

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Keeping Evidence and Memory: Archives Storytelling in the Twenty-First Century

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Tanya Zanish-Belcher served as the seventy-third president of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in 2017–2018. Her presidential address was delivered August 17, 2018, during the Joint Annual Meeting of the Council of State Archivists, the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, and SAA in Washington, DC.

Hello, I am honored to be speaking to you as SAA's seventy-third president and would like to express my gratitude for having the opportunity to represent our organization this past year. Three years ago, our SAA Annual Meeting theme was Telling the Story of Archives as part of President Kathleen Roe's "Year of Living Dangerously." Recently the term "storytelling" just kept popping up everywhere for me. I subscribe to the *Brain Pickings*¹ newsletter (edited by Maria Popova), which focuses on the literary arts. While I often delete the messages due to lack of time, I do save them if a subject catches my eye. And so, while I was reading what I had set aside, the word "storytelling" appeared three times in conjunction with authors Iris Murdoch, Ursula K. Le Guin, and Susan Sontag. In the next day or so, the SAA Annual Meeting program came out, and I signed up to attend "A Finding Aid to My Soul," an open-mic storytelling session. In May, I was interviewed for a blog post on diversity in archives created by Pass It Down, which advertises itself as a digital storytelling company.² And, finally, I was recently standing at the elevator and saw a Wake Forest flyer advertising the MA in Sports Storytelling Program.

These seemingly ordinary appearances of various forms of "storytelling" got me thinking. I realized that beyond simply telling our own archives stories, though, the term can also be used in how we consider the documentary record. Archives storytelling depends, in every way, on recorded evidence and memory. Researchers use the records we collect to make sense of the past, present, and

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future. Archives and their use enable a cycle of storytelling with multiple characters and perspectives, different endings, and even never-endings. As Murdoch observes, “we are constantly employing language to make interesting forms out of experience which perhaps originally seemed dull or incoherent.”³ Sense-making belongs to the genealogists, researchers, scholars, and students who visit us or view our materials online. We can only hope that what we have acquired and collected can provide those interesting forms. We need to remember that, as Sontag points out, “To tell a story is to say: *this* is the important story. It is to reduce the spread and simultaneity of everything to something linear, a path.”⁴ This is why we collect about inadequately represented communities, create a documentation strategy, or interview and capture the stories of those who have been left out of the historical record. Wherever archivists focus their attention and effort can expand the number of stories told. Finally, Le Guin observed that, “One of the functions of art [archives] is to give people the words to know their own experience. . . . Storytelling is a tool for knowing who we are and what we want.”⁵ However, how do we tell our story? The story of archivists? Who are we, and what do we want? So, here is a tale of what SAA (and when I say SAA, I mean all of us) has been working on over the past year.

Advocacy

One of the primary ways we tell our story—for archivists, users, and the records—is through the practice of advocacy. Nothing could have prepared me for the onslaught of historical records issues over this past year or two, especially at the federal record level. Public records, including local and state records, are truly essential to the functioning of American democracy. In my years as SAA president and vice president, we have authored numerous issue briefs and position statements, signed letters and petitions, and responded to external requests representing crucial national records concerns.⁶ The most recent relate to our support of the Presidential Records Act, concern about the illegal removal of Iraqi records from Iraq, and the nomination of Gina Haspel as director of the CIA (given her destruction of records documenting torture). We spoke about the importance of net neutrality, the use of private email by all government officials, the need for transparency in public records, the value and importance of the US Census, and police mobile camera footage as a public record. For anyone interested in the labor-intensive and complex process by which these briefs and statements come to pass, please see my *Off the Record* blog post from July 16.⁷ Earlier this week, SAA, along with Council of State Archivists (CoSA), National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA), and Regional Archival Associations Consortium (RAAC), hosted a training day completely dedicated to congressional advocacy where volunteers met with

congressional legislators and staffers. SAA has also collaborated with other related professional organizations, such as the American Historical Association, the National Humanities Alliance, and the National Coalition for History, an advocacy group that represents many in the history-related professions. This gives us additional flexibility, as well as a moral voice with the addition of powerful voices, when responding to issues of national importance.

