Greetings from the trenches of preparation for the 2017 SEA biennial. The labor of planning an academic conference, I’ve decided, is quintessentially meta-intellectual: one’s efforts are directed at building the container of time and space in which intellectual exchange and learning will occur, and yet one’s activities are detached from the contents of the container one is building. Much of my time is spent perusing catering menus, assessing disability access, building registration or submission portals, and – of course – fretting over the budget. Dozens of questions about apparently trivial and yet crucial questions nibble daily at my attention: Will the buses be on time? Will the PowerPoint projectors work? Will there be enough coffee? Will it rain?

In this age of electronic interconnectedness, a conference might seem an increasingly antiquated and lavish form of expenditure. It does, after all, require a profound collective expenditure of money, time, global-warming fuel, and personal effort from attendees and hosts alike to have a conference take place. Why suffer the rigors and frustrations of modern air travel in an era of FaceTime and Skype? Why drive for hours on end when there is email? The answer of course is that there is still no substitute for a face-to-face conversation. These include the exchanges that occur in the relatively formal settings of panels and papers, but also in the informal interactions that take place at receptions, coffee breaks, even shared transport to and from the airport. For all its expense, a conference turns out to be a remarkably efficient method of facilitating not only networking and community building but also dynamic intellectual exchange and true learning. I suspect that most of us can cite several instances in which our thinking about a particular project dramatically changed or an opportunity arose because of such conversations at conferences.

Therefore, amidst all my logistical planning, I am keenly interested in the conversations approximately 400 of us will hold next March on our shared scholarly interests. Driving all my organizational work are three core questions: What will we discuss about early America, what shape will those discussions take, and who will participate?
The conversation that takes place at the 2017 biennial will have strong continuity with those in our preceding biennials and smaller, topical conferences. I also expect that there will be new contours and participants, in keeping with our setting in Tulsa, our focus on the question of the public, and some additional features I’d like to describe here.

First, I’m delighted to announce that the Oklahoma Humanities Council has awarded a Major Grant to support our two plenary lectures (by Chadwyck Allen and William Warner) as well as an event that will take place on the Wednesday evening preceding the conference proper. This pre-conference event is a panel discussion titled “The Public and Our Past: Finding and Connecting with Early America.” It will follow a day of public outreach and service in the Tulsa community for a smaller number of SEA members who are able to arrive early. It will be chaired by our own past president, Zabelle Stodola, Professor Emerita of the University of Arkansas, Little Rock, and the speakers will be the four SEA members serving on the conference’s Committee on Public Outreach: Kristina Bross, Lorrayne Carroll, Catherine Kelly, and Clark Maddux. All five participants have pursued forms of humanistic scholarship involving intensive public outreach and engagement. Together, the speakers will address two questions: what are the aspects of early America that most interest the public, and what activities are especially useful in fostering connection and dialogue between humanities scholars and the general public in learning about the American past?

Second, this grant from the Oklahoma Humanities Council is in part a match to a generous private gift from a local Tulsa resident and longtime friend of the University of Tulsa’s English Department. Part of this gift will specifically enhance the Society’s outreach to local teachers. We therefore will be offering at least 20 scholarships to teachers in Tulsa and Northeastern Oklahoma to attend the conference, especially for Friday, March 3. Some of our programming on this second day of the conference will attend to teaching and to subjects that tend to connect more closely with high school curricula.

Finally, I wanted to tell you more about our plans to set up community service and outreach projects in Tulsa on Wednesday, February 28, for those of you who can arrive a day early. I have a limited number of small grants available to cover the extra night in the conference hotel, for those of you who wish to participate. So far we have made plans for two outreach projects. One group will visit the fifth graders at Kendall-Whittier Elementary School, a Tulsa public school that has a longstanding partnership with the University of Tulsa as part of our True Blue Neighbors project, to teach them about colonial America. The teachers have expressed particular interest in some activities relating to the American Revolution. Another group will visit the John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation to assist with sorting, cataloguing, and abstracting photographs in the Center’s archives. Depending on how many of our attendees express interest in participating, we may develop more outreach activities. Stay tuned for details.

