

Society of American Archivists
Publications Board Meeting
Chicago | February 8–10, 2015

MINUTES

In attendance: Chris Prom (Chair), Cara Bertram (Intern), Jody DeRidder, Colleen McFarland, Nicole Milano, Lisa Mix, Tawny Ryan Nelb, Cheryl Oestreicher, Michael Shallcross, Margery Sly, and ex officio members Greg Hunter (*American Archivist* Editorial Board Chair), Michelle Light (Council Liaison), and SAA staff members Teresa Brinati, Anne Hartman, and for parts of the meeting Peter Carlson and Solveig De Sutter.

I. The New Face of Book Publishing at a Professional Association: Intellectual Capital versus Revenue Generation

READINGS: [Open Access and Professional Societies](#) | [Putting Society Publishing in Context](#) | [The Membership Business Model for Scholarly Communications](#) | [Sustaining Scholarly Publishing](#)

A. The Role of Publications within SAA

1. Need for Publications: Associations, including SAA, often assume the role of shaping the professional literature. There is an interest and growing need for archival literature.

B. Clarifying Business Objectives

1. Revenue: Membership, the Annual Meeting, Education, and Publications are the biggest contributors to revenue within SAA. Publications now contribute less than 20 percent of the revenue. The Board discussed looking at publications less as a source of revenue, and more as a contribution to the profession. The conversation about what purpose publications has for the society should evolve.

2. SAA's Role as a Clearinghouse: At one point, SAA was a clearinghouse, but it have let go of that image. As a result, readers are not seeing as many standalone books as they had in the past. SAA now offers between 50 and 70 items, and most are SAA produced (about 20 percent of the books contribute 80 percent of the revenue). Distributing books from other publishers is challenging because SAA does not get the discount it needs, plus the books can be easily purchased elsewhere.

C. Exploring Business Models and New Strategies for Product Development/Distribution

1. Reading Materials: Instructors are changing the way they assign readings to students. Instead of assigning a whole book, many now tend to put chapters on reserve, assign instructor-published textbooks and materials, and use alternate reading materials—like the freely available content online. SAA's Archival Fundamentals Series (AFS) has staying power because it is heavily used in college

and university classrooms, but SAA must search for other ways to best meet instructors' and readers' needs.

2. Online Access to Content: It's a transition/hybrid period in publishing, and offering a variety of options for readers is necessary. Currently, however, Adobe Digital Editions makes it challenging to open and effectively use the ebooks that SAA offers.

The Board discussed adding an option to membership (for an additional fee) that would allow the member online access to SAA's catalog of titles. This option could be similar to Google Books—if you search for a term, phrase, or name, that portion of the content would be displayed in search results. More on this model:

- This option was also compared to Amazon Prime for SAA.
- Members would be allowed to access the publications via cloud, but they would not be allowed to download the publications.
- Members could access as much content as possible, including items available in HathiTrust.
- Similar to EBL and ebrary (ebook aggregators), members would be able to keep any notes they make on the material.
- Other associations are offering similar options: Electronic publications access is a member benefit for the Modern Language Association; and ACM (Association for Computing Machinery) charges an additional \$99 for access to a digital library.
- If this option were offered, SAA should make it clear that there is not a guarantee that a new book will be published each year.
- Because this deviates from the approach SAA has taken in the past, the Board would need to seek input from members and institutions.
 - SAA could survey members about the publications program in particular, asking:
 - Have you purchased a book in the past two years? Why or why not?
 - Does the book's value to you correlate with the price?
 - Have you purchased books from ALA, ARMA International, Rowman and Littlefield, etc.?
 - SAA should also reach out to institutions to determine their opinions of the idea. The survey could be incorporated into a request for feedback on AFS III.
 - SAA would need to set a fee relative to each institution; getting that number correct would require some work.

SAA should reach out to the Mellon Foundation to determine if grant funding could be received for the project. Mellon's focus is scholarly communication issues and is interested in projects that serve the greater good, so it might be a good fit. If SAA

wants to use Mellon, it should be explicit in how this model could help other publishers.

TO DO #1 (Brinati, Prom, Funding Committee): Map out a planning grant for a licensing model and pitch project to Mellon Foundation.

3. Podcasts: The Board discussed the possibility of SAA Publications creating content that is not text, such as podcasts. Podcasts are a mix of education and entertainment and could help facilitate conversations. AV Preserve’s “More Podcast, Less Process” was cited as a model. The podcasts would be free for members.

Podcasts can be conducted by Publications Board members, which would also help spread awareness for the work that the Board does. The Board could also consider partnering with SAA component groups to conduct the podcasts. Podcasts interviewees could include new fellows or other leaders in the profession, as well as authors and editors of SAA books.

TO DO #2 (Milano, Bertram): Speak with AV Preserve and other individuals who are familiar with the work and materials needed to conduct a podcast.

II. Reports

A. Council Updates—Michelle Light: Some SAA members requested action regarding two recent controversies: the University of Oregon (UO) records release incident and the University of Texas’s (UT) decision to not disclose the purchase price for the García Márquez archive. The Council issued a neutral statement on UT’s decision, recommending that SAA component groups discuss the issue amongst themselves. They also wrote a blog post for *Off the Record*, giving members the “behind-the-scenes” look at their discussion of the issue. SAA President Kathleen Roe named an ad hoc group to gather information and provide comments and recommendations on the UO incident, which informed Council on a discussion of the issue. After review, Council determined that there was insufficient published evidence for SAA to make any specific statements regarding the matter, but it would continue to monitor the situation.

Council also:

- Will complete cultural competency training at its May meeting. The training will focus on how to be sensitive when framing the conversation about diversity, and will help the Council devise strategies SAA can take to help to further diversify the archival record.
- Approved the SAA-ACRL/RBMS Joint Task Force on the Development of Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy
- Approved the exploration of a new membership fee structure
- Submitted a proposal to the IMLS for a planning grant so that SAA could become more data informed and data guided. The Council would like to gather data on the archival profession to see what kind of state the

profession is in. This data would especially help inform the advocacy agenda, giving SAA numbers to back up the facts.

B. Financial Overview—Peter Carlson, SAA Director of Finance and Administration

The organization is healthy; revenue from membership and the Annual Meeting in particular has been strong. Expenses in the publications department have been controlled, but there is still a need to grow sales in the area.

- For the six months ending December 31, 2014, the total income from publications was \$120,663.11, and total expenses were \$122,455.71.
- The organization as a whole experienced a \$242,546.79 net gain. For the six months ending December 31, 2014, the income was \$1,981,996.76 and expenses were \$1,739,449.97.

C. The Publishing Enterprise—Teresa Brinati

1. [Program Update](#) (July 2014–January 2015):

- The revenue in FY 2014 was \$268,377; the projected revenue for FY 2015 is \$255,024.
- The publishing agreements currently used by SAA for book and module publishing are under review by Menzi Behrnd-Klodt. Behrnd-Klodt, an archivist and attorney, is updating the agreements and will provide revised templates for: author of a monograph, editor of a monograph, chapter contributor to a monograph, author of a module, and editor of a module. These will be adaptable for co-authorship and co-editorship.

2. [AFS Revenue History](#):

- Sales of the AFS II books have remained steady since the books' original publications. From April 1, 2007, through June 30, 2014, 24,370 books from the series have been sold.
- *Arranging & Describing Archives and Manuscripts* has been the most successful, bringing in \$218,246.97 of revenue (22.96% of the total series revenue). *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts* follows closely behind, bringing in \$215,343.72 in revenue (22.65% of the total series revenue).

3. Typical Production Expenses:

- For a 336-page, 6x9 paperback book, production for 350 copies typically costs SAA \$14,424.85, with the total book cost per unit being \$46.53. If the book is sold for \$49.95 to members and \$69.96 to nonmembers, the estimated net revenue is \$1,999.30 on the first run of press. All expenses (e.g., honorariums, copyediting, design and layout, mfg., marketing, etc.)

are folded into the initial press run. Subsequent press runs yield a much higher rate of return.