We also have continued our international advocacy work. In a noteworthy meeting of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR) of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), SAA, represented by past president Bill Maher and other affiliated advocates, took significant steps that placed the needs of archives, libraries, and museums at the forefront of international conversations on intellectual property. An action plan will be presented soon, and SAA is working to collect archives examples that “demonstrate how essential copyright exceptions are to the mission of archives, both in the United States and beyond,” stated Maher in his most recent report to SAA Council.

Why does SAA dedicate its time to advocacy, and why is this important for us as archivists? We play a special role in the preservation of the historical record, and, in many cases, the preservation and access of these records depend on our local, state, and federal governments. Building awareness also allows us to share who we are with the public and why records are integral to their lives. Through these advocacy efforts, we do our best to ensure that archival sources protect the rights of individuals and organizations, assure the continued accountability of governments and institutions based on evidence, and safeguard access to historical information and cultural heritage.⁸

Diversity

Fostering diversity and inclusion within the profession continues to be a high priority for SAA. During our 2017 Annual Meeting in Portland, we sponsored the Liberated Archive: A Forum for Envisioning and Implementing a Community-Based Approach to Archives. SAA's efforts at continuing diversity discussions continue at this meeting in multiple sessions and our Diversity Forum featuring a panel discussion on disabilities. The opportunity to discuss these issues face-to-face is a key reason why the Annual Meeting is so important. Fund-raising for the Mosaic Scholarship and the Brenda S. Banks Travel Award continues, and our key partnership with the Association of Research Libraries in the IMLS-funded Mosaic Fellows Program will last two more years. The *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials* were endorsed by SAA Council at our meeting on August 13.⁹

Our diversity work continues even after the Annual Meeting concludes. The Task Force on Accessibility is updating our 2010 Best Practices for Working

with Archives Employees and Users with Physical Disabilities and is expanding them to include neurodisabilities, temporary disabilities, and others that may be in scope. Our Tragedy Response Initiative Task Force was proposed by our Diverse Sexuality and Gender Section, who were motivated by the Pulse Night Club tragedy as well as far too many other incidents in the past few years. The task force will provide guidance regarding policies, procedures, and best practices for acquisition, deaccessioning, preservation of, and access to memorial collections and will also be considering the feasibility of creating a permanent volunteer tragedy response team to assist communities. An *Off the Record* blog post on July 30 provides an update, and a final report will be submitted by 2020.¹⁰

Finally, sharing our expertise should be a priority. The events that took place in Charlottesville in the fall of 2017 point to the need for archivists to use our skills and experience to assist our communities in researching and determining the meaning and value of the names, images, and monuments in their midst, and whether what those symbols represent is historical truth or something else. In my first job at the Alabama Department of Archives and History, I learned to process and describe collections and to grapple with the enormity, complexity, and, quite often, the awfulness of American history. As a transplanted Yankee, it did not take me long to figure out the reason for the Confederate flag above the capitol, or why the state holidays included Confederate Memorial Day and Martin Luther King Jr./Robert E. Lee Day (still). I understood too well why the street on which I was fortunate to attend the dedication of the Civil Rights Memorial at the Southern Poverty Law Center also hosted a Ku Klux Klan march several years later.¹¹ This is not isolated to Alabama, or even to one region of our country. The symbols of oppression and our violent past are all around us.

The Council's Diversity and Inclusion Working Group's priority this year was to begin the process of creating Diversity Toolkits that will be available for everyone. The resources currently include materials for facilitating discussions, helping communities in crisis, researching the historical context of monuments, and teaching complex history at the K–12 level.¹² The goal is to provide a starting point to learn more about these issues. This work is good. But more needs to be done. The implementation of equity and inclusion is not simply the purview of the Diversity Committee or our sections or the Council. It is a responsibility for all of us.

SAA Foundation

Too many archival stories this past year have involved natural disasters—hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and the terrifying fires on the West Coast. Fortunately, the SAA Foundation's National Disaster Recovery Fund for Archives

was expanded in 2017 to include eligibility for Mexico and non-US Caribbean Islands and to award up to \$5,000 in grant funding. As you can imagine, Hurricane Maria and the Mexican earthquake damaged many archival repositories. To date, the foundation has awarded nine grants to archivists and repositories in Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, and Mexico. We are grateful to our Latin American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Archives Section for translating the application materials. We have a growing role to play in the American hemisphere, and it is important that we take that responsibility seriously.

