AHRT Publication Venues Survey Report

November 2015

The Steering Committee of the Archival History Roundtable (AHRT) conducted a survey regarding possibly creating a publication venue for archival history. The survey was a Google form (<http://goo.gl/forms/9qYTFKFjYu>), was distributed via the AHRT email forum, and was open from October 28, 2015 – November 20, 2015. The survey contained 3 questions, and 93 responses were submitted.

# **Question 1: Should the Archival History Roundtable (AHRT) create a publication venue that highlights the history of archives as a profession, or the history of individual institutions, leaders, and trends within the profession?**

**Other statements:**

1. Electronic publication
2. I think the rt should encourage and support publishing on archival history, but not necessarily create a venue for it.
3. If there is someone to pull together a volume around an important theme!
4. Unclear to me. There are a couple of venues out there to publish about the history of the profession and while it would be great to have an SAA venue, I can't see how you get enough volunteers into this do actually run a peer reviewed journal type venue

# **Question 2: What do you think is the most appropriate venue for an AHRT publication?**

**Other statements:**

1. A e-newsletter (PDF or other format)
2. Peer-reviewed occasional electronic papers with POD options to start

# **Question 3: Please provide any other feedback regarding a possible AHRT-created and -maintained publication venue here.**

1. Creation of a peer-reviewed publication will be valuable to those seeking scholarly publication. But let's also think about a space where "historical notes" or other smaller pieces might find a stable home (and a stable url). Shorter historical notes and documentary vignettes are often the building blocks for analysis, yet they take a while to compile. it would be nice to have a place to post/publish these types of things, too.
2. Highlighting the history of archives as a profession and the history of trends within the profession are of the most interest to me.
3. "Sustaining a journal and ensuring sufficient distribution are challenging. Also, likely best to consider electronic, Web-based options at the start--albeit with print-like composition features to facilitate POD options thru Amazon and the like.
4. I prefer an occasional papers approach with dedicated topics for peer-review production. "
5. This is a great idea. My research is on the history of regional special collections, specifically Appalachian special collections. I would appreciate a dedicated publishing venue for this and similar types of archival history. Gene Hyde UNC Asheville gyhyde@unca.edu
6. Hopefully the project could be North American in scope.
7. It could be published electronically, but still have a rigor of a peer-reviewed publication
8. I believe that institutional memory, particularly at archival repositories, is rarely a priority but is badly needed. So, providing a venue for archivists who are interested in the evolution of archival institutions and the profession as a whole would provide some a huge hole in the understanding of ourselves.
9. Perhaps a blog hosted by AHRT and publicized through SAA and the Archives ListServ.
10. Publishing a newsletter that serves as a clearinghouse for published research and dissertation/thesis research on archival history would be useful and ambitious enough. All of the available archival journals, such as AA and Archivaria, are very open to and interested in archival history research -- why compete with them. A newsletter could serve as a means for ascertaining the need for a new journal.
11. Peer-reviewed in some form would be good for all of those who need publications (and some academic archivists are on tenure track), but a paper publication will be hugely expensive; should be all digital all the time, something like Open Journal System (I think Archivaria uses that and many universities are running an instance for their faculties to use) so that everything can be done online: submissions, review of submissions, publication. And so it can expand to suit as it grows. Also, from the start, PLEASE figure out how to archive it! Topics: no "or": all of it! Great idea.
12. We need to make sure we don't set up a rigid publishing schedule that encourages slipshod work or things that are hurried for a deadline. Maybe this isn't such a danger, but I have seen organizations that get too specific about scheduling and then the content suffers. I remember paper publications in the scholarly world that were called "occasional papers" or something like that, and maybe at least at the beginning this would be a good model to follow instead of being really rigid about publication. (I was editor of an archival publication for 11 years.)
13. Scholarly publishing venues for archivists are somewhat limited and it would be really nice to see an additional outlet that would add to our profession. Even if it were totally online, it would be a great opportunity for us.
14. A dedicated issue of the American Archivist might be appropriate.
15. I wrote some recommendations but the form shot out from my pad too quickly. If you did NOT get it I will re-create!
16. I wrote some recommendations but the form shot out from my pad too quickly. If you did NOT get it I will re-create!
17. Not sure what is the best format, but something that shares links/citations to writings (in all formats) relevant to archival history. Might also be venue for queries, notices of relevant archival collections, conferences/sessions, and brief essays.
18. I'd be very happy to assist with this (tamar.zeffren@gmail.com)
19. Government Records Section is advertising for case studies to be posted to SAA's website, using an internal peer review process; I think other sections or roundtables have done something similar. This seems like it would be an excellent way to help individuals get something published professionally as well as expand knowledge about archival history.
20. I have written/spoken on archival education history and would love to contribute!
