**Peer reviews**

**Queer Feminist Archives**

**Compiled by Stacie Williams, Publications Editor**

**1/5/2022**

**Reviewer #1**

**Criterion: Meets professional need [Good: Meets a professional need by addressing a challenge that is common, but less critical]**

Proposed book might address some challenges faced by a large portion of the archival community. The topic of respectfully managing queer archives is important and relevant to many. However, the focus on collections of ephemera makes it a very narrow audience. The author mentions her own work on specific collections as a focus of the book--which is also a very narrow perspective. The book's relevance is further narrowed by the intensive processing approach suggested by the author, which would be extremely difficult for most archives to achieve without special funding. Few repositories have the resources to conduct such in-depth research (described in sections 4.i.1. and 5.) on every collection.

**Criterion: Makes unique contribution to professional discourse [Good: Brings forth some new knowledge or fills an existing gap in the literature in a relevant or timely topic]**

**Criterion: Author/editor qualifications [Poor: Inadequate writing sample provided and/or has few or no prior publications; difficult to assess expertise in subject area; if compilation, no editing experience or no evidence that they can manage an editing project]**

Publishing a monograph may be too big a leap for this author at this point in her career. Unless I am misinterpreting her CV, it appears as though she has written book reviews and blog posts and presented at conferences. There is no evidence of rigorous peer-reviewed scholarship.

**Criterion: Proposal completeness [Good: Adequately developed proposal with most necessary information ; substantially complies with proposal template, but some gaps]**

**Criterion: Marketability (primary audience — SAA members; archivists, archives students) [Good: Perceived demand high to medium ; sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length appealing]**

I believe there is a strong contingent of archivists who would be interested in this topic.

**Criterion: Marketability (secondary audiences — allied professions, general public) [Fair: Perceived demand medium; may not be sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length does not enhance appeal]**

The book might be of interest to gender studies if it were not so archives-specific.

**Criterion: Contributes to/meets Pubs Board goals/mission (see https://www2.archivists.org/publications/book-publishing/guidelinesforbookproposals) [Excellent: Fully supports goals/mission by: a) is a new or newly translated academic work on an advanced topic; b) establishes best practice(s); d) new work that needs evolving membership need(s) and/or c) is good value for initial outlay at agreed publication time]**

The topic is very relevant to SAA's mission.

**Criterion: Contributes toward SAA's Strategic Plan and Core Organizational Values (see https://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-plan) [Excellent: Fully supports plan and values; represents excellent return on investment by speaking directly to current needs and initiatives.]**

The topic reflects SAA's values.

Overall publication priority: Medium

Summary Recommendation: Revise and resubmit

I have concerns about the author's professional maturity. For example, I am concerned that the author has a simplistic view of MPLP as equivalent to minimal processing. MPLP does not "advise against item level processing." MPLP advises that archivists establish processing priorities holistically (surveying the needs of users and the accessibility of all their collections), allocate processing resources accordingly, and apply the level of processing that will make each collection discoverable and usable.

**Reviewer #2**

**Criterion: Meets professional need [Good: Meets a professional need by addressing a challenge that is common, but less critical]**

**Criterion: Makes unique contribution to professional discourse [Good: Brings forth some new knowledge or fills an existing gap in the literature in a relevant or timely topic]**

**Criterion:\*if applicable, meets stated aims of series for which book is proposed (i.e. https://www2.archivists.org/publications/archival-futures/submission-guidelines or https://www2.archivists.org/publications/book-publishing/module-guidelines-trends-in-archives-practice [Good: Mainly meets stated aims and could be improved with a few tweaks]**

Comments (may be shared with proposer)

The proposal has not been identified for either of those series.

**Criterion: Author/editor qualifications [Good: Record of peer-reviewed publications and/or very good writing sample; demonstrated expertise in subject area; if compilation, has editing experience]**

This would be the author's first long form publication but she has peer reviewed articles and book reviews. Topics have included teaching, diversity, and social theories.