The foundation also supported a new program for 2018 to provide grants of up to \$1,000 each for travel to attend the SAA Annual Meeting. We received nearly eighty applications for ten grants! Sustainable funding for professional development is an obvious problem for archivists, and so, as I transition to the position of immediate past president and remain on the SAA Foundation Board for (at least) one more year, one of my goals will be to explore how we can connect with external foundations and match their available funding and interests with our needs. The SAA Foundation has generously agreed to extend the travel award program for Austin in 2019.

Membership and Professional Development

Recently, SAA has undertaken two membership surveys to learn more about what you want from your organization. One focused on institutional support for professional development; the other on the needs and interests of midcareer archivists. Both provided key data about what our members need for their success. I mentioned exploring foundation support for professional development, but we also obtained good information about what continuing education archivists would like SAA to provide—courses on career planning, management, and leadership, among others. Your feedback in these surveys provides a path for SAA to follow during the next several years.

In 2018, SAA implemented a new association management system (AMS) and began using Higher Logic to host the organization's discussion lists. At the same time, SAA Council made the difficult decision to discontinue the Archives and Archivists Listserv in 2017 due to an antiquated platform, limited staffing to oversee and moderate the discussion, and the sheer disintegration of the quality of the discourse.¹³ Having a new and robust infrastructure will allow a better sense of community among our members. You also play a role in the community that SAA is building. Overall, how many people participate in SAA leadership? Although my unscientific count via the SAA website could include some duplication, as of the fall 2017, the total appeared to be approximately 631 archivists who are participating in SAA leadership activities.

This does not count all the other things archivists do as part of SAA, whether authoring an article for *American Archivist* or essay for *Archival Outlook*, presenting to your colleagues, or sharing your opinion about our policies via the website. SAA members have recently reviewed the updated Principles and Priorities for Continuously Improving the SAA Annual Meeting, the Code of Ethics, Best Practices for Internships as a Component of a Graduate Archival Education Program, and Best Practices for Volunteers. Treat these as the opportunities they are for having your voice heard. And never hesitate to contact your elected officers and Council members.

These are only some of the SAA stories from the past year. Where should we go next?

Some Recommendations for SAA's Future

I realize the term “strategic planning” is not one to raise excitement levels. But, because SAA represents a multitude of diverse individuals and opinions (6,038 members and 526 institutions), a strategic plan is integral for our success as an organization. As a reminder, the Society of American Archivists is committed to core values that remind of us of who we are and who we aspire to be:

- We advance the public standing of archivists.
- We ensure the diversity of our membership and leaders, the profession, and the archival record.
- We foster an open and inclusive culture of creativity, collaboration, and experimentation across the association.
- We provide excellent member service.
- We ensure transparency, accountability, integrity, professionalism, and social responsibility in conducting our activities.

The more frequently we remind ourselves of what we stand for and how we integrate it into our everyday professional lives, the more successful as an organization we will be.¹⁴ Based on our strategic plan, what should SAA's top priorities be?

First, we need to re-emphasize the energy that we invest into our diversity and inclusion efforts. The Diversity Toolkits need to be finalized, and we need members to contribute ideas and sources. If everyone hearing my voice or reading this article submitted a 650-word annotated recommendation, the toolkits would become a tremendous crowd-based resource for all. Suggestions can be made on an ongoing basis.¹⁵ We need to better document underrepresented communities. We need to collaborate with communities to maintain their own identities and postcustodial archives even as we reconceptualize and

reconfigure how we do our work for our own acquisitions.¹⁶ Archivists also must work with communities and develop best practices in consultation with them to preserve their own materials outside of traditional archives. We can share advice, expertise, supplies, and, above all, our intentionality—ensuring that all boats rise and as many historical records are preserved as possible. How can we also document and share the unique diversity projects that so many of our repositories are undertaking? Being strategic about this work is well worth our time, and incorporating it into our mission is key. While a portal library hosted by SAA for sharing policies and forms is still being discussed, what about a portal for collecting and sharing specific projects archivists have done to reconceive their collections to more truly be representational?

SAA has primarily focused its efforts on recruiting archivists who are members of marginalized communities and on ensuring their participation in the organization and the profession. It is unclear how successful that effort has been, and, although recruiting those new to archives is important, retaining them is even more so.¹⁷ We need to know what works, what specific obstacles exist, and how we can expand efforts to overcome barriers. SAA could foster ongoing work related to diversity, providing educational resources and best practices that can help keep all professionals—and specifically archivists of color—engaged and in the field.