If the conversation that takes place during and after this conference is a dynamic and expansive one, bringing new voices into our study of early America even as it retains continuity with our discussions at past events, then I will consider all the effort to have been well worth it. Many thanks to those of you who have submitted proposals, and particular thanks to our Program Committee: Gabriel Cervantes, Betty Donohue, Patrick Erben, Brigitte Fielder, Richard Frohock, Catherine E. Kelly, Victoria Murphy, Meredith Neuman, Marie-Jeanne Rossignol, Gordon Sayre, Jodi Schorb, and Stephanie Schmidt. I look forward to seeing all of you in Tulsa next March!

Laura Stevens
SEA President
University of Tulsa
Twelve years ago I wrote a piece entitled “The Crisis in Scholarly Publishing: Demystifying the Fetishes of Technology and the Market” for *Profession*, the annual MLA forum on curriculum and labor issues that, since 2011, is no longer published on paper. For this column I decided to look back to see how the trends and anxieties I wrote about have turned out.

Back in the early 2000s electronic publishing and digital humanities were still in the formative stages, but some predicted drastic and imminent changes. The boomtown mentality of the 1990s proclaimed that the internet would bring about a “paperless office” and “digital universe” and make printed books and even paper obsolete. University administrators worried that on-line courseware and for-profit schools like the University of Phoenix would take students away from state universities. Some of my faculty colleagues were concerned about the demise of the scholarly monograph. A few university presses had already closed and many others were believed to be endangered. Academic books were becoming much more expensive and were selling in smaller numbers. There was fear that new faculty would be unable to publish their first books, and thus unable to earn tenure, unless their institutions paid subvention fees to the book publishers. But if such subventions became routine, I wrote, then scholarly publishing might become a form of vanity publishing, where university presses rewarded the manuscripts that came with subventions instead of those of the highest quality. The values that supported academic publishing and secured our authority as scholars seemed fragile, because the media and the markets that supported these values were changing.

I was library representative for the English department (I still am), charged with the task of serials cancellations, of choosing which journals in literary studies should be cut so as to balance our acquisitions budget line against a relentless rise in the prices of journal subscriptions. University of Oregon libraries were meeting these challenges with creativity and advocacy; library staff worked hard to educate faculty on the issues and urged them to join the movement for open access journals. The creative commons and free culture gospel of Jimmy Wales and Lawrence Lessig came to inspire academia. Rather than sign over the copyrights on their intellectual work to for-profit publishers, scholars should insist on retaining copyright, or at least the right to circulate their own publications by posting on their websites (or databases such as academia.edu or researchgate.net, which did not yet exist in 2005). A few Mathematics and Biology colleagues told of creating their own journals to bypass the price-gouging practices of Elsevier, Taylor & Francis, or Springer.

In my article for *Profession*, I proposed that scholarly societies in history and literary studies might begin editing and publishing monographs electronically. A society could appoint an editorial board that would solicit manuscripts, arrange for blind peer-review, hire copy editors, and then publicize and disseminate e-books (as we now call them). Needless to say, the SEA has not done this, and neither have other societies I belong to or am familiar with.

More than a decade has passed, and I’m surprised at how little has changed, at least from the perspective of faculty scholars and authors. The importance of the scholarly monograph for our careers has not diminished. The same university presses still enjoy prominence in our field, and many other publishers continue to release monographs in early American studies. University presses have become more active in journal publishing, suggesting that they see more revenue from that business than from monographs. The open access movement has been hijacked by shady outfits that send out spam inviting solicitations to journals that promise peer review and free distribution, while concealing the “page fees” and other costs imposed on authors. The open access digital journal *Common-place* has become an important new venue for work on early America, but nearly all of the traditional journals in the field remain, and most still publish paper editions as well as electronically through databases like Project Muse and JSTOR.

From the perspective of librarians there has been more change, but also a sense of relief. Ten years ago some feared that library buildings and book stacks would become obsolete, but today our University of Oregon Knight Library has more student traffic than ever, and public libraries in many cities are also healthy. The long aisles of current journal issues are gone, but wi-fi, color printers and scanners, tutoring centers, and group study rooms bring in students who might never have come to read journals. High inflation in journal subscription costs have continued, and the library buys fewer new monographs and almost no new literary fiction or poetry books. But interlibrary loan and the sharing of materials within regional library consortia, such as the Orbis Cascade Alliance in Washington and Oregon, has done much to blunt the impact of declining acquisitions budgets. Electronic access to monographs had gained a toe-hold, but not as quickly as I expected.
Best of all, from my perspective, is that interest in print books and book history, and the role of libraries and archives in this history, has not withered under the onslaught of internet and digital culture, but rebounded. Rare books and special collections at Knight Library has added a new facet to my work.