**Criterion: Proposal completeness [Good: Adequately developed proposal with most necessary information ; substantially complies with proposal template, but some gaps]**

**Criterion: Marketability (primary audience — SAA members; archivists, archives students) [Good: Perceived demand high to medium ; sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length appealing]**

**Criterion: Marketability (secondary audiences — allied professions, general public) [Good: Perceived demand high to medium; sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length appealing]**

**Criterion: Contributes to/meets Pubs Board goals/mission (see https://www2.archivists.org/publications/book-publishing/guidelinesforbookproposals) [Good: Largely supports goals/mission by: a) being a revised edition or translation of a previous work; and/or b) is an opportunity for co-publication with another publishing outlet; and/or c) has some expected return for timely outlay and/or d) partially meets the requirements found in the Excellent category.]**

**Criterion: Contributes toward SAA's Strategic Plan and Core Organizational Values (see https://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-plan) [Good: Largely support plan and values by integral relationship to SAA objectives; has likely expected return on investment relative to plan and core values.]**

Overall publication priority: Medium

Summary Recommendation: Accept with minor revisions (specify below if not noted above)

One thing I am curious about is how the author will compare her own experiences working on queer feminist collections and with other collections at other repositories? Will she do a survey of finding aids, interview other archivists about their work experiences or interview users of those collections? I would like to know a little bit more about her research methodology.

**Reviewer #3**

**Criterion: Meets professional need [Good: Meets a professional need by addressing a challenge that is common, but less critical]**

**Criterion: Makes unique contribution to professional discourse [Good: Brings forth some new knowledge or fills an existing gap in the literature in a relevant or timely topic]**

**Concern that there would be substantial overlap with Michelle Caswell's recent book for Routledge "Urgent Archives: Enacting Liberatory Memory Work." I haven't read Michelle's book yet so I can't say for sure, just something to think about.**

**Criterion: Author/editor qualifications [Poor: Inadequate writing sample provided and/or has few or no prior publications; difficult to assess expertise in subject area; if compilation, no editing experience or no evidence that they can manage an editing project]**

I don't see any evidence that this author is ready for a monograph-length work. I would like to see at least one peer-reviewed article that is not a review.

**Criterion: Proposal completeness [Good: Adequately developed proposal with most necessary information ; substantially complies with proposal template, but some gaps]**

**Criterion: Marketability (primary audience — SAA members; archivists, archives students) [Good: Perceived demand high to medium ; sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length appealing]**

**Criterion: Marketability (secondary audiences — allied professions, general public) [Fair: Perceived demand medium; may not be sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length does not enhance appeal]**

I think that there could be some interest in the library or museum fields, depending on how narrow the author's focus ends up being on archival processing, versus cataloging in general.

**Criterion: Contributes to/meets Pubs Board goals/mission (see https://www2.archivists.org/publications/book-publishing/guidelinesforbookproposals) [Good: Largely supports goals/mission by: a) being a revised edition or translation of a previous work; and/or b) is an opportunity for co-publication with another publishing outlet; and/or c) has some expected return for timely outlay and/or d) partially meets the requirements found in the Excellent category.]**

**Criterion: Contributes toward SAA's Strategic Plan and Core Organizational Values (see https://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-plan) [Good: Largely support plan and values by integral relationship to SAA objectives; has likely expected return on investment relative to plan and core values.]**

Overall publication priority: Medium

Summary Recommendation: Reject

I would strongly encourage the author to write one or two chapters and submit them as articles to peer reviewed journals, and then consider resubmitting their book proposal in a year or two. If resubmitted, I'd like to see the author reach out to archivists at other institutions for examples--this proposal leaned heavily on examples from their places of work, and I would want to see a broader diversity of repositories represented.

**Reviewer #4**

**Criterion: Meets professional need [Good: Meets a professional need by addressing a challenge that is common, but less critical]**

I must begin my assessment by confessing that I know little about queer archives and queer feminist archives. I don’t work with these materials at institution. The few LBGTQ+ collections we have at my institution mainly focus on lesbian and gay communities (mostly gay male communities), so I do not know much about archival practice relating to other gender and sexuality populations, and I do not know the needs of this space. I will try to assess this manuscript proposal to the best of my ability. I do think this proposal can address a professional need as long as it offers practical, implementable strategies, which the author plans to do in chapter eight. The book's focus on queer feminist collections may not be applicable to a wide number of archivists; however, as the manuscript states, the ideas presented may be applied to archival descriptions for other historically marginalized communities.

**Criterion: Makes unique contribution to professional discourse [Good: Brings forth some new knowledge or fills an existing gap in the literature in a relevant or timely topic]**

Based on my research, the SAA-published piece that most closely aligns with this proposal is “An Exploration into Archival Descriptions of LGBTQ Materials" (2018). This proposal has a more specified focus, and it is a full book as opposed to an article. I do think this proposal will make a unique contribution to the professional discourse and will take a deeper dive than previous writings.

**Criterion: Author/editor qualifications [Fair: adequate writing sample or has some prior publications; demonstrated knowledge of subject area ; if compilation, some editing experience or some evidence that they can manage an editing project]**

The author's CV and writing sample demonstrate a passion for and dedication to this subject. The author's previous publications seem to be much shorter than this proposed 30,000-word book, so the author may need some shepherding and guidance while embarking on this larger project.

