

**Society of American Archivists  
Publications Board Meeting  
Atlanta, GA | August 3, 2016**

**MINUTES**

**In attendance:** Chris Prom (Chair), Mary Caldera, Krista Gray (intern), Nicole Milano, Lisa Mix, Tawny Ryan Nelb, Colleen McFarland Rademaker, Michael Shallcross, and Margery Sly; incoming board members Sarah Demb, Aaron Purcell, Jennie Thomas, and Anna Trammell (intern); and *ex officio* members Amy Cooper Cary (Council Liaison), Greg Hunter (*The American Archivist* Editor), Peter Wosh (Archival Fundamentals Series III Editor), and SAA staff members Teresa Brinati and Abigail Christian.

**Unable to attend:** Jody DeRidder.

**I. WELCOME & REPORTS**

**A. Chair of the Board Update—Christopher Prom:**

- Prom recognized outgoing board members Lisa Mix and Tawny Ryan Nelb for their two terms of service as well as welcomed new board members Sarah Demb, Aaron Purcell, and Jennie Thomas.
- In July, SAA released two new books in the Trends in Archives series, *Teaching with Primary Sources* and *Digital Preservation Essentials*. A forthcoming book in the series, *Appraisal and Acquisition Strategies* should be available in October.
- The review process for two new manuscripts is underway: *Moving Image and Sound Collections* by Anthony Cocciolo and another volume in series Trends in Archives Practice, *Putting Descriptive Standards to Work* edited by Kris Kiesling. Assuming all goes well, both books should be available in early 2017.
- The board is working with three potential authors to submit proposals for new manuscripts, including a proposal for a 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of *Museum Archives*.
- The Publications Board successfully administered in spring 2016a survey on SAA books and publishing, which garnered more than 1,600 responses. Prom, Grey, and Trammell are working on a final report about the survey.

**B. Council Liaison Update—Amy Cooper Cary:**

- The SAA Council is implementing changes to member affinity groups. Distinctions between sections and roundtables will be eliminated—all will be sections. There will be no limit to the number of sections members can join; nonmembers can be on up to three listservs. Sections will now need standardized bylaws and to conduct online elections annually. The Council is exploring new software to engage group members.
- Diversity and inclusion initiatives continue to be high on the Council's priority list.
- The Council discussed the contribution SAA publications make to the association fiscally and otherwise. The Council recognizes the value of and is committed to maintaining a strong publications program. A shifting culture change around publications is something for the Publications Board to consider. There is an opportunity to discuss the role of publications in the broader profession and in

graduate archival education. For example, the board may be asked to comment on drafts as the Education Working Group changes to Guidelines for a Graduate Program in Archival Studies.

**C. Publishing Program Overview—Teresa Brinati:**

- Revenue has been trending down for print book sales but this does not affect the quality of the products or program.
- SAA has received licensing fees for translating and publishing *Archives Power* in Korean, now in its second reprint. In addition, another publisher has recently requested rights to translate into Korean and publish *Managing Congressional Records*.
- “One Book, One Profession” has just launched as a new marketing initiative with *Teaching with Primary Sources* as the inaugural selection. It will be interesting to see how it can be implemented within the board’s networks.
- The second Archives Short Fiction Contest also launched this summer. Deadline is Oct. 31.

**TO DO #1:** Prom to work with Brinati and Christian to identify and appoint three judges for the Archives Short Fiction Contest.

**D. Dictionary Working Group Update—Margery Sly:**

- New IDM software for collaborative editing is being implemented and all group members were trained on the new software during a meeting in Chicago in May. The group plans to go live with the software by this fall with the goal of making the dictionary available in 2017.

**E. *The American Archivist* Update—Greg Hunter:**

- The transition to using Allen Press continues as the journal implements PeerTrack manuscript submission and peer review software into the production workflow. Reviewers will soon be registered in the system.
- New this year is an intern for *The American Archivist* Editorial Board, Donna Bronson. One of the projects Bronson will work on is making the “dark content” in the back issues more discoverable (i.e., all the content lumped into “Additional Matter” category).
- Gloria Gonzalez was appointed this summer as the new Coordinator of the Reviews Portal. She succeeds Alexandra Orchard who is the new editor of *Archival Issues*.