Second, we need more information about the makeup of our profession so that SAA can work to meet the many needs of its members. In his 2016 presidential address, Dennis Meissner called for the creation of a Task Force on Research/Data and Evaluation.¹⁸ The task force, created last fall, presented some preliminary findings at the May Council meeting and will most likely recommend the creation of an SAA committee dedicated to research. Here are some of the questions that this committee can productively research:

- What is the current breakdown in percentage of degrees held by archivists? Thirty years ago, the predominant source of archives degrees was history programs. In A*CENSUS (2004), the breakdown was 39.4% for the MLS/MLIS vs. 46.3% for the MA/MS/MFA.¹⁹ It now appears that most archivists entering the field are coming from library school programs—but it would be good to have those numbers confirmed. However, still many, many people working as archivists chose another path to this profession. How can archivists coming from different backgrounds—and, in some cases, philosophies—communicate and collaborate most effectively? How can our continuing education programs assist in fostering community among such a disparate group?
- How can we better collaborate with the graduate programs that funnel students into the profession? There are substantive professional discussions about the number of archives graduates and the perception

they are overwhelming a small and shrinking job market. SAA has done many evaluations and reports that indicate that we simply cannot afford the cost of an official accreditation process.²⁰ So, it may be time to think creatively about what SAA *can* do.

- We can collect better documentation of all archives graduate programs (libraries and public history), no matter the discipline, and increase the understanding of their strengths.
- We could collaborate with archival educators and host a forum as an invited opportunity for all archives program representatives, archives educators, and practicing archivists to meet and discuss issues.
- We can foster forums for the various degree programs to discuss curriculum and other issues affecting archives students.
- As a profession, we also need more information about archivists' salaries, organized by location, type of degree, type of repository, and geographic location. These data would give us important information that would enhance our programming and advocacy efforts. Increasingly, job ads with no salaries are the norm. How can we encourage more transparency within the profession? The American Association for State and Local History recently introduced policies that any job ads shared on its site must post salaries.²¹ And, as with the American Library Association, it would be good for SAA to provide a minimum salary by state to strengthen archivists' negotiating power.²²
- Knowing more about the various subsets of SAA membership would also be helpful as we try to collect more valid and useful data. As I mentioned previously, what has happened to the Mosaic Scholarship participants and Mosaic Fellows? Are they still in the profession, or have they moved to other careers? Why? How effective is our mentoring program? Does our partnering structure work? How can we improve this experience? It is time to explore the ways that we can truly examine our hiring and organizational practices.
- It is apparent that the archives profession has many economic issues. These range from how graduates find the programs they attend, the increasing number of unemployed graduates, student debt rates, and the lack of archivists of color to the overwhelming prevalence of part-time and temporary positions in the profession, among others. I have written more on this topic in "What about Invisible Labor?"²³ SAA members recently reviewed the Best Practices for Internships as a Component of Graduate Archival Education and Best Practices for Volunteers in Archives, contributing many good ideas for revisions. However, in addition to these best practices, I would suggest

we proactively develop solutions for institutions to consider. Some possible ideas:

- Investigate grant possibilities for providing financial support for interns for archival programs, individual repositories, or consortium arrangements.
- Fund-raise in your home institution to create endowments or expendable accounts to support interns, with SAA possibly providing some guidelines on how to make that happen.
- Provide best practices for archivists communicating with their local graduate archives programs (who include internships as part of their degree process) to discuss these concerns further, and develop ways to either provide support for interns via tuition remission or provide credit hours without cost to the student.

I would propose a subcommittee of the Committee on Research to address specific questions of economic equity, employment, and broadly identified topics on the labor of archivists. These topics could include benefits, internships, salaries, how and when graduates enter entry-level positions, promotions, retirement, and broader work topics such as developing apprenticeship programs and how to make our labor more visible. Until we have the data and the ability to thoroughly analyze the results, it is difficult for SAA to respond in an informed and substantive manner.

It will always be difficult for a large, complex organization to move nimbly and be flexible, given competing priorities and SAA's commitment to building consensus. Does SAA always get it right? Of course not. However, I would argue that SAA succeeds more often than it fails. And, I would like to believe that we are an organization that learns from its mistakes to do things better the next time. Much like democracy, SAA is us, after all.