This past year I was co-chair of the Oregon Rare Books Initiative. ORBI sponsors a lecture series where treasures from the collections—books of science, of exploration, of poetry or art, as well as manuscript letters and papers—are brought out for display, while expert scholars explain their research on these materials. The initiative has also promoted efforts to involve rare books and special collections in classes.

When I teach Thomas Jefferson in American Literature to 1800, my students watch the film Jefferson in Paris (1995) as well as read Notes on the State of Virginia (1784), and meet in the library to see some of the papers donated by director James Ivory. Years before Annette Gordon-Reed published Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: An American Controversy (1997), Ivory, Ismail Merchant and screenwriter Ruth Prawer Jhabvala placed Jefferson’s relationship with Hemings at the center of their bio-pic, even in the face of protests from the Thomas Jefferson Foundation.

Early Americanists can contribute special wisdom on the dynamic state of scholarly publishing today. After all, we teach authors who struggled to establish a new American Literature in the early 1800s, even as the absence of copyright laws made it very difficult for them to earn a living by their pens.

SEA members have worked to revive interest in forgotten texts with the Just Teach One initiative, and to reissue out-of-print works with Early American Reprints and other publishing ventures. We study books that emerged from an industry so decentralized that important books were published in small towns like Batavia, New York, and yet we also turn our skills toward manuscript circulation networks that were the academia.edu of the day. I’m proud that our field has these skills, but I cannot say that I was successful ten years ago in predicting the evolution of scholarly publishing.

Gordon Sayre
SEA Vice-President
University of Oregon

As I am writing this column during a summer teaching and traveling in Germany, the view from here—and the news streaming in from across the globe—is all too familiar. Just since I left: Orlando. Istanbul. Dhaka. Baghdad. Alton Sterling. Philando Castile. Dallas. Boats crammed with human beings trying to reach a safe coast yet capsizing at sea. And Syria—I wonder what happened to the people of Aleppo I visited in 1993. It is impossible to say what and whom I am failing to count, pay tribute to silently or loudly. Places and human beings who are becoming synonymous with violence and death, defying comprehension and even our ability to act, speak, and write.

Is it presumptuous to think that the early American past bears answers to the racism, poverty, violence, and loss of life we face today? Can I, speaking from a privileged position inside the academy, do anything other than perpetuating that privilege? I believe that justice and peace should not solely be the responsibility of the oppressed. We must all contribute to making things better while accepting the limitations of our perspectives and learning from the voices that must be heard—present and past.

In early America, those voices included a group of Dutch and German-speaking Anabaptists who had experienced persecution, torture, incarceration, and public executions at the hands of secular and religious authorities. Though killings subsided in the late-seventeenth century, persecution had marked the Anabaptist faith, leading to a "theology of martyrdom." The core of this theology was defenselessness: the abrogation of violence in response to violence. (NB: I am not building up to a present-day analogy that chastises the oppressed for venting their anger.)

One of the Anabaptist strategies for resisting violence was to collect the stories of the “blood witnesses” who paid the ultimate price for their beliefs. The Mennonite

Engraving by Jan Luykens. Thieleman J. van Braght, Het Bloedig Tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel, Amsterdam, 1685.
Martyrs’ Mirror or Bloody Theater, originally published in Amsterdam in 1660 and 1685 by Thieleman J. van Bragt, became the largest book published (in German translation at Ephrata in 1748) in colonial America.

In the 1740s, German-speaking Mennonites feared that imperial warfare would unleash mandatory military service in spite of Pennsylvania’s liberty of conscience. Although the Ephrata translation did not include the depictions of torture and death in Jan Luyken’s engravings, the stories of people like Dirk Willems strengthened American Mennonites in the difficult principle of non-violence: Willems was a Dutch Anabaptist who escaped from prison. When a prison guard pursued him, Willems made it across a frozen lake but the guard broke through the ice. Willems turned around to save his pursuer’s life, just to be recaptured and executed. While asking the impossible, Willems’s story elevates peacefulness and exposes the perversity of prejudice and state-sponsored violence. Though Pennsylvania Mennonites were never executed for their beliefs or forced to pick up arms, they faced accusations of loyalism during the American Revolution.

