

2006 Minutes of the Society of Early Americanists' Annual Business Meeting

**Friday, May 26, 2006, at the American Literature Association Conference
San Francisco, May 25-28, 2006, Hyatt Regency, Pacific Concourse H**

Attending: Mary McAleer Balkun, Richard Frohock, Lisa Gordis, Thomas Krise (SEA Vice-President), Susan Imbarrato (SEA executive coordinator), Laura Arnold Leibman, Shawn Martin, Dennis Moore (SEA president), Jeffrey Richards, and Tom Scanlon.

SEA President Dennis Moore called the Society of Early Americanists' annual business meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone. Members present all introduced themselves. Tom Krise moved that the Business Meeting minutes from 2005 be approved and Mary Balkun seconded; motion passed. [Minutes](#) will be posted [here](#) at the SEA website.

SEA Pres. Moore's report

2007-08 Conferences: Moore began his report by providing an update on the forthcoming biennial SEA conference to be held in Williamsburg, June 7-10, 2007. This will be a joint conference with the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, in conjunction with the 400th anniversary of Jamestown and with the Institute's annual Conference. Fredrika Teute, Editor of Publications at the Institute, and Dennis Moore will serve as co-chairs, along with a cross-disciplinary Program Committee that includes: Stephen Carl Arch (English, Michigan State University), Wendy Bellion (Art History, University of Delaware), Holly Brewer (History, North Carolina State University), Mendy Gladden (Publications, Omohundro Institute), Rhys Isaac, representing the Institute's Council, Mark Kamrath (English, University of Central Florida), Thomas Krise, SEA's V.P. (Chair of English, University of Central Florida), Edward Larkin (English, University of Richmond), Sally Promey (Art History, University of Maryland), Jeff Richards (English and American Studies, Old Dominion University), Marion Rust (English, University of Virginia), Mark Valeri (Church History, Union Theological Seminary), Karin Wulf, book review ed., [WMQ](#) (History, American University). More information is [here](#).

Moore also noted attendance at the various SEA and SEA-related conferences, in that the SEA biennial conference attendance ranges from 150 to 200 and the "off-year" topical conferences averages around 80 attendees, as with the recent "Early American Cartographies" conference, March 2-4, 2006, at The Newberry Library, Chicago, which was quite successful. The SEA co-sponsored this conference with the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts, College of Arts and Letters at the University of Notre Dame and the four research centers of the Newberry Library: the Center for Renaissance Studies, the Hermon Dunlap Smith Center for the History of Cartography, the D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian History, and the Dr. William M. Scholl Center for Family and Community History. Co-chairs of the program committee were Gordon Sayre and Carla Zecher, director of the Center for Renaissance Studies at The Newberry, and committee colleagues were Eric Slauter, Martin Brückner, Stephanie Fitzgerald, SEA vice president Thomas Krise, and Dennis Moore, ex officio; more information is [here](#).

Moore also announced a Spring 2008 conference, currently in the planning stages, to be held in West Lafayette, Indiana to commemorate the bicentennial of the founding in 1808 of nearby Prophetstown, the Shawnee brothers Tecumseh and Tenskatawa's pan-Indian village on the banks of the Wabash. Kristina Bross (Purdue University) and Edward Watts (Michigan State University) will serve as co-chairs; more information is [here](#).

Affiliations: Moore reported on the SEA's ongoing affiliations with the [American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies](#) (ASECS). Lisa Logan (U. of Central Florida) has graciously agreed to continue serving as chair of the SEA-ASECS liaison committee through 2007. The next ASECS conference will take place in Atlanta, Georgia, March 22-25, 2007; more details appear [here](#). The SEA hopes to have two sessions. In addition, Moore reported on our cooperation with the French Colonial Historical Society, which will be holding conferences in 2007 in France and 2008 in Canada. Elizabeth Samet (U.S. Military Academy) and Gordon Sayre will co-chair an ad hoc committee to propose an SEA Session for the FCHS's 2008 conference.

There was a general discussion about coordinating with local and regional conferences to encourage increased scholarship and discussion on early American topics. Tom Scanlon suggested exploring opportunities for participating in other existing conferences (e.g., regional American Studies Association chapters' meetings). Individual SEA members, for example, might take the initiative to gather papers, invite graduate students, and generally encourage early American topics at other conferences. Jeffrey Richards suggested creating an early-American related conference Bulletin Board, perhaps on the list-serv. Laura Arnold Leibman suggested encouraging Teaching Panels as well at other conferences. Moore reminded the group about the [Early America Matters Caucus](#) within the ASA, emphasizing that it and the SEA have no official links.

SEA Website: Moore expressed a debt of gratitude to Michael Clark (University of California, Irvine) who has served as the SEA Webmaster for ten years and who has decided to step down from this role. Susan Imbarrato who will be serving as Webmaster has begun updating the site with assistance from the Minnesota State University-Moorhead technology Department, which has recently received grants for such purposes. The new website should be ready by late summer. Mary Balkun expressed interest in helping with the SEA website at some point.