Challenges for the Archives Profession

While SAA faces significant tests, the broader archives profession also faces challenges. Sometimes these intersect and overlap, but not always. By joining and participating in SAA, you have already chosen a leadership position for the profession, and it is important to 1) be knowledgeable about organizations and affiliated professions other than your own, and 2) consider how decision-making and discussions can also affect non-SAA members.

The Value of the Public Record

Over the past three decades, there have been increasing pressures on the very concept of public records, something so key to the functioning of our American democracy. Secrecy and efforts to hide corruption and wrongdoing and “fake news” have been present in our political life dating back to the earliest days of the republic. As we now live in a digital world, many of our basic beliefs about what can be controlled in the creation or alteration of a record, its authenticity, and its very meaning are called into question. Preservation and access to the public record, whether you are a government records archivist or not, should be a concern to you as a citizen.

The political spoils of our election system do have consequences on the historical record and have a direct impact on the efficacy of the archival enterprise.²⁴ Current challenges for government archives’ sustainability include the overall shrinkage of governments and budget cuts for archives; the political appointments of individuals without archives experience or backgrounds; archives being subsumed by government bureaucracy and overwhelmed by unfunded mandates; and officials not understanding the role or importance of electronic records and digital preservation.

Citizens still have ways to challenge and question records’ restriction or destruction and to protect open access, including Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, sunshine laws, and calls for public comment on appraisal decisions. Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington has brought Federal Records Act lawsuits against the Environmental Protection Act (EPA), filed a FOIA request with the State Department, and, after filing a complaint with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), an investigation is underway to determine if the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Health and Human Services violated the law by deleting records of immigrant families split apart at the border.²⁵

I would ask you to serve as archives experts and responsible citizens to closely monitor your local archives, state archives and state historical records advisory board (SHRAB), and NARA. Be an advocate and stay informed. Write letters to the local newspapers and talk with your legislators and representatives about the importance of archives. There are advocacy publications and affordable webinars forthcoming from SAA—use them. SAA and individual archivists have an important role to play as consistent and constant advocates.

International Human Rights

I represented SAA at the International Council on Archives Conference (ICA) in Mexico City in November 2017, and I was reminded of the importance

of SAA's international activities. We have a major role to play in the Western Hemisphere and world, not only as a role model, but also sharing resources such as disaster funding and developing collaborative projects that can have an impact on archivists in multiple countries. Given our meeting location in Austin next year, I would propose a concerted effort to invite archivists from Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean to join us and discuss both the questions and possibilities of collaborating. Given the current difficulties in travel from both within the United States and outside, our online exploration in providing virtual resources should also extend further throughout our hemisphere.

The documentation of human rights was also discussed at the ICA conference. Past SAA president and former Interim Archivist of the United States Trudy Petersen reported on her work with Swisspeace, an ICA effort to preserve and save records digitally in different geographic locations for protection purposes. They recently shared Guiding Principles for Safe Havens for Archives at Risk for comment from the archives community.²⁶ Amnesty International is also announcing a project for the preservation of digital records. According to its press release, "the new archive will accelerate investigations into human rights violations and protect digital records of significant historical importance to the global movement."²⁷ It is important that we support this work and recognize that both activists and archivists play a role in ensuring the preservation of and access to these records.

Allied Memory Organizations and Professions

Numerous communities—digital humanities, digital libraries, history, library, museum, and public history—overlap with the archives profession and continue to expand and splinter. There is a distinct need to map these associated collection and memory professions and monitor their projects, grants, and research activities that can also affect us.

Based on feedback we hear from SAA members, affordability of our services is also a priority. Our perpetually low salaries, combined with a lack of financial support and an increasing number of competing conferences and symposia, put pressure on professional development resources and limit how and when archivists can participate. In many ways, this cycle ensures that archivists working at larger institutions with funding will attend, have their voices heard, and gain connections and experience, whereas those at smaller institutions will be left out. Development, interoperability, sustainability, and inclusivity of all (especially of smaller repositories) remain questions.

At this Joint Annual Meeting, I hosted a meeting with representatives from the American Association for State and Local History, the Association for Moving Image Archivists, the Coalition for Networked Information, the Digital

Library Federation, and the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), among others. We discussed how we can better collaborate as we face similar challenges in our stewardship of the cultural record. How can we more effectively share information and integrate the impact of our research and scholarly efforts? How can we share any understanding of current projects focusing on finding aid portals; data preservation; digital literacy; the algorithmic, linked data, and metadata environments; website preservation; and user technology if we remain siloed?