**Criterion: Proposal completeness [Good: Adequately developed proposal with most necessary information ; substantially complies with proposal template, but some gaps]**

I think the proposal was very clear and well written. It did not clearly state how the proposed manuscript relates to the SAA Strategic Plan, but it did emphasize its value to the archival profession.

**Criterion: Marketability (primary audience — SAA members; archivists, archives students) [Fair: Perceived demand medium; may not be sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length does not enhance appeal]**

I think the marketability for this proposal will be good for archivists, particularly during a time period when many repositories are engaging in reparative archival description. The main subject matter of this book may not be widely applicable to most archivists, but it can still be a great resource.

**Criterion: Marketability (secondary audiences — allied professions, general public) [Fair: Perceived demand medium; may not be sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length does not enhance appeal]**

I imagine the appeal to secondary audiences may be lower since this book specifically relates specifically to archival practice, namely creating finding aids.

**Criterion: Contributes to/meets Pubs Board goals/mission (see https://www2.archivists.org/publications/book-publishing/guidelinesforbookproposals) [Excellent: Fully supports goals/mission by: a) is a new or newly translated academic work on an advanced topic; b) establishes best practice(s); d) new work that needs evolving membership need(s) and/or c) is good value for initial outlay at agreed publication time]**

**Criterion: Contributes toward SAA's Strategic Plan and Core Organizational Values (see https://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-plan) [Good: Largely support plan and values by integral relationship to SAA objectives; has likely expected return on investment relative to plan and core values.]**

This proposal aligns with SAA Strategic Plan goals 2, 3, and 4.

Overall publication priority: Medium

Accept with minor revisions (specify below if not noted above)

I think the author should be thoughtful about the section on MPLP. Some of the points the author discussed in this section aren't fresh, which the author partially implied in the proposal. It is widely known that Greene and Meissner never intended MPLP to apply to all collections. I am also a bit confused because it sounds like the author is saying that most queer feminist collections require item-level description. Is this feasible for archival institutions? Could this prevent queer feminist archival collections from being accessible to the public for longer periods of time? Based on the outline, I assume the author will address this question in the "How to Initiate Change in Your Archive" section.

**Reviewer #5**

**Criterion: Meets professional need [Excellent: Meets a professional need by addressing a critical, broad ranging challenge]**

**Criterion: Makes unique contribution to professional discourse [Excellent: Brings forth new knowledge or fills an existing gap in the literature in a highly relevant or timely topic]**

**Criterion: Author/editor qualifications [Good: Record of peer-reviewed publications and/or very good writing sample; demonstrated expertise in subject area; if compilation, has editing experience]**

**Criterion: Proposal completeness [Excellent: Fully developed proposal with all necessary information; fully complies with proposal template; provides clear scope, realistic timeline; all dependencies identified and addressed]**

**Criterion: Marketability (primary audience — SAA members; archivists, archives students) [Excellent: Perceived demand very high ; sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/length highly appealing]**

**Criterion: Marketability (secondary audiences — allied professions, general public) [Good: Perceived demand high to medium; sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length appealing]**

I don't see this being used by the general public. It's quite short and really seems to be more of a guide than a fully explored book with thought offshoots that might interest nonpractitioners.

**Criterion: Contributes to/meets Pubs Board goals/mission (see https://www2.archivists.org/publications/book-publishing/guidelinesforbookproposals) [Excellent: Fully supports goals/mission by: a) is a new or newly translated academic work on an advanced topic; b) establishes best practice(s); d) new work that needs evolving membership need(s) and/or c) is good value for initial outlay at agreed publication time]**

**Criterion: Contributes toward SAA's Strategic Plan and Core Organizational Values (see https://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-plan) [Excellent: Fully supports plan and values; represents excellent return on investment by speaking directly to current needs and initiatives.]**

Overall publication priority: Very High

Accept in current form

**Reviewer #6**

**Criterion: Meets professional need [Excellent: Meets a professional need by addressing a critical, broad ranging challenge]**

**Criterion: Makes unique contribution to professional discourse [Excellent: Brings forth new knowledge or fills an existing gap in the literature in a highly relevant or timely topic]**

This work addresses an important gap in the book literature by interrogating current normative practices for arrangement and description and bringing in new viewpoints and bringing together some existing arguments into a single reference work.

**Criterion: Author/editor qualifications [Fair: adequate writing sample or has some prior publications; demonstrated knowledge of subject area ; if compilation, some editing experience or some evidence that they can manage an editing project]**

The author has some experience with professional writing, but not much of it is in longer form, such as a journal article or book chapter. The writing mainly falls in the categories of reviews and blog posts. The writing style seems solid though.

**Criterion: Proposal completeness [Good: Adequately developed proposal with most necessary information ; substantially complies with proposal template, but some gaps]**

I'm curious about the timeline and if it might be ambitious for a first-time, long-form writer. My experience with book timelines is limited though, so I defer to those with more experience on this. In the proposal, links to finding aids from institutions referenced would be helpful examples of the content the author intends to highlight.

**Criterion: Marketability (primary audience — SAA members; archivists, archives students) [Good: Perceived demand high to medium ; sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length appealing]**

I need this book to be published so I can add it to my reference shelf. I see it as important for archives students as well as practitioners working with a diversity of collections. Part of the marketing consideration would be broadcasting the ideas and facilitating discussions that draw more archivists and students into these ideas. I know from my work that there are many questions around identity and naming that we need to be considering, but many folks don't think to ask.

**Criterion: Marketability (secondary audiences — allied professions, general public) [Fair: Perceived demand medium; may not be sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length does not enhance appeal]**

Library professionals and those involved with oral history should find this useful. I think there could be some interest from academics in queer and/or feminist history.

**Criterion: Contributes to/meets Pubs Board goals/mission (see https://www2.archivists.org/publications/book-publishing/guidelinesforbookproposals) [Excellent: Fully supports goals/mission by: a) is a new or newly translated academic work on an advanced topic; b) establishes best practice(s); d) new work that needs evolving membership need(s) and/or c) is good value for initial outlay at agreed publication time]**

I think the potential work meets the Pub Board's goals and, with support, should be a high quality work.

**Criterion: Contributes toward SAA's Strategic Plan and Core Organizational Values (see https://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-plan) [Excellent: Fully supports plan and values; represents excellent return on investment by speaking directly to current needs and initiatives.]**

Overall publication priority: High

Accept with minor revisions (specify below if not noted above)

Reviewer #7

**Criterion: Meets professional need [Good: Meets a professional need by addressing a challenge that is common, but less critical]**

There is a fair amount of literature on the subject, and a book that draws much of it together would be an asset.

**Criterion: Author/editor qualifications [Poor: Inadequate writing sample provided and/or has few or no prior publications; difficult to assess expertise in subject area; if compilation, no editing experience or no evidence that they can manage an editing project]**

**Criterion: Proposal completeness [Good: Adequately developed proposal with most necessary information ; substantially complies with proposal template, but some gaps]**

The proposer's relative inexperience with the press means that the proposed timeline is very slight in detail. Suggest that more detail be discussed with SAA Pubs editor so it can inform any revised proposal.

**Criterion: Marketability (primary audience — SAA members; archivists, archives students) [Fair: Perceived demand medium; may not be sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length does not enhance appeal]**

If it is marketed at a broader audience with reference to surfacing queer materials in any type of collection, then this would move up in the rankings. As it stands, primarily aiming the book at those who work with designated queer and feminist collections would (alas) result in too small an audience.

**Criterion: Marketability (secondary audiences — allied professions, general public) [Fair: Perceived demand medium; may not be sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length does not enhance appeal]**

May appeal to queer theory, gender, and sexuality studies professionals.

**Criterion: Contributes to/meets Pubs Board goals/mission (see https://www2.archivists.org/publications/book-publishing/guidelinesforbookproposals) [Excellent: Fully supports goals/mission by: a) is a new or newly translated academic work on an advanced topic; b) establishes best practice(s); d) new work that needs evolving membership need(s) and/or c) is good value for initial outlay at agreed publication time]**

Could establish best practice.

**Criterion: Contributes toward SAA's Strategic Plan and Core Organizational Values (see https://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-plan) [Fair: Tangentially supports plan and values or does so only as by product; may generate return on investment but outcome is uncertain]**

Supports GOAL 3: ADVANCING THE FIELD: Professional knowledge expands to keep pace with an increasingly diverse archival record; but return on investment is uncertain as currently presented.

Overall publication priority: Medium

Revise and resubmit

The proposal would be strengthened by flipping the overall emphasis to applying lessons or methods from this type of collection to other communities so that is has a broader range of appeal. Also suggest including Margaret Norton's work in Section 2.iii and adding Zapeda (2018) and Alexander & Rhodes (enculturation.net/files/QueerRhetoric) to literature review.