Unlike the Mennonites, most German and Dutch-speaking immigrants simply sought freedom from war, poverty, and hopelessness. Arriving in crowded boats, German speakers raised the ire of some English colonials. In 1751, Benjamin Franklin (in)famously promoted exclusively white immigration in an essay on population growth:

> Why should the Palatine Boors [i.e. German-speaking immigrants] be suffered to swarm into our Settlements, and by herding together establish their Language and Manners to the Exclusion of ours? Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a Colony of Aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our Language or Customs, any more than they can acquire our Complexion. (“Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind,” www.franklinpapers.org)

Franklin claimed that “the Number of purely white People in the World is proportionately very small,” with non-white people allegedly including not only Africans but, in Europe, “the Spaniards, Italians, French, Russians and Swedes, [who] are generally of what we call a swarthy Complexion; as are the Germans also, the Saxons only excepted, who with the English, make the principal Body of White People on the Face of the Earth. I could wish their Numbers were increased.” Displaying some awareness of his bias, Franklin claimed: “But perhaps I am partial to the Complexion of my Country, for such Kind of Partiality is natural to Mankind.” When Benjamin was watching boatloads of “swarthy” immigrants stream onto American soil, he apparently thought: thank God (or nature? chance?) for making me white (and British).

Rather than smearing Franklin, my target is the ludicrous nature of racial classifications and the resulting prejudices.

The juxtaposition of Franklin’s assumptions and the Mennonite commitment to peacefulness illustrates the effectiveness of non-violent resistance as well as the necessity of laying bare and undoing the very roots of prejudice. I admire that Franklin later acknowledged many of his own errors; he supported the abolitionist movement and cooperated with the German-speaking community. We should emulate such self-scrutiny, while calling out anyone who makes us believe that racial bias is natural and inevitable.

Of course, German-speaking immigrants faced an easier path toward enfranchisement than freed African slaves, Native Americans, and Hispanics. The descendants of those “Palatine Boors” profited from racially constructed privilege. Yet, when German-speaking pacifists joined with English Quakers in the so-called “Friendly Association” to stave off an all-out war against Lenape warriors in the 1750s and prevent further violence against peaceful indigenous people after the Paxton Boy massacre in the 1760s, they recognized their own privilege and their responsibility for establishing peace and justice. Anabaptists understood that their past persecutions obligated them to prevent similar victimization in America and show solidarity with their Indian as well as their European neighbors.

> “The Indians having burnt several houses on the frontiers […] and murdered and scalped some of the inhabitants; […] two or three of the dead bodies were brought to Philadelphia in a wagon, with an intent as was supposed to animate the people to unite in preparations of war to take vengeance on the Indians, and destroy them: They were carried along several of the streets, many people following, cursing the Indians, also the Quakers because they would not join in war for destruction of the Indians. The sight of the dead bodies and the outcry of the people were very afflicting and shocking to me: Standing at the door of a friend’s house as they passed along, my mind was humbled and turned much inward when I was made secretly to cry; What will become of Pennsylvania?” (An Account of the Gospel labours […]. Philadelphia: 1779. 175)

I share Churchman’s concern at this juncture—but not just for the U.S. Across the globe, we witness large-scale pogroms and individual violence based on the fear and hatred of difference. It is not an option to simply recoil from such violence; we must effect change. But where and how? I agree with the Mennonites: we must tell the stories of all those who suffered and died; we must also lay down our weapons.

Patrick Erben
SEA Executive Coordinator
University of West Georgia
American Literature Society Announces The 1921 Prize in American Literature

We are pleased to announce The 1921 Prize in American Literature, a new prize awarded to the best article in any field of American literature. The prize is named for the year the organization was initially founded “to promote and diversify the study of American Literature.” Judged by a panel made up of members of the American Literature Society Advisory Board and other scholars in the field, the competition will be divided in two categories: one for graduate students, scholars in contingent positions, and untenured faculty members; one for tenured faculty.

The winner will be announced at the 2017 MLA American Literature Society panel.

Rules for competition:
• Please send an electronic copy of the nominated essay (PDF preferred) to the 1921 Prize Committee by 15 September 2016 at 1921prize2016@gmail.com.
• Authors must be members of the American Literature Society to be eligible for consideration. To join the society, please visit http://www.als-mla.org/als/
• No person may nominate more than one essay in a given year.
• Only one article per author may be considered, regardless of who nominates the article.
• Articles must appear during the calendar year in one of the following journals: African American Review; American Literary History; American Literary Realism; American Literature; Early American Literature; ESQ; J19; Legacy; MELUS; Studies in American Fiction; and Studies in American Indian Literatures. Essays that appear elsewhere cannot be considered.
• Articles scheduled to appear, but not yet published by the deadline, will be considered if authors provide verification of their publication within the calendar year.
• A nominal cash prize, to be announced later, will accompany the award.
• Questions about the prize should be directed to Elizabeth Duquette (eduquett@gettysburg.edu).