Leadership and Service

I want to conclude by briefly addressing leadership in our organization, because this is where SAA truly has so much to offer everyone. Both SAA and the archives profession need you. We need every one of you—your experience, your willingness to work hard, your perspective. Keep these things in mind as you write your own story:

- Be strategic and mindful about your archives career and service.** Dedicate yourself to what you truly care about and are willing to spend time on.
- Leaders are made, not born.** Consider every experience you have as an important step on your path and as a part of your individual story.
- Believe in yourself and share yourself with others.** At this meeting, smile and say hello to someone you don't know. Share a story from your archives. Find a mentor. Be a mentor.

Finally, I would also advise the following given how emotionally taxing our work can be at times:

- Remember why you do what you do. Take time for reflection and introspection about the complexity and depth of archives work.
- Take comfort in the friendship and support of your archives colleagues.
- Appreciate and feel the gratitude of your donors, no matter if they are individuals, offices, or agencies.
- Remember the integral role *you* play in creating the historical record. Be creative and strategic on how you accomplish your vocation.

Here is my final thought. While archivists are about records, what we really are about is people. The people who created and saved the records—present, past, and future—and the people who want to use them to construct new narratives. Our mission is to best serve as thoughtful and dedicated intermediaries to ensure their stories and lives are not forgotten.

Thank you for sharing this time with me today.

NOTES

- ¹ *Brain Pickings—An inventory of the meaningful life*, <https://www.brainpickings.org>.
- ² Pass It Down, “A Q&A with Tanya Zanish-Belcher, President of the Society of American Archivists,” August 2018, <https://www.passitdown.com/the-blog/a-qa-with-tanya-zanish-belcher-president-of-the-society-of-american-archivists>.
- ³ Maria Popova, “Iris Murdoch on Storytelling, Why Art Is Essential for Democracy, and the Key to Good Writing,” *Brain Pickings*, July 18, 2018, https://www.brainpickings.org/2018/07/18/iris-murdoch-existentialists-mystics-philosophy-literature-art/?mc_cid=d1cd12e441&mc_eid=e82f5bbd6c.
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- ⁵ Maria Popova, “Ursula K. Le Guin on Art, Storytelling, and the Power of Language to Transform and Redeem,” *Brain Pickings*, January 30, 2018, https://www.brainpickings.org/2018/01/30/ursula-k-le-guin-walking-on-the-water/?mc_cid=d1cd12e441&mc_eid=e82f5bbd6c.
- ⁶ Society of American Archivists, “Position Statements & Resolutions,” <https://www2.archivists.org/statements>.
- ⁷ Tanya Zanish-Belcher, “Advocacy Building Blocks,” Society of American Archivists, *Off the Record Blog*, July 16, 2018, <https://offtherecord.archivists.org/2018/07/16/advocacy-building-blocks>.
- ⁸ While I am focusing on advocacy in the public policy arena, archivists also must work to better advocate for the profession to the general public. David Gracy II articulated this need in his president’s address “Archives and Society: The First Archival Revolution,” *American Archivist* 47, no. 1 (1984): 7–10, and President Kathleen Roe expanded on his ideas in “Why Archives?,” *American Archivist* 79, no. 1 (2016): 6–13. The Committee on Public Awareness oversees SAA’s current efforts in this area.
- ⁹ Society of American Archivists, “Protocols for Native American Archival Materials: Information and Resources Page,” <https://www2.archivists.org/groups/native-american-archives-section/protocols-for-native-american-archival-materials-information-and-resources-page>. For further information on the endorsement, please see Society of American Archivists, “SAA Council Endorsement of Protocols for Native American Archival Materials,” August 13, 2018, <https://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-council-endorsement-of-protocols-for-native-american-archival-materials>.
- ¹⁰ Steven Booth, “Update from the Tragedy Response Initiative Task Force,” Society of American Archivists, *Off the Record Blog*, July 30, 2018, <https://offtherecord.archivists.org/2018/07/30/update-from-the-tragedy-response-initiative-task-force-guest-post-by-saa-council-member-steven-booth>.
- ¹¹ Southern Poverty Law Center Civil Rights Memorial, <https://www.splcenter.org/civil-rights-memorial>.
- ¹² Society of American Archivists, “Diversity and Inclusion Toolkits,” <https://www2.archivists.org/advocacy/diversity-and-inclusion-toolkits>.
- ¹³ Society of American Archivists, “Archives and Archivists Listserv to Be Decommissioned,” November 6, 2017, <https://www2.archivists.org/news/2017/archives-and-archivists-list-to-be-decommissioned-as-of-december-31>.
- ¹⁴ Society of American Archivists, “SAA Strategic Plan,” <https://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-plan>.
- ¹⁵ If there is a topic or a resource that you wish to see included, please contact president@archivists.org.
- ¹⁶ Additional readings: Elisabeth Kaplan, “We Are What We Collect, We Collect What We Are: Archives and the Construction of Identity,” *American Archivist* 63, no. 1 (2000): 126–51; Randall C. Jimerson, *Archives Power: Memory, Accountability, and Social Justice* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2009); Tanya Zanish-Belcher, ed., with Anke Voss, *Perspectives on Women’s Archives* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2013); Mary Caldera and Kathryn M. Neal, *Through the Archival Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2014).