**Reviewer #8**

**Criterion: Meets professional need [Good: Meets a professional need by addressing a challenge that is common, but less critical]**

I agree this proposal addresses a neglected area of study within archives, especially from collection access, description, and management standpoints. While queer feminist collections may seem a narrow focus, the author does make a case for this being applied more broadly to other underrepresented voices in chapter 8. I think this broader case needs to be interwoven throughout the entire text, however. Mainly, I think doing so will make the volume more marketable and applicable for archivists. I do have concerns with some of the more practical applications of these theories – especially regarding MPLP. The notion of item-level description needs to be presented more realistically. Virtually no archivist has the luxury of item-level processing – even on a selective scale. So I ask the author, if we can’t execute the ideal what is good enough yet still respectful and ethically responsible? In order to truly meet the needs of archivists, there needs to be more mention of sustainability for all these practices too. Terminology is ever-evolving so how do you keep up? If subject headings are user-generated, how do we sustainably vet them? These are all important things to do but we need to have it presented in a more realistic way (expand on the “balancing backlog and changing workflows” section of chapter 8).

**Criterion: Makes unique contribution to professional discourse [Good: Brings forth some new knowledge or fills an existing gap in the literature in a relevant or timely topic]**

More proposals are coming through that address the ethical care and description of collections that document marginalized communities. And Michelle Caswell has done a lot of work on feminist care models for archives but I do think the queer feminist distinction is an important one that hasn’t directly been addressed. I think it could bring forth some new insight for intersectional archival collections.

**Criterion: Author/editor qualifications [Fair: adequate writing sample or has some prior publications; demonstrated knowledge of subject area ; if compilation, some editing experience or some evidence that they can manage an editing project]**

While I want to encourage new voices to publish with SAA I do have concerns about Kuske’s lack of publication and practical work experience. A review isn’t exactly a research article. My hesitations with some of the more ideal practices presented here are confirmed when I see a somewhat limited resume, too. I would like to see a more seasoned archivist (not necessarily a seasoned author – just someone with more experience in the field) pair up with Kuske on a longer monograph or maybe, given the length of the proposed volume, have this be a Future series book.

**Criterion: Proposal completeness [Good: Adequately developed proposal with most necessary information ; substantially complies with proposal template, but some gaps]**

This is a strong proposal and provides a clear outline. I’d like to see a little more already written for Chapters 5, 7, and 8. These are really meaty and could make or break the viability of this proposal (see my comments above about ideal vs. good enough and applications to collections documenting other marginalized communities). I think a chapter a month is doable but somewhat ambitious depending on whether things are written and research is already compiled. I do think more time for the intro and conclusion is necessary. That’s where it all comes together and is synthesized so extra time should be carved out.

**Criterion: Marketability (primary audience — SAA members; archivists, archives students) [Good: Perceived demand high to medium ; sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length appealing]**

I think archivists and archives students will be interested in this but, again, it will be more marketable with mentions of broader application and a more realistic application of some of these ideal practices.

**Criterion: Marketability (secondary audiences — allied professions, general public) [Fair: Perceived demand medium; may not be sellable at standard SAA price points; proposed format/design/ length does not enhance appeal]**

I think people outside the archival field may find interest in this but I do think it’s somewhat limited to historians or allied professions.

**Criterion: Contributes to/meets Pubs Board goals/mission (see https://www2.archivists.org/publications/book-publishing/guidelinesforbookproposals) [Good: Largely supports goals/mission by: a) being a revised edition or translation of a previous work; and/or b) is an opportunity for co-publication with another publishing outlet; and/or c) has some expected return for timely outlay and/or d) partially meets the requirements found in the Excellent category.]**

I think this would highlight a newer voice and a neglected area of intersectionality in archival collections. It also address an evolving best practice. However, it might be more marketable as a Futures series than a monograph.

Criterion: Contributes toward SAA's Strategic Plan and Core Organizational Values (see https://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-plan) [Good: Largely support plan and values by integral relationship to SAA objectives; has likely expected return on investment relative to plan and core values.]

Definitely addresses core values of inclusivity, accountability, and social responsibility – unclear what ROI and reaching the fullest potential need of archivists is without including some of the recommendations I mentioned above.

Overall publication priority: High

Revise and resubmit

Chapter 7 is especially intriguing but I have concerns with the “warnings” section of the chapter. This will need examples because there obviously isn't a universal guide to what is considered illicit. It's something I personally struggle with as an archivist because while I want to be empathetic and sensitive to donors/ creators/researchers, I don't want to assume feelings or censor anyone unintentionally.