For more information see: https://www.als-mla.org/als/

Legacy Announces Winner of Best Paper Contest

This year’s recipient of the award for the best student paper presented at the SSAWW 2015 conference in Philadelphia was Joshua Bartlett of SUNY University at Albany, for his paper “‘the groundless Gulph…the raging Sea’: Littoral Spaces and Liminal Persons in Phillis Wheatley’s ‘On Messrs Hussey and Coffin.’” The contest results were announced by Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers.

SEA Member Wins Two Books Awards

William Heath, Professor Emeritus, Mount St. Mary’s University, is the recipient of two 2016 Spur Awards from the Western Writers of America, one for Best Historical Non-fiction and one Best First Non-Fiction Book.

Professor Heath’s book, William Wells and the Struggle for the Old Northwest, is the first Wells biography to cover the years 1770-1812. Professor Heath is also a finalist for the Ohioana Book Award for best book written by an Ohioan or about Ohio.

“A View of Salem in North Carolina” by Ludwig Gottfried Von Redeken in 1787.
Earlier this year the Executive Committee invited members to vote for one of six possible designs for a new SEA logo. One of them was the Society’s original logo, still very much in place on our website; the other five were designed by students of a colleague of mine in the University of Tulsa’s art school. The vote was close, and so the Executive Committee decided to take some time to discuss the results, even as they sought to determine the original source for the woodcut that is at the center of the Society’s traditional logo. The most votes went to #4, which is a highly stylized version of a turkey. #5 and #6, however, which are slight variations on the same design (with a red dot and without) together received more votes than #4.

There was quite a drop-off between these designs and the remaining 3. Long before the vote I had decided to use #4 as a special local for the 2017 Tulsa biennial, because I felt that stylistically it was a good match with the art deco architecture in downtown Tulsa. Given the attachment of #4 to the biennial and the slightly higher number of votes received by #5 and #6, the Executive Committee has decided to go with #6, the version without the red dot (the dot seemed to have caused some confusion).

The new logo is featured on the masthead of this edition of the newsletter. The Executive Committee would like to acknowledge the design work of Belle McDaniel, a very talented art major who just graduated from The University of Tulsa, and her teacher Teresa Valero. Belle also designed some beautiful letterhead for the Society, which some members will be receiving in various communications.

However, the Executive Committee would like to present this as a provisional logo, seeing over the next year how the members like it. This is for two reasons: first, there were several comments along with the votes that provoked additional thought about the logo project. One member pointed out that while all the candidates for a new logo present a single male turkey, the original logo has the advantage of presenting a trio of turkeys, both male and female, and thus conveying the community and sociability that are so important to the SEA. Others expressed turkey fatigue, wanting an entirely different image for the Society. The Executive Committee wanted to acknowledge those comments and bring them into the discussion, using this new logo on a trial basis.

Second, while considering the new turkey logos, the Executive Committee also set out to learn why the SEA’s logo is a turkey and what the origin is of this particular image. David Shields, one of the Society’s Past Presidents and one of the founding members, first proposed this image because a turkey: was emblematic of the New World, was Native, yet became a planetary resource. I remember in our discussions at the time we didn't want any particular image of a human (settler or native) because it might suggest we thought one strand of history was predominant. We also discussed whether to do an abstract image, like a Japanese Mon, but found that too corporate in sensibility.

This particular woodcut was the first graphic representation of turkeys published in Europe.

Daniela Bleichmar of the University of Southern California was of great help in tracking down the original source of the image. The woodcut first appeared in Pierre Belon, L’histoire de la nature des oyseaux (1555). Gordon Sayre also discovered a lovely color version, which is available on the Gallica database: http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8608302w/f283.item.r=BELON%20OYSEAX

The color woodcut, while quite vivid and pretty, shares some of the limitations of the black-and-white version for use as a logo, especially on electronic media. The Executive Committee looks forward, however, to featuring it more prominently on the SEA website and in other communications.

The Executive Committee would like to thank those who voted and sent comments.

