

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
January 23 – 26, 2013
Chicago, Illinois**

**Report of the Publications Editor
(Prepared by Peter Wosh)**

Since this will be my last report to the Council, I would like to reflect on the state of the program at this point and offer a few observations concerning my six years as Publications Editor.

First, we need to acknowledge and celebrate the quality of our publications. Teresa Brinati regularly monitors, dissects, and disseminates reviews to the Publications Board. Our monographs receive consistently outstanding acclaim in the professional literature. SAA clearly has a reputation for producing valuable and authoritative texts that both provide useful guidance for practitioners and advance professional discourse on a theoretical level. Committed authors, a thorough review process, careful editorial work, and high production values all contribute to this positive reception. We need to maintain those quality standards and capitalize on this critically important component of our “brand.” Although there are always pressures to streamline procedures, increase volume, and move faster, we need to maintain high standards and make sure that we do not compromise our commitment to producing first-class products.

Second, the Publications Board remains the cornerstone of the program. Members contribute excellent commentary concerning individual manuscripts, have made very useful suggestions concerning marketing and production, and have moved the program in many innovative directions. Online discussions have proven useful, but face-to-face meetings have also built a sense of community and helped the board to cohere as a group. Despite SAA’s budgetary issues and the need to carefully monitor meetings, the mid-year planning meeting has been very crucial for program development and should continue.

Third, the “fundamental change” project offers great potential for reshaping our program, developing a new business model that balances electronic and print publications, and connecting with our consumers in a more flexible and timely manner. Over the course of the past year, as we have developed the archival arrangement and description modules, we have learned a lot of lessons about scheduling, quality control, editorial oversight, and user expectations. Excitement needs to be tempered with realistic assessment, and we still need to determine how these products will play out in the marketplace. We will spend a considerable portion of our January meeting discussing these topics and may come back to the Council with some specific recommendations and action items to further develop this initiative.

Fourth, we need to develop realistic revenue projections for the publications program. Our members function in a rapidly changing informational universe, and our program operates in a highly competitive publishing environment. We need to institutionalize ways to solicit more systematic feedback from our audiences concerning needs and opportunities. Archival education programs, association membership trends, and user demands have shifted dramatically over the past six years, and we likely need to modify expectations accordingly.

In closing, I have really enjoyed this opportunity. Teresa Brinati and her staff provide outstanding leadership and have been a pleasure to work with in every way. Nancy Beaumont consistently has been supportive, constructive, and accessible. The SAA Council has been responsive and provided important funding for the program at key moments. SAA is extremely fortunate that Christopher Prom will be assuming the Publications Editor position, and he is perfectly positioned to take the program in new and exciting directions. I have much appreciated the opportunity to work with everyone and wish the program much success in the years ahead!