**F. Archival Fundamental Series III Update—Peter Wosh**

- There are seven books in progress for the AFS III, and almost all authors are on track for developing manuscripts in the next year.
- *Providing Reference and Access Services for Archives and Manuscripts*: Author Cheryl Oestreicher has signed her contract, created a working outline, and written approximately fifty pages.
- *Appraising and Acquiring Archives and Manuscripts*: After some negotiation, author Mark Greene has agreed to a contract with SAA. He has completed a “fundamentals of appraisal” webinar and currently is working on an “advanced appraisal” webinar for SAA, which have been helpful in allowing him to bring together material that will be incorporated into the book.

- *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts: Principles and Practices*: Authors Elizabeth Joffrion and Michele Cloonan have signed a contract with SAA, have held several planning sessions, are well underway in the research and resource gathering phase, and have sabbaticals lined up in the coming year that will allow them to focus on writing and editing tasks.
- *On Leadership and Management of Archives*: David Carmicheal and Peter Gottlieb are the editors. They have drafted four of the projected six chapters for the first half of the book: strategic planning, budgeting, communications, and change. They also have altered the final two chapters in this section, which will address: staff development/ building new leaders and creating coalitions/partnerships. They also have secured contributors for the second half of the book, which will focus on leadership issues applicable to specific types of repositories: Megan Sniffin-Marinoff (colleges and universities); Sarah Koonts (government/public sector); Jennifer Johnson (corporate/business); and Lynette Stoudt (historical societies). Contracts will be issued in September to the contributors.

Rademaker suggested that since this volume is organized according to specific types of repositories, could the editors also consider addressing religious and nonprofit repositories as well as lone arrangers.

**TO DO #2:** Wosh to suggest to the editors of the Leadership and Management volume to add an author who could address the religious and nonprofit sectors.

- *Advocacy and Outreach for Archives and Manuscript Repositories*: Author Kathleen Roe has signed a contract with SAA and established deadlines for the development of the book. The research stage is well underway. Roe is working with the Issues & Advocacy Roundtable in particular, as well as attendees in the SAA workshops (June and October) to identify case study examples/scenarios for use, as well as to get feedback on particular issues and approaches to advocacy. She is also working with SAA Education Director Solveig De Sutter to initiate the “Advocacy Café” webinar series in fall 2016 that will focus on particular advocacy elements relevant for the manual.
- *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts*: Author Dennis Meissner has signed a contract with SAA. Owing to his 2015/2016 responsibilities as SAA president, there is no progress to report as yet.
- *Introducing Archives and Manuscripts*: Author Tom Nesmith has not yet signed a contract or settled a deadline, but will do so shortly as he will have more time in the next year with forthcoming retirement.
- There was some discussion by the Publications Board about accessioning/ deaccessioning as a possible additional title in AFS III, but the board decided against adding it to the series. Instead, the board believes it would be a worthwhile stand-alone book.

**TO DO #3:** Caldera and Demb to work on a proposal for a book on accessioning/deaccessioning.

## II. SAA BOOK PUBLISHING SURVEY RESULTS

The Publications Board discussed general impressions from the results of the survey administered in spring 2016 and which garnered 1,642 responses:

- **Type of Respondents:** The board was overall amazed at (and grateful to) the number of people who responded. Not quite the majority of respondents were mid-career or early in the profession (between 25–44). There were not many student respondents (about 15% identified as students), although the board has often seen students as a primary market. The survey may not have targeted that market well or the program is not. Academic archivists are a significant cohort within SAA membership, about 50% of respondents were academic archivists, and the make of the board is heavily academic.
- **Response to Price Points:** People want and value the information the program provides, but there is a tension between the open access movement to make information freely available while also needing to make money and to support the research and development of new book projects. Even though people do not want to pay, they still want the quality to be there. If the publications program does not publish the books they need or request, readers will find it through another publisher. This is not just a tension within SAA but other organizations, such as ALA, as well. Perhaps the subscription model that was suggested in the survey is not a good idea as people do not want to pay the cost.
- **E-book Pricing:** The price people were willing to pay for digital books was very low. Publishing online still has costs associated with it that are equal to print costs and the production cycle is longer than manufacturing (six weeks versus three weeks). There doesn't seem to be an overwhelming love among readers for e-books, but there is an obligation to make books available in multiple formats. In terms of open access, the program can loosen up digital rights if need to. BiblioVault, the vendor that prepares and distributes SAA e-books, recommended a limitation for users to only print one page every five minutes, which slows pirating. Caldera mentioned that one thing that was not asked on the survey is digestibility at one time—how people use material. Do they want something to hold that's easier to read?

**TO DO #4:** Brinati and Christian to look into loosening up DRM to allow for printout of pages.

**TO DO #5:** Brinati and Christian to look into e-sales to see if any institutions are purchasing e-books or if it is just individuals.

- **Educating Members on Stewardship:** The board discussed educating members on how they can *steward* the publications program. Buying an SAA book represents more than the money paid—it is also an investment in professional development and in the intellectual capital of the association. There is a disconnect between what the association strategically prioritizes and the sale of books. For example, diversity is a centerpiece of SAA's strategic plan and members are openly concerned about diversity, yet the sales of *Through the Archival Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion* (SAA, 2014) do not reflect the alleged interest. Similarly, archival educators should realize the impact they have on the publications program when they cherry

pick content, put it on reserve, and do not encourage students to buy books to build their professional library. Manuals of practice have traditionally been bread-and-butter for the program, but the Publications Board feels an obligation to publish on other topics (e.g., the history of the profession, thought pieces, and more theoretical works), even though these are often slow-selling books. **This is *not* just a Publications Board issue, but an association-wide and profession-wide issue because what is at stake is a canon of professional knowledge with a shrinking and elusive audience.** There is an opportunity for the Council to educate members about what a professional organization and community should be. Knowledge-sharing and the forwarding of professional discourse via publishing is one of those things.

**TO DO #6:** Prom, Brinati and Christian to draft a series of messages to targeted audiences (i.e., archival educators, practitioners, students, etc.) for the Publications Board to provide input on. Engage the Council in the dissemination of these messages.

- **Marketing Strategies:** Rademaker suggested exploring more ways to engage membership and get them interested in SAA books, to push the program's marketing efforts forward, perhaps with a podcast featuring the program's authors.

**TO DO #7:** Rademaker, Milano, Brinati and Christian to explore podcasting (i.e., pick a book and invite an author to experiment).

- **Bundles/Monthly Subscription:** Readers may balk at the commitment to spend for an entire year, but may consider a monthly subscription, or a model where once a user has downloaded content three times, they have essentially bought and paid for it—such as a patron acquisition plan in libraries. Another idea might be student or education subscriptions by topic or by semester, where students can access content for a semester. At this time in their life, students aren't thinking about building their library. Working with archival educators to find out what they need to develop a subscription service for students may be beneficial. Consider an institutional perspective and library perspective as potential distribution models.

### III. Next Steps with the Survey

**TO DO #8:** Prom, Grey, and Trammell to prepare brief article on the survey for *Archival Outlook* (Sep./Oct. 2016).

**TO DO #9:** Add to agenda for winter 2017 meeting of Publications Board a continued discussion of survey results and implications. Prepare a vision of the publications program in the short-term (2-3 years) and long-term and consider how the Council can help the publications program attain its goals. Supply the Council with a report/recommendations by the Council meeting in spring 2017.

**TO DO #10:** Miscellaneous considerations for winter meeting agenda: Should a Publications Board rep be a member of Archival Educators Roundtable or other education-related group within SAA? Sustaining members receive a free copy of every SAA book published during the year; how can sustaining members be leveraged to benefit the publications program? After a publications distribution model is identified, pilot it with an education institution (i.e., University of Michigan).