- ¹⁷ Alex H. Poole, "Harold T. Pinkett and the Lonely Crusade of African American Archivists in the Twentieth Century," *American Archivist* 80, no. 2 (2017): 296–335.
- ¹⁸ Dennis Meissner, "Bare Necessities," *American Archivist* 80, no. 1 (2017): 6–18.
- ¹⁹ Society of American Archivists, "A*CENSUS: Archival Census and Education Needs Survey in the United States," November 3, 2016, <https://www2.archivists.org/initiatives/acensus-archival-census-education-needs-survey-in-the-united-states>; Victoria Irons Walch, Nancy P. Beaumont, Jeannette Bastian, Elizabeth Yakel, Susan Davis, Nancy Zimmelman, and Anne Diffendal, "A*Census (Archival Census and Education Needs Survey in the United States)," *American Archivist* 69, no. 2 (2006): 438–47.
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- ²¹ American Association for State and Local History, "Career Center," <https://jobs.aaslh.org>.
- ²² American Library Association Allied Professional Association, "Minimum Salaries by State," 2014, <http://ala-apa.org/improving-salariesstatus/resources/minimum-salaries-by-state>. Also see Amy Bartholomew, Jennifer Dorning, Julia Eisenstein, and Shannon Farrell, *Advocating for Better Salaries Toolkit*, April 2017, <http://ala-apa.org/files/2010/02/2017-ALA-APA-BETTER-SALARIES-TOOLKIT-6th-ed.pdf>.
- ²³ Tanya Zanish-Belcher, "What about Invisible Labor?," Society of American Archivists, *Off the Record Blog*, August 7, 2018, <https://offtherecord.archivists.org/2018/08/07/what-about-invisible-labor>.
- ²⁴ Council of State Archivists, "The State of State Records, Part I: Overview and Commentary (April 2017): 2–17. While I have spent a significant amount of time discussing the federal records situation in this article, I am also concerned about the funding and status of local and state archives, which challenge our ability to preserve the historical record. In addition, discriminatory state laws, ranging from bathroom access, abortion access, and adoption restrictions, also threaten the viability of SAA and its ability to host Annual Meetings around the country. SAA made the decision to remain in Austin for its 2019 meeting, due to financial liability and contract negotiations completed years in advance. Changing Annual Meeting locations less than a year away is simply not a viable option, and the organization would have been seriously financially compromised had such a change been made. Adding to the complexity of the decision was the fact that the other option for hosting the meeting (Indianapolis, Indiana) also has discriminatory laws, as many other states do as well. In addition, California has banned state-funded travel to nine states, including Alabama, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Texas. The future does not look promising. Other issues have also impacted the Annual Meeting. A labor dispute at the Hyatt Regency (Chicago, 2011) and a discrimination lawsuit against the Adam's Mark Hotel (Denver, 2000) both challenged SAA's commitment to our Code of Ethics while also maintaining our fiduciary responsibility and effort to prevent irreparable harm to our organization. There may well come a time when SAA will suffer a financial setback from which it cannot recover. Or, in many cases, as with the decision to remain in Austin in 2019, the choice will be between the lesser of two evils.
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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