The Society of Early Americanists Newsletter (SEAN): Moore noted that as previously reported in the [SEAN](#), William Scheick has decided to step down as longtime [SEAN](#) editor. We are currently searching for a new editor. General discussion included the form that the [SEAN](#) might take, as a pdf document that would be downloaded from the SEA homepage and/or as a hardcopy once or twice a year.

Essay Prizes: Moore reported that Laura Stevens (Univ. of Tulsa) will continue through 2007 as chair of the SEA Essay Prize committee. Moore recognized this year's seventh annual SEA Essay Prize recipient, Anna Mae Duane (University of Connecticut) for "Pregnancy and the New Birth in [Charlotte Temple](#) and [The Coquette](#)." She received the award on April 1, 2006, at the Montréal ASECS; each recipient receives a framed certificate, a check for \$100.00, and immortality, and details are [here](#).

Moore reminded everyone that the Essay Prize is currently open to presenters at the SEA and at ASECS's national and regional conferences (the prize originated under the auspices of the Society for Eighteenth-Century American Studies, which merged into the SEA in 1999, since which time the SEA has been ASECS's Americanist affiliate). He opened discussion about possibly extending the pool of eligible papers, to include early-Americanist papers presented at the ALA, where the SEA has traditionally held its annual business meetings, as well as at the MLA, OAH, and other conferences. Moore suggested that there could be a second prize that would be parallel to and distinct from the existing prize. General discussion ensued with suggestions that the competition be opened up to include papers at ALA, MLA, and SSAWW conferences; that only SEA members be eligible; that there perhaps be one general prize that would include entries from all of these conferences; and whether to diffuse the existing Essay Prize, which is entering its eighth year. Discussion of the rationale for an essay prize included encouraging scholarly excellence, encouraging attendance and participation, supporting junior faculty seeking tenure, and encouraging cooperation with affiliated organizations.

SEA Vice-President Thomas Krise's report

ALA San Francisco 2006 Reception: SEA Vice-President Thomas Krise reminded everyone of the ALA Reception tonight, Friday, May 26, 2006, 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., jointly hosted by the SEA, the Society for the Study of American Women Writers (SSAWW), and the journal Studies in American Fiction, with special thanks to Melissa Homestead (University of Nebraska) Membership and Finances Officer of the SSAWW, and Mary Loeffelholz, Editor, Studies in American Fiction (Northeastern University) who co-organized the reception and provided generous financial support. The reception will be held in the Hyatt Regency, Atrium.

ALA San Francisco 2006 Panels: Krise reported on the four SEA Sessions at this year's ALA: "Gendered Accounts and Literary Renderings" (Susan Imbarrato, chair); "Voices Raised in Protest" (Thomas Krise, chair); "New World Fictions" (Dennis Moore, chair); and "Teaching Early American Literature" (Mary Balkun, chair). A complete list of papers on these panels appears [here](#). As SEA Vice-President, Krise assembled and chaired an ad hoc committee to screen all the proposals for papers in the current ALA conference; he acknowledged SEA colleagues Karen Weyler and Michael Clark for their service on this year's ad hoc selection committee.

ALA Boston 2007: For the 2007 ALA, which will take place May 24-27, 2007, at The Westin Copley in Boston, Vice-President Krise will again coordinate the SEA Sessions.

Fund Raising Efforts: Krise reported that he and Amanda Irvin, graduate assistant, were working on applications for foundations and non-profit organizations to possibly raise funds for graduate student travel grants and to build the SEA community. Tom Krise also reminded the meeting of the Lifetime Memberships available for \$350.00. In addition, we will also have a category where teachers may be honored (or memorialized) by a contribution of \$300 to the Society of Early Americanists. Current recipients include Dennis Moore and Annette Kolodny; more information is [here](#).

2009 Conference: Tom Krise also discussed plans for the March 2009 SEA conference to be held in Bermuda to commemorate the 400-th anniversary of the founding of the colony. He is

double-checking on other conferences' schedules and other dates to avoid any conflicts and is also investigating hotel and conference accommodations.

SEA Executive Coordinator Susan Imbarrato's Report

Susan Imbarrato reported on the SEA Treasury, which stands currently at \$20, 880. The SEA has around 350 current members, with about 100 memberships up for renewal on July 1. Imbarrato asked for suggestions regarding notification of membership dues. At present, the SEA sends out a general reminder to the membership in the fall. There was discussion about possibly sending out individual letters to notify people that their membership was up for renewal. Imbarrato suggested that we might remind members to consult the SEA website's on-line Directory for membership status before renewing. Imbarrato also noted that the updated SEA Website will possibly offer an on-line credit payment option, which might be more convenient for our members and in keeping with other organizations that also offer this option.

General announcements, adjournment:

Lisa Gordis suggested that we might again apply to the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, for travel support for high-school teachers to the 2007 SEA conference.

Moore concluded the meeting by reminding everyone of the 2009 SEA conference slated for Bermuda, and the meeting adjourned at 9:20.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan C. Imbarrato
SEA Executive Coordinator 2005-07