Laura Stevens, SEA President
Gordon Sayre, Vice President
Patrick Erben, Executive Coordinator
I openly admit that I might be perpetuating such biases with this final statement: I found this colloquy, especially with its level format, to be a positive demonstration of the kind of democratic communication described in the two excellent books we discussed.

James M. Greene
Pittsburgh State University

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**Reflections from ASECS**

The American Society of Eighteenth Century Studies held its 2016 convention in Pittsburgh, PA from March 31 through April 2.

One of the highlights I remember from my first SEA conference in Philadelphia in 2011 was attending the colloquy on Annette Gordon-Reed’s *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family*, organized and moderated by Dennis Moore. It was a real pleasure, then, to be a respondent in the discussion Dennis planned for ASECS 2016 in Pittsburgh, which turned to two recent books on communication practices during the American Revolution, *Propaganda 1776: Secrets, Leaks, and Revolutionary Communications in Early America* by Russ Castronovo and *Protocols of Liberty: Communication Innovation and the American Revolution*, by William B. Warner.

In addition to Dennis and the two authors, I was joined on the dais by Sonia Di Lorento of the University of Turin and Paul Downes from the University of Toronto. Of course, that dais was purely metaphorical. The session was scheduled for the hotel’s appropriately named Grand Ballroom, a vast Art Deco space which would have been perfect for Jay Gatsby’s visit to Pittsburgh, but was a bit too large for the seminar sized audience that attended our 9:45 AM session. At Dennis’s suggestion, we dispensed with formality and arranged chairs in a circle in the middle aisle.

This literal leveling between audience and presenters seemed highly appropriate for a discussion of the radical potential of print communication in the Revolution. Both Castronovo and Warner read the Revolutionary past with an eye for horizontal models of authority that deemphasize notions of individual authorship. As such, our conversation centered on questions of power, and how the modes of communication analyzed by these books both enabled and constrained the American Whigs.

The relationship between writing and violence lurked throughout this discussion. Paul Downes asked at one point if what Warner calls “the protocols of liberty”—the social norms and customs expected in correspondence among the Whigs—could be considered a means of structuring nonviolent political action and thus providing a substitute for bloodshed. Indeed, Warner concludes his book by describing these protocols as a gift from the Founders to subsequent generations of Americans. Yet as Castronovo’s book demonstrates, such well-intentioned attempts to organize public discourse always compete with the unruly and unpredictable energy of propaganda.

Our own conversation was far from unruly. Russ Castronovo even quipped at one point that the discussion might reflect the biases of “happy English professors.”
The SEA sponsored the following three panels:

Globalizing the American Revolution: A Round Table

Chair: Nancy Ruttenburg, Stanford University
1. “Charlotte Corday’s Gendered Terror: Femininity, Violence, and Domestic Peace in Sarah Pogson’s The Female Enthusiast,” Miranda Green-Barteet, University of Western Ontario
2. “Franklin’s Mail: Gun Trafficking and the Elisions of History,” Maria O’Malley, University of Nebraska, Kearney
3. “Political Theology and the Alternate Enlightenment in Blake and Husband,” Edward Simon, Lehigh University
4. “‘Walk upon water’: Equiano and the Globalizing Subject,” Denys Van Renen, University of Nebraska, Kearney
5. “‘Endeavoring to Turn Pirate’: Father Bombo and the Oriental American Revolution,” Matthew Pangborn, Briar Cliff University
6. “The Orphaned Republic: The Global and the Local in Lutyens’s and Hütter’s The Life and Adventures of Nathan Moses Israel,” Leonard von Morzé, University of Massachusetts Boston

Round Table on Teaching Early American Literature

Chair: Kathleen Donegan, University of California Berkeley
1. “Experiencing and Representing a New World: Community Engagement in the Early American Classroom,” Keri Holt, Utah State University
2. “Living in Native Space: Using Google Maps to Build a Sense of Place,” John J. Kucich, Bridgewater State University
3. “Incorporating Digital Archives into the Early American Literature Classroom,” David Lawrimore, Idaho State University
4. “Engaging the Non-Major with Early American Literature,” Lisa Smith, Pepperdine University
5. “Beyond Lyric Reading: Reimagining The Tuesday Club in the Age of Social Media,” Todd Barosky, St. Martin’s University