D. Publications Board Subcommittees

1. Acquisitions: Strategies for Author Recruitment—Lisa Mix:

- Currently, SAA reaches out to authors when there's a specific topic in mind.
- The Board might consider looking for the gaps in the literature, or looking at *American Archivist* articles, to see if any could be expanded into a book.
- SAA should add more content to website to entice authors to publish with SAA. For example, emphasize that the books go through a rigorous review, and publishing with SAA could be added to instructors' tenure packet. This area of the website could also include testimonials from other authors, as well as an option for members to submit suggestions for topics.

TO DO #3 (Acquisitions Subcommittee): Look at current content on the website, and draft new or additional content to be added that would help to attract authors to publish with SAA and to solicit new ideas from members.

2. Marketing—Tawny Ryan Nelb (see also Marketing Report from Ryan Nelb, emailed Pubs Board list 02-18-15):

- The Board once again discussed the possibility of selling books on Amazon. While SAA could not offer all books on Amazon because of the 55% cut Amazon takes and the lack of two-tiered pricing, it could offer a specific book on the site that would be of interest both to archivists and non-archivists. Possible options include *Photographs: Archival Care and Management* and *Architectural Records: Managing Design and Construction Records*.

TO DO #4 (Brinati, Hartman): Explore the possibility of selling one of SAA's titles on Amazon.

- Google Ad Words could also be a way to reach new audiences. There would need to be a strong splash page with a link to buy the book.

TO DO #5 (Brinati, Hartman): Explore using Google Ad Words to promote *Rights in the Digital Era*.

- The Board also again discussed the idea of creating a book about archives for the general public, detailing ways that they can preserve their records. SAA could work with the National Archives to produce the book (Meg Phillips is NARA's External Affairs Liaison). This book could possibly be promoted

through Ancestry.com or FamilySearch.com, where SAA could reach family historians and genealogists.

- Laura Schmidt (author of *Using Archives*) was suggested as someone who could write the book. Content from *Using Archives* could also be used in the book.

TO DO #6 (Nelb): Draft a description of what the book for the general public would consist of, share with Board.

TO DO #7 (Hartman): In the online bookstore, add links (when possible) to reviews of SAA books and blurbs from the reviews.

E. *Dictionary of Archives Terminology*—Margery Sly:

1. Word of the Week: The eblasts have been going out weekly since July 23, 2014, and there are now more than 900 subscribers. The Working Group is looking into adding illustrations to the definitions, which some subscribers have asked for.

2. Software: The Working Group is currently using Asana, free project management software, but would like to upgrade to an actual dictionary program. The *Dictionary of American Regional English* is a model worth emulating.

3. Publication: The Working Group would like the dictionary to be available in late 2015, but thinks 2016 is a more realistic estimate (because it revolves around getting and implementing a dictionary software program). One of the enhancements is the tagging of all existing entries in the 2005 *Glossary* and new entries in the dictionary so readers will be able to pull terms together around specific topics.

F. *American Archivist*—Greg Hunter:

1. Spring/Summer 2015: Hunter shared the table of contents for the upcoming issue, which will include a section on archives and community engagement.

2. Acceptance Rate: Hunter is continuing to monitor the acceptance rate, which is about 10 percent.

TO DO #8 (Hunter): Publish acceptance rate information online.

3. Allen Press: SAA signed a contract in January with Allen Press to support hosting of all legacy and future online journal content; submission, tracking, review, and editing of manuscripts for the journal; production of the online version of the journal in dual formats; maintenance of article-by-article embargo on new content for SAA members and subscribers; early delivery of individual articles to members and subscribers; optimization of available content for reading on mobile devices; and printing and distribution of the print edition of the journal. Allen Press has begun work on the new website, which is expected to be up by April. SAA will use Allen Press for production starting with the Fall/Winter 2015 issue.

IV. Updates on Program Activity

A. [Action Items from August 2014 Minutes](#):

TO DO #9 (Brinati, Light): Send ebook of *Archives and Justice: A South African Perspective* to ebrary (and other aggregators/vendors listed on the BiblioVault website) as an experiment.

TO DO #10 (Brinati, Hartman): Create a cost estimate for the AFS III.

TO DO #11 (Prom): Contact Nancy Bartlett to discuss the status of *Visual Cultures and Archives*.

TO DO #12 (Brinati, Bertram): Create a Google Doc for the project status report and share with the Board.

B. [Project Status](#):

1. **AMIA Compendium of Moving Image Cataloging Practice:** Manuscript is moving along steadily and is expected in spring 2014.

2. **Archival Fundamentals Series III:** Prom has received four of the seven outlines and hopes to share all outlines with the Board this spring. A suggestion was made to connect authors with SAA's Continuing Education program (workshops, webinars, DAS offerings) so that there is the potential for greater integration.

3. **Archives in Libraries:** Copyedits are with the authors; book could potentially be available in time for the Annual Meeting.

4. **Spanish translations of donor brochures:** Still outstanding.

TO DO #13 (Prom): Follow up with Adriana Cuervo on the status of the Spanish translation of the donor brochures.

5. **Case Studies on Diversifying the Archival Record:** Diversity Committee is continuing to evaluate the five existing case studies using the process and rubric established by the Publications Board.

6. **Campus Case Studies:** Under consideration: *Case 15: Digital Preservation Strategies for a Small Private College*. The College & University Archives Section will now be evaluating case studies in this topical area using the process and rubric established by the Publications Board.

7. **EAD3:** Not clear on the timetable, or when the standard and tag library will be finished.

8. **Management of Local Government Records:** Declined to move forward with it.

9. **Trailblazer: Harold T. Pinkett, Archivist-Historian:** Prom sent feedback to author, asking him to address the repetition in some of Pinkett's writings, as well as content that would not be applicable to an audience of archivists.

10. Module 8: *Becoming a Trusted Digital Repository*: Manuscript with designer for layout.

11. Trends in Archives Practice – *Digital Preservation Essentials* cluster: The module *Preserving Digital Objects* by Erin O’Meara and Kate Stratton has been submitted, the three other module manuscripts are in limbo, but authors have indicated they’ll be submitted in March. If not received by then, SAA will need to decide how to move forward. *Preserving Digital Objects* could be published electronically as a standalone module, or perhaps bundled with another cluster.

12. Trends in Archives Practice – *Teaching with Primary Sources* cluster: In progress. Beth Yakel, who’s authoring the module *Contextualizing Archival Literacy—Environments and Issues*, is looking for a coauthor. The authors of the other two modules have submitted substantive drafts.

13. Trends in Archives Practice – *Putting Descriptive Standards to Work* cluster: Kelcy Shepherd has agreed to write the third module, *Using EAD3*; Kris Kiesling has agreed to edit the cluster.

14. Trends in Archives Practice – *Appraisal and Acquisition* cluster: The module *Collecting Digital Manuscripts* by Gabriela Redwine and Megan Barnard was submitted. The Board discussed Martin Gengenbach (from the Gates Archive) as a potential author for *Digital Forensics*. This module, however, would be more difficult than the others because the content would need to be continuously updated. While many institutions take a more hands-off approach to the topic, others will need intensive training.

TO DO #14 (Prom): Contact Geof Huth to discuss being the author for *Appraising Digital Records*.

15. Trends in Archives Practice – *Archivists Working with the Media* module: Awaiting revised proposal from the authors.

16. *Developing Creative Public Programming* module: No developments since fall 2014.

C. Shepherds

1. McFarland volunteered to shepherd *Putting Descriptive Standards to Work*.
2. Milano volunteered to shepherd *Archivists Working with the Media*.

TO DO #15 (Brinati): Draft and distribute a description of shepherd duties to the Board.

D. Continuing Education Program Collaboration—Solveig De Sutter, SAA Education Director

1. Processing Electronic Records and Manuscripts: A webinar complementing Gordon Daines’s module, *Module 2: Processing Digital Records and Manuscripts*, is in

progress and will be taught by Sybil Schaefer. The module is included in the price of the webinar, and will be delivered to the individual who buys the license. However, any additional people at a site who view the webinar would need to purchase their own copy of the module.

2. Publications and Education: There is currently a disconnect between the two programs. Many of the readings the instructors assign come from outside SAA. It's also difficult to give companion books at preconference education offerings; De Sutter said it's best to push publications on the web and in workbooks. De Sutter recommended keeping education and potential courses or workshops in mind during the initial stages of publishing a book.

3. DAS Reader: The Board suggested producing a DAS Reader, similar to *A Modern Archives Reader: Basic Readings on Archival Theory and Practice* (NARA, 1984) that was developed to support the Modern Archives Institute at the National Archives. The reader could introduce the DAS program and assemble the best introductory readings. It could include one key reading from each area in the curriculum. New content should also be added, so readers see additional value in the publication.

TO DO #16 (De Sutter): Send the pre-readings used for DAS courses to the Publications Board; Board should read the materials and determine if the DAS Reader could be a publication worth pursuing.

TO DO #17 (Sly, Brinati, and De Sutter): Coordinate with Dictionary Working Group to align tagging and sub-glossaries with SAA Continuing Education workshop topics.

V. Potential New Projects

A. Web Archiving: Prom suggested this cluster that would include social media, web archives, and AV. For potential authors, the Board recommended looking at: Lisa Schmidt (Michigan State University), Tracy Seneca (University of Illinois at Chicago), and Michael Shallcross (University of Michigan), as well as looking for possible authors in the special section on Twitter in the Fall/Winter 2014 issue of *American Archivist* or contributors to Kate Theimer's book *Web 2.0 Tools and Strategies for Archives and Local History*.

B. Processing Manual: This manual would cover the detail of processing. While *How to Manage Processing in Archives and Special Collections* (SAA, 2012) covers the topic at a high level, this manual would be more practice-based and include the basic information learned in Processing 101. It could provide guidelines for processing that people in the profession could point to. It would also be useful for new archivists, or for those outside the profession. This manual could be developed with an advisory committee, similar to how Thelma Ross is revising the *AMIA Compendium of Moving Image Cataloging Practice* (SAA and AMIA, 2001).

C. "Interdisciplinary" Topics: The Board discussed the need for SAA to stake its claim on topics that are emerging in several professions. SAA could shape the conversation before

anyone else does. Digital humanities for archivists and digital legacies were suggested topics.

D. Succession Planning: Cornerstone local and regional institutions are dying, and need help ensuring that corporate memory and the archives survive. This manual could help institutions manage their archives as institutions are shuttering, or when institutions are undergoing major transitions.

TO DO #18 (Prom, Board): Draft a call for proposals with a deadline, inviting proposals on the above topics or others. Include a deadline, and post on the SAA website, and promote via the *Off the Record* blog, social media, etc.

E. Archives Fiction Contest: The Board suggested doing something fun to raise awareness about the SAA publishing program, such as hosting an archives fiction contest for SAA members. Participants could submit short stories or cartoons or graphic novels. The Board would assemble a selection committee to select the top submissions, which would then be posted on the SAA website, with members voting for their favorite. The winner would receive a nominal cash prize.

TO DO #19 (Oestreicher): Draft a call for fiction that describes the contest.

VI. Community Archives Proposal

A. Reactions: The author proposed a three-module cluster, with the first module being distributed for free to the public to assist in building community archives. The Board did not see the need for a free module. They also thought it was best to direct the content to an audience of archivists, who would want to form a personal connection with community members anyway, rather than hand them a publication. The Board thought modules 1 and 3 were too similar, but saw strong potential with module 2. Rather than focusing on community archives, the audience seems to be more activist archivists, or archivists for nontraditional communities and communities not based on geography. The Board decided the proposal was at best one module to be available electronically only OR submitted for publication consideration to *American Archivist*.

TO DO #20 (Prom): Compile feedback from Board and send to proposer.

TO DO #21 (Brinati): In the "Guidelines for Publishing with SAA," include a page limit on CVs submitted with proposals; proposals should include a two-page CV that addresses past publishing experience.

TO DO #22 (Prom, Brinati): In online bookstore, revisit description of *Records of American Business* and refresh, emphasizing the Mark Green/Todd Daniels-Howell now classic contribution, "Documentation with an Attitude." Prom could then prepare a blog post for *Off the Record* and tie it to a contemporary issue, which would give the book a new lease☺