21. A newsletter focusing on reviews, with short summary historical articles would be great--something to keep readers up to date and energized about doing historical research on archival topics. A full journal would be great, of course, but may be too much for the roundtable initially.
22. This sounds like a wonderful proposal. I suggest finding a way to balance the peer-review process with the widest distribution method(s) possible to promote accessibility and greater contributions.
23. "I just contributed to a forthcoming volume on displaced archives to be published in the UK early next year, and a separate conference paper analyzing the problem of displaced Polish archives in Russia. So my current research research interests in archival history have been covered. Perhaps best first organize an interesting conference panel, and then see if you get publishable quality papers! Pat Grimsted
24. I'm interested in combo peer-reviewed publication and a PDF that's accessible online.
25. In my own education as an archivist, the historical context of our profession has never been addressed. Although it may be available, I don't recall it having been covered in any of my coursework, and I think it's a relevant topic.
26. A PDF newsletter seems to be the most plausible, though I think the h-net option is a good one if it can better connect archival history to other strands of history. This seems essential if we want to do anything more than talk to each other. A separate peer-reviewed publication would be ideal, of course, but we may not be ready for that. SAA's response might well be that the best stuff could be published in AA. I'm not sure, but I'd venture that there has not been a flood of archival history submissions in recent years.
27. I would enjoy reading and contributing to an SAA-hosted publication, much like the successful Campus Case Studies (16 and counting), CEPC Case Studies (5), and Government Records Case Studies. Historians have good things to say and need quality venues to say it.
28. I'd be happy to help with providing editing assistance. Chana Kotzin, PhD Archivesproject@bjebuffalo.org
29. I think this would be a great idea for those of us interested in archival history. Also, having another opportunity for a peer-reviewed publication would be welcome. There are quite a few us out there that need to submit articles to peer reviewed publications as part of our jobs. I would be much more likely to write on a historical topic than anything else.
30. I think a peer-reviewed publication would be great, maybe a yearly publication or even electronic only, but still peer-reviewed. I am not sure what type of commitment that would take to get it off the ground. I believe the audience exists for it, especially as the profession becomes more professionalized and the history of the genesis of archives and how all of these archival theories and principals we hold dear were created is increasingly forgotten.
31. The opportunity for submitting articles could be open to all members and roundtables of SAA to encompass a broad and diverse range of insight and perspectives of history.
32. Facebook or distribution by Email
33. Publications take a monstrous amount of time. For a peer-reviewed publication, it would be even worse. Why not an occasional publication, like a book dedicated to the history of the profession with individual essays, to begin? That's doable, and would test the waters so to speak about the amount of writing that is out there.
34. One focus could be "insider" views of "major" events in archival history such as the FBI appraisal, PROFS case, impact of standards, the "feminization" of the profession, The role of politics in an archival institution, etc. Bruce Ambacher
35. Part of the challenge of the AHRT and therefore a special publication is that most archivists believe the history of the profession is important but it cuts across virtually all aspects of the archival profession so that no one "owns the history of the profession. To overcome this, it will be necessary to identify various stakeholders in the profession and solicit their participation. This sounds like a series of invited essays that would be synthesized editorially.
36. I think it is a good idea to have a publication dedicated to archival history and trends in addition to SAA's already existing publications. I don't see a conflict with what they already produce and the type of publication you are suggesting.
37. This would be a good opportunity to include development of the profession in various countries overseas (not just Europe) without having to focus on records management in those countries unless that was the impetus for developing the profession. With good research, there could be brief discussions on the predecessor individuals or institutions that collected and preserved documents and why, and how that led to the creation of modern archives and creation as a profession. This could start out as small newsletter research projects (to ensure that work gets done) eventually developing into a serious of publications with multiple authors for each.
38. I want to contribute to it!
39. I would love to see a publication that covers both the history of archives as a profession and of individual institutions, leaders, and trends of the profession.
40. Considering the caveat that I am not very actively involved with AHRT, but would like to be more so, maintaining any kind of publication does involve a good deal of work. A peer-reviewed publication would be great, but even more intense. If an archival historian wanted to publish, conceivably they could/should do so through established journals. But, I think some kind of publication (vetted and reputable) that has a scholarly focus is a great idea.
41. A focus on archival history of this nature is long overdue. Thank you for putting the matter before the AHRT group.
42. While availability to other archivists is of primary importance, posting to h-net or other spaces that are not strictly utilized by archivists would increase the overall visibility for our profession and increased support for our work within academia.
43. Important to publish archival history news and articles not available in other journals or publications so we offer a new resource and do not duplicate existing sources