

Society of American Archivists
Publications Board Meeting
Chicago | January 29-31, 2017

MINUTES

In attendance:

Chris Prom (Chair), Mary Caldera, Sarah Demb, Jody DeRidder, Nicole Milano, Colleen McFarland Rademaker, Aaron Purcell, Michael Shallcross, Margery Sly, Jennie Thomas, Anna Trammel (Intern), and *ex officio* members Amy Cooper Cary (Council Liaison), Greg Hunter (*The American Archivist* Editor), and SAA staff members Nancy Beaumont, Teresa Brinati, and Abigail Christian.

I. REPORTS

A. Welcome – Chris Prom

B. Council and SAA Updates – Nancy Beaumont

- The SAA Committee on Public Policy (COPP) and the Committee on Public Awareness (COPA) have both been very active this year. Projects include the launch of the blog *ArchivesAWARE!* (COPA), and several issue briefs drafted for Council approval and recommendations to the Trump administration transition team submitted in December (COPP). There is currently a concern for the future of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), as well as for NEA and NEH. COPP's approach is to draft messaging on the importance of these programs, gather data on institutions who received funds and the impact of those funds, and to work behind-the-scenes to support a reauthorization for NHPRC.
- With Greg Hunter's term as editor of *The American Archivist* ending in December 2017, SAA has issued a call for applications for the next editor. Applications are due April 14.
- In early January, the Program Committee met to select 2017 Annual Meeting sessions. Highlights of the Portland conference include trying out a convention center for the second time and an all-day forum on Saturday focused on community archives.
- SAA is exploring a new association management system and also a learning management system to support education efforts, with tentative plans for implementation in February 2018.
- SAA has hired a new education director, Kara Adams, while former director Solveig DeSutter will stay on as an education consultant.
- The SAA Foundation set new records for giving in 2016: \$72,648 in donations and 413 unique donors.
- Fiscally, income from program areas (Annual Meeting, Education, Publications) is lower than anticipated this year. SAA continues to consider ways to cut costs as well as invest in programs, courses, and publications that will bring in more income.

C. Publishing Program Overview – Teresa Brinati

- Refreshing the Archival Fundamentals Series is essential to the publications program's bottom line; therefore, the Board needs to encourage authors of AFSIII volumes to meet deadlines and continue moving projects forward.
- Print book sales are declining and ebook sales are minimal. The open access movement is now exerting tension in the book arena. Cherry-picking by archival educators and incidental sharing of publications with and among students affects the bottom line. Although sales have exceeded expectations in three of the six months this fiscal year to date, it has not been enough to offset the down months. The American Association of Publishers recently reported that net profit for "professional publishers" (the category in which SAA falls) was down overall, so we're part of a larger trend (not that it's any consolation).
- ALA is going to adopt 6 more SAA books for distribution. There is now interest from ALA in exploring co-publishing opportunities, an idea initially investigated by SAA when it first received a publication proposal for *Archives and Libraries*, several years ago. Although ALA declined the co-publishing offer, it was the beginning of a distribution relationship in which ALA has distributed more than a dozen SAA books, which has yielded thousands of dollars in royalties for SAA. Book topics to propose for co-publication with ALA include research data and appraisal, digital forensics, archival metadata for librarians, and archiving for librarians who are lone arrangers.

To Do #1 (Prom, Brinati): Schedule meeting with ALA's Rachel Chance to further pursue collaboration on publishing projects (see topic list in bullet above), distribution of SAA books, and feedback on price point for AFS III series. (See also #13 below).

- Thanks to Trammel for her recent work in looking through reviews in the professional literature of SAA books from the last three years and gathering excerpts to use as marketing and for posting on the website catalog.

To Do #2 (Brinati, Christian): Finish posting blurbs to online book catalog.

- SAA had 130 contributors to its magazine, journal, case studies, modules, and books overall in 2016. Content contribution offers an excellent way for members to participate and stay involved in SAA.

D. Dictionary Working Group – Margery Sly

- Word of the Week emails have been a consistent success and subscriptions continue to inch upward since it was launched 2½ years ago.
- The IDM dictionary software is now populated with terms from the 2005 *Glossary* and the group is focused on developing new content. March is the projected month the group will transition from using Asana for collaborative editing to fully using the new software.
- After that, the next step will be working with IDM on the front end—what the dictionary will look like in Drupal.

E. *The American Archivist* – Greg Hunter

- PeerTrack, the management system for handling submissions, is now fully implemented and will save time in the peer review process.
- Intern Dana Bronson will begin working to make “dark content” in issues available.
- Bronson recently harvested links to all of the presidential addresses published in the journal. This “collection” of *American Archivist* content is now available on the SAA website.
- Production of issue 79.2 was delayed but is projected to be available in February. The next issue, 80.1, will debut a new department called “Archives in Translation,” which publishes translations of international articles on important archival themes.