Transpacific Early America

Chair: Hsuan L. Hsu, University of California Davis
1. “Seduction, Cannibalism, and Commerce in the Revolutionary Pacific,” Michelle Burnham, Santa Clara University
2. “Noble Savage, Sexuality and the Lapérouse Expedition in the Pacific,” Chunjie Zhang, University of California Davis
3. “Slavery in the Pacific: The Startling Case of Sui Sin Far’s Mother,” Mary Chapman, University of British Columbia

Other Early American Sessions

The Female American; or, The Adventures of Unca Eliza Winkfield, I: Colonial Encounters
Organized by the Southern California Society for the Study of American Women Writers

Chair: Jesslyn Collins-Frohlich, College of Charleston
1. “Strange Mentors: Reimagining Contact and Conversion in The Female American,” Maria O’Malley, University of Nebraska, Kearney
2. “The Paradoxical Voice of The Female American,” Peter Weise, University of California, Davis
3. “Empire and the Pan-Atlantic Self in The Female American; or, the Adventures of Unca Eliza Winkfield,” Denise MacNeil, University of Redlands

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Richard S. Pressman is Professor Emeritus of English, St. Mary’s University, and publisher of Early American Reprints.

What was the impetus for Early American Reprints?
About six years ago, I came to think that Margaretta (1807) was worthy of republication—in part because there are not enough Early American texts available in print, in part because of the dearth, in particular, of women’s work. Although Broadview was interested, even reconsidering their first decision not to go ahead, in the end they were afraid it would not sell enough. So I tried various academic houses; same story. Then I asked myself what “enough” meant, concluding that it meant a sufficient amount to cover their overhead—for they have staff, equipment, utilities, maybe even rent. Then I came to two realizations: (1) I had strong editorial skills, decent critical skills, and knowledge of printing processes and graphic design (even with an undergraduate degree in Printing Management, of all things!) and (2) I have no overhead: I don’t pay myself anything, I use the faculty computer lab, and it costs me little to nothing to gather materials. All I have to pay for is some duplication of proofs and the manufacturing. Okay, so I lose money, but it’s a labor of love.

How would you describe the mission of EAR?
The mission is to make available to the academic community high-quality critical editions of as many worthwhile texts from the early period as possible and to provide the texts as inexpensively as possible (others’ books are generally much more expensive). As the copyright page says, “The press is especially interested in recovering texts by women and minorities.”

What publications have you produced to date?
Since 2012, I’ve produced three texts, nearly one a year: Martha Meredith Read’s Margaretta (1807, 2012), Tabitha Gilman Tenney’s Female Quixotism (1801, 2013), and Rebecca Rush’s Kelroy (1812, 2014). Isaac Mitchell’s The Asylum; or, Alonzo and Melissa (1807, 2016), text number four, will likely be available by the time this newsletter is received.

How do you manage to keep costs down for the volumes?
I want to be clear to our readers that the editions are first-class productions. First, high-quality papers and bindings are used; there is no cutting of corners. Secondly, all are critical editions, with a scholarly introduction by a recognized scholar in our field (all are members of the SEA), with some ancillary materials and extensive footnotes, and with modernized punctuation and sometimes paragraphing (but absolutely no substantive changes). So these editions can compete with anything produced by the established houses. What makes the difference is that I have no overhead whatsoever and I am willing to lose money in order to keep prices way down. My volumes sell for about $9.00, but would otherwise go for double that price.

How do you spread the word about new publications?
That’s been a problem. Advertising is expensive; Amazon’s rate is unreasonable. I’d have to raise my prices too much for me to continue an inexpensive alternative. Until recently, I relied on conferences, most notably the SEA, some non-monetary support from the SEA, a couple of ads in Early American Literature (because it’s the only one that’s relatively inexpensive), and word of mouth. However, now my books—even though new—are listed with Alibris (my personal first choice for used books, many of which are new anyway), which automatically lists me with the used-book services of Barnes & Noble, Amazon, and about half dozen others, and I expect to be listed with the Independent Publishers Group. Eventually, I want to be associated with an academic publisher as an independent line.

What is the value of an imprint like EAR?
People can expect top quality at most inexpensive prices to obtain copies of books either unavailable anywhere else or, in some cases, for much higher prices. For example, Broadview’s edition of Kelroy goes for $18, while mine goes for $9. Broadview’s has some more ancillary material, but with far fewer explanatory footnotes to help the reader, especially the advanced undergraduate.
What future publications are being planned?
The next book in line, which is already in the early planning stage, is not, like the first four books, a novel. Instead it will be a collