gloria Gonzalez is also cycling off after her second term as the Reviews Portal Coordinator. During her time, she has significantly increased the number of views the portal has received and instituted a popular series on pop culture and archives. Certificates of appreciation will be sent to them, and Lee hopes they all stay involved with the journal. The Board welcomes new members Hung, Lacher-Feldman, Puerini, and Welsh as well as three early-career members Espanto, Hammond, and Moran.

II. Reports

- A. Editor Search Committee (Soyka):** The committee is pleased to introduce Amy Cooper Cary as the [incoming Editor](#); her term will start January 2021. Lee and Cary are already in conversation and preparing for the transition. Soyka, who chaired the search committee, thanked everyone who served on the Search Committee, which met eight times between May and July.
- B. Council (Ramirez):** The SAA Council approved revisions to Core Values and Code of Ethics, [among other actions](#). The Council briefly discussed the Editorial Board's proposal to form a task force on professional mediation, facilitation, and conflict management and a task force on publication ethics. The Council plans to circle back to the proposal in a future meeting and consider how it might fit into broader initiatives underway. In addition, at its May meeting, Council decided that *American Archivist* will move toward digital-only distribution in 2021.
- C. Publishing Program (Brinati & Christian):**
- a. The publications program has issued seven new titles this year. *Creating Family Archives*, SAA's first public-facing book is also its first book on Amazon. The book has sold more than 1,200 copies, largely to nonmembers.
 - b. This year also debuted the open access [Dictionary Archives Terminology](#), launched in April 2020, and authors are now using the *Dictionary* regularly in their citations.
 - c. Among SAA's ongoing, open access case studies series, the Teaching with Primary Sources series had a banner year, publishing six case studies.
 - d. Stats: Between July 2019 and July 2020, the most read article is from 1982, "Notes Toward a Theory of Appraisal." It's surprising to an older article be the most read; it

was possibly part of a class assignment. Shout out to Ramirez, whose article “Being Assumed Not to Be: A Critique of Whiteness as an Archival Imperative,” was number six on the list. And Kate Madison’s article, “‘Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story’: The Use and Representation of Records in *Hamilton: An American Musical*,” continues to be widely read. [Click here for more analytics](#).

- e. The online journal is getting a new look in October 2020. The new website features a contemporary interface, a mobile-friendly platform, and metrics for each article.
- D. Publications Editor (Williams):** Williams is making progress on manuscripts in the pipeline and working on developing new manuscripts. She looks forward to seeing where the Publications and *American Archivist* Editorial Boards can collaborate, such as in enriching our networks for our reviewer pools.
- E. Reviews Editor + Reviews Portal (Anderson):** Anderson aims to include ten reviews per issue. She is excited to share recent and forthcoming reviews of publications in languages other than English. There have been some delays due to the pandemic from both publishers and reviewers, but are on track to still have a full section in the next issue. On the Reviews Portal, website views have increased since 2019. The portal has published several recent reviews of project management applications and pop culture and archives with more to come in both categories.
- F. Archives in Context Podcast (Anderson):** [Season 4](#) was released on August 11. The season includes interviews with a number of new resources and projects, not only authors of SAA books. The podcast team will meet at the end of August to plan the next season, so if Board members have suggestions for authors or articles to highlight, let Anderson know.

III. Issue Updates & Manuscript Submissions

- A. Issue 83.2:** The table of content is set and production will begin layout soon. This issue will be available in print and digital editions, and will be Lee’s last issue as Editor.
- B. Issue 84.1:** This issue will be digital only. Lee aims to line up articles for the Spring/Summer issue so that Cary can seamlessly transition into her role.
- C. Issue 84.2:**
 - i. This is a special issue on design records, guest-edited by Trivette. The deadline for submissions was July 1, and Trivette has received nine articles. This issue also brought in a new crop of reviewers to the reviewer pool, and design has been added as a category.
 - ii. It’s a positive sign of interest if any Board members want to pursue additional special sections or issues. The [call for submissions](#) for this issue went out January 2020, with a deadline of July 1, 2020, with anticipated publication in the Fall/Winter 2021 issue. From the time of first submission, it takes about one year to print, which includes a time of peer review, revision, and production (copyediting, page proofs, index, printing). Here is the timeline during that year:
 - July 2020: All articles due
 - July/August 2020: Editor reviews submissions / may return to author for revision before sending to peer reviewers
 - Sept 2020: Editor assigns peer reviewers to articles
 - Oct/Nov 2020: Peer reviewers read and submit feedback
 - Dec 2020: Editor compiles peer review feedback, makes decisions about publishing of articles, and returns articles to authors for revision
 - Jan/March: Authors work on revisions, due April
 - April-May: Editor reviews final submissions, then sends to SAA to begin copyediting

- June 2021: All articles submitted to SAA for copyediting

D. Manuscript Submissions:

- i. Submissions increased significantly this year, in part due to call for design records. Peer reviewers have also increased substantially since fall 2019. Although complex to calculate due to how manuscripts are assessed (specifically in the revise and resubmit category), the most recent stats for acceptance rates are around 50%.
- ii. The process for letters to editor could be better defined. After a letter is received, the author of the article that the letter comments on would be notified and given time to respond, if they desire. The author's letter would be published after the letter to editor in the same issue (as opposed to the following issue). Letters to editor are always welcome and valued; they are a great way to share thoughts on content in the journal and create a wider discussion.

IV. Peer Track Classifications: Lee compared the categories of expertise that reviewers select when they register as a peer reviewer with keywords submitted by authors with their articles to make sure that reviewer expertise is better matched with article content. He has assigned broad categories that each article keywords fall into that could be added to the Peer Track review system, but it would be good to have a small group review and refine this initial attempt at re-organization. Hung asked if these are merging two different processes: author keywords for indexing and keywords for categorizing peer reviewers. Lee said in a sense yes, but the way the two systems are set up in Peer Track are somewhat merged and it may help to have more uniformity between the two. There's some urgency in that we currently don't have peer review categories for topics such as diversity, equity, and inclusion; digitization; social justice; etc. It would be good to implement changes in a batch to notify reviewers just once to update their settings; several Board members suggested moving ahead anyway and adding these categories now. Hung, Puerini, and Welsh volunteered to be on a working group to take a closer look at the categories (if there are other volunteers, let Lee know).

TO DO #1 (Lee): Share spreadsheet of classifications with Editorial Board

TO DO #2 (Lee, Hung, Puerini, and Welsh): Meet to discuss next steps in classifications project.

TO DO#3 (Brinati, Christian, Hering, Espanto, Hammond, Moran): Schedule Zoom meeting to discuss online QC and Hidden Content Project.

TO DO #4 (Lee, Cary, Brinati, Christian): Schedule Editor transition meetings.

TO DO #5 (Editorial Board): Schedule next Zoom meeting for September/October.

V. Proposed Agenda Items for Next Editorial Board Meeting:

- Peer Review
- Author Name Change Request Policy
- Proposal for Strategy to Address Professional Mediation, Facilitation and Conflict Mgmt.
- Data Sets + Odum Institute + CORDA
- Outreach and Engagement: Component Groups + Article Reading Program + Reader Survey
- AA Online Quality Control + Hidden Content Project
- Style Guide