F. Review of To-Do List from August 2016 Minutes – All

- TO DO #3—Book proposal on accessioning/deaccessioning: Audra Eagle Yun submitted a preliminary proposal, which Caldera, Demb and Prom reviewed and returned with feedback. Yun is revising and will resubmit a full proposal for Board consideration.
- TO DO #4—Loosening up DRM to allow for printout of pages is in process.
- TO DO #6—Asking archival educators and students for input on publications is in process. Prom sent a message to educators at the end of December to ask for feedback on topics they’d like to see and promote books. No response thus far.

G. Project Status – All

- *AMIA Compendium of Moving Image Cataloging Practice*: project currently stalled.

TO DO #3 (Prom and Brinati): Contact Thelma Ross to re-assess interest in the *AMIA Compendium of Moving Image Cataloging Practice* project.

- Archival Fundamentals Series III: Authors for *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts* (Beth Joffrion and Michele Cloonan) have asked for an 18-month extension six months ahead of the 18 months they’ve already had per the publishing agreement. Cheryl Oestreicher, the author of *Providing Reference and Access Services*, is on track to meet her March deadline, which would make this the first volume in the series in production. Tom Nesmith still has not signed the contract for *Introducing Archives and Manuscripts*. Kathleen Roe’s manuscript on *Advocacy* was due December 31, but she has indicated she is now targeting a February/March submission. A nonprofit or religious archives perspective still is missing from *Leading Archives and Manuscript Programs*. The deadlines for the *Arrangement and Description* (Dennis Meissner) and the *Appraisal* (Mark Greene) volumes are December 2017 and July 2018 respectively.

TO DO #4 (Beaumont): Convene conference call with the Beth Joffrion and Michele Cloonan regarding the requested extension for *Preserving Archives and Manuscripts* and determine what's up.

TO DO #5 (Prom): Check in with Tom Nesmith regarding contract for *Introducing Archives and Manuscripts*.

TO DO #6 (Prom): Prom to talk with AFS III series editor Peter Wosh about discussing with David Carmicheal and Peter Gottlieb the adding to *Leading Archives and Manuscript Programs* a chapter on nonprofit/religious archives. Possible authors include Nicole Milano, Colleen McFarland Rademaker, and Malachy McCarthy.

TO DO #7 (Prom, Milano, Brinati, Christian): Work with Ana Rodriguez and the SAA LACCHA Section to translate into Spanish selected article(s) from *The American Archivist* to include in the journal's new "Archives in Translation" department.

- *Moving Images and Sound Collections* on track to be available in time for SAA Annual Meeting in Portland.
- Trends in Archives Practice: Fingers crossed that *Putting Descriptive Standards to Work* will be available in time for Annual Meeting in Portland. On a side note, the Standards Committee's Technical Subcommittee on Describing Archives: A Content Standard has recently requested funding to revise the principles on which DACS is based, which may affect the book's relevancy; however, revising standards can take several years to implement and this book will be ready to be released this summer.

II. REIMAGINING THE BOOK PUBLISHING ENTERPRISE

A. Sales Data – Teresa Brinati

- The Board looked at sales of a dozen representative titles in the catalog from 2008–2016. The Archival Fundamentals Series is the largest contributors to the Publications' bottom line. These volumes are consistently used in college and university classrooms, and the Board receives many requests from educators to put chapters on reserve. *Arrangement and Description* has been the top-selling book for decades. Altogether, 20 books account for 80% of sales.
- *Museum Archives* will go into a third reprint.
- In looking at stats for who is buying SAA books, the Board was surprised to see that it is a 50/50 split between nonmembers and members. This may imply that nonmembers do not see book discounts as enough incentive to become a member and/or their employing institutions are footing the tab for the book purchases.
- A holiday promo in December for 20 titles contributed to exceeding the sales goal for that month. There was a 50/50 split between member and nonmember consumers who took advantage of the discounts. The sale was promoted in *In the Loop*, on social media, and on listservs, all of which include a large nonmember audience in addition to members. Plans for other monthly and flash promotions are in process.
- Data on e-sales shows a very low rate of consumers buying eBooks. It costs SAA around \$500 to convert to eBooks and add digital rights management.

- Feedback from buyers indicates that they prefer flexible or open access PDFs over the DRM PDFs available in the SAA Bookstore, though flexible PDFs would adversely affect SAA's income because they could be passed around freely and used by anyone.

TO DO #8 (Brinati): Contact Yankee Book Peddler to determine quantity of books they have purchased/sold.

TO DO #9 (Brinati and Christian): Increase nonmember prices in bookstore while keeping member prices the same.

TO DO #10 (Brinati and Christian): Explore Ebrary (Proquest) as a potential distributor of content that includes multi-user licensing.

B. The Survey Said . . .

- The Board reviewed the results from the 2016 SAA Book Publishing Survey conducted last spring asking people about their purchasing habits and interest in a subscription service. Respondents overwhelmingly preferred print. They often asked for topics that are already in our existing catalog, meaning there is need and opportunity for us to promote past books and find new avenues for marketing. Email was by far the preferred way for respondents to learn about new books. Individualized and direct marketing as well as timely marketing of culturally relevant books is to our benefit. The cost of books was a major barrier to purchasing, and yet our book pricing for members is below average compared to other book publishers. We could develop discounts for specific groups—particularly students and new professionals—and promote the value and quality of SAA publications. There is also a need to make people aware of the structure of the series Trends in Archives Practice in which educators can pick and choose modules to fit their needs. A subscription service was met with lukewarm response and does not seem to be a worthwhile pursuit. The Board discussed how to streamline barriers to authorship, by possibly working with the SAA Foundation to develop a “new authors” publication fund. The anticipated success of AFS III means we could use profit as seed money to fund other important but perhaps not money-making projects. Monographs were low on the list of what respondents wanted and so could be included in special, online-only volumes of *The American Archivist* instead.

C. Brainstorming Ideas for Marketing, Content Development, and Formats

- **New Marketing:** Ideas included making the SAA Sampler Series open access and pitching it to archival educators and to regionals for book discussions; developing more outreach to educators, perhaps at Annual Meeting; distribute coupons to lower tier membership categories (i.e., Students and ID levels 1 and 2) to address financial concerns; distribute to past purchasers who haven't recently made a purchase coupons with a message along the lines of “We missed you!”; include a regular sidebar in *Archival Outlook* and *In the Loop* to advertise books around a theme or timely topic and to raise awareness of titles in the existing catalog; consider *Through the Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion* as the next One Book, One Profession selection (and send the book's editor Mary Caldera on tour!) and host a Twitter chat at Annual Meeting; send MailChimp emails when a new book is released with quotes from the book or blurbs;

develop a mini-catalog through MailChimp or mailed flyers to promote books—direct marketing; pursue opportunistic marketing, such as promoting *Archives Power* now given the political climate; promote specific books on targeted listservs; podcast; host Twitter chats with authors or partner with SNAP’s Twitter chats; pair books with educational offerings; develop catalog promoting possible curriculum materials; incorporate testimonials from readers; find out what regional organizations authors attend and provide books—a tour.

- **New Content Development:** Ideas included a cultural competency book or cultural competency component embedded in every book; series of primers; “archives for dummies” or “accidental archivist” book; finding gap areas in core series such as event collecting or big data; developing a volume for Trends in Archives Practice, “History as it Happens: Capturing Life Now/Today,” that would include web archiving, social media, and event-driven collection; digitization for and born digital records for “dummies” that considers how people should think about these processes/records vs. tools to use (which would quickly date the publication); digital humanities or scholarship from an archivists point of view (what do scholars need from archivists), which could be an ALA collaboration; finding new authors through funding from the SAA Foundation; and a book on accessibility of non-traditional or challenged groups.
- **New Formats:** Ideas included investigate Fulcrum as a platform; experiment with serialization (Charles Dickens’ style); print-on-demand for educators using modules in courses (educators select modules for their course pack and we set a price).

D. Putting it all together

Top priorities for marketing:

- i. Pursue opportunistic marketing in the short-term
- ii. Develop segmented emails and reader testimonials
- iii. Promote relevant books on listservs that members of the Board participate in—peer to peer recommendations go further than SAA promotions. find out regionals and sections going to—have speakers go, ask authors for ideas in marketing),

Top priorities for content development:

- i. Pursue “Cultural Competency” as a stand-alone book. A good editor is needed. Cooper Cary can serve as liaison with the Diversity Committee, which can help the Board determine potential authors. This book could possibly be paired with an education offering.
- ii. Pursue a collaboration with ALA, specifically the idea of “Accidental Archivist,” which would serve as a prequel to *The Lone Arranger*.
- iii. Develop primer idea as leaflets, written by AFS authors, and release just before/as AFS books come out.
- iv. Develop new TAP book, “History as It Happens.” Drop “in the digital age” from title—a dated term. Sly will be co-editor. Potential editors or writers: Ed Sommers and Jarret Drake.

TO DO #11 (Brinati and Beaumont): Work with Matt Black in Member Max to determine how we can target specific groups and capture mailing addresses for direct marketing.

TO DO #12 (Brinati and Christian): Publish the Social Justice Sampler.

TO DO #13 (Brinati and Christian): Make the three volumes in the SAA Sampler Series (Social Justice, Advocacy, and Law and Ethics) open access.

TO DO #14 (Brinati and Prom): Connect with ALA's Rebecca Chance to discuss print-on-demand of individual modules + collaboration on "Accidental Archivist" idea.

TO DO #15 (Prom and Sly): Flesh out proposal for "History as It Happens" idea.

TO DO #16 (Brinati and Christian): Determine if Bibliovault or another vendor could do print on demand for modules and what the costs would be.

TO DO #17 (Brinati and Christian): Revise checklist for marketing new releases to include asking what regional/local/allied professional meetings authors will be attending, what listservs will the book be relevant to, and any other author ideas for marketing.

TO DO #18 (Cooper Cary): Set up a forum or gathering at the SAA Annual Meeting or during the Archival Educators Section meeting, or at the AERI conference(also in July) to connect the Board with archival educators.

TO DO #19 (Shallcross, Prom): Explore the possibility of using the platform Fulcrum.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. The Board discussed Laura Millar's proposal for an archives book for the general public, which could be sold on Amazon and at places such as the National Archives gift store, state historical gift shops, and other places where it could reach non-archivists. Price point would be around \$35. Title needs work. Partner with SAA groups such as the Committee on Public Awareness and the Reference, Access and Outreach Section to serve as an advisory board or peer review. A lot of effort would need to go into marketing—if possible, request endorsements by celebrities who use archives (e.g., Lin-Manuel Miranda, Ron Chernow). This book could be our first test run with Amazon as a distributor. The volume would need plenty of color illustrations and very engaging narratives/storytelling.
- B. Rademaker and Milano have proposed a Publications podcast. Milano will be co-host with another TBD archivist while Rademaker will be the producer. Upfront costs include headsets and microphones for three people, but the budget to maintain is less. The Board recommends a paid software—such as Zoom over Skype—to maintain consistent quality. The proposed title of *<bioghist>* may be too "insider." *Seen and Heard, Archives People*, and *<in•context>*al so recommended. The proposed 30 minutes for each episode is perhaps too long—20 minutes may be more manageable for listeners and producer. The role of an advisory board will evaluate efficacy of the podcast through the number of downloads, social media engagement, and invited feedback to determine whether the podcast is something to continue. Beaumont recommended that the podcast be an SAA project instead of just publications. There is potential to partner with Kara Adams, director of education, because of her experience in web and video webinars. Sly suggested including some oral histories or story corps that were done at the SAA Annual

Meeting in Cleveland in 2015 as a feature, segment, or incorporated in the opening or closing credits. If an SAA project, then the funding can be worked into the next budget cycle. If a Publications Board project, then a proposal could be submitted to the SAA Foundation for funding. The Board decided to move ahead with the project.

- C. The Board has two "Essays in Honor of . . ." projects forthcoming. One currently in production is in honor of Mark Greene. A proposal for a volume in honor of Richard Cox recently has been submitted. The Board discussed how many of these types of volumes could Publications Program pursue at a time, how well they would sell, and what is their role in the professional literature. If enough new content and a different enough angle, then the book offers more marketability. The Board also discussed how the existing "in honor of" projects can be marketed or title changed so the books have broader appeal.
- D. Publications has partnered with the Latin American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Archives (LACCHA) Section to translate the brochure "Donating Personal and Family Records to Repositories." LACCHA is eager to contribute in this way and interested in partnering on future projects. The next brochure being translated is "Guide to Deeds of Gifts" and is due March 3, 2017. After that, LACCHA will translate the brochure "Donating Organizational Records."
- E. Two books are out of stock and the Board discussed whether to run another reprint, convert them to eBooks, or release them as open access to HathiTrust. The Board decided to do one more small print run of *Planning New and Remodeled Archival Facilities*, which has already had two print runs and may be revised by the Standards Committee's Technical Subcommittee on Archival Facilities Guidelines after it has revised *Guidelines for Archival Facilities*. The book *Film Preservation: Competing Definitions of Value, Use, and Practice* will be released to Hathi Trust.

TO DO #20 (Brinati and Prom): Check into costs of the "archives for the general public" book and provide the Board's feedback to Millar so she can submit a revised proposal.

TO DO #21 (Milano and Rademaker): Incorporate Board feedback as well as input from Education Director Kara Adams, then resubmit podcast proposal to Board.

TO DO #22 (Prom): Provide feedback to editors of the "Essays in honor of Richard Cox" proposal.

TO DO #23 (Brinati and Prom): Follow up with the Standards Committee's Technical Subcommittee on Archival Facilities Guidelines on its revision plans for *Guidelines for Archival Facilities*.

TO DO #24 (Brinati and Christian): Order a print run of 100 for *Planning New and Remodeled Archival Facilities*

TO DO #25 (Brinati and Christian): Contact Karen Gracy to let her know that her book, *Film Preservation: Competing Definitions of Value, Use, and Practice*, is now out of print and that SAA would like to submit it to the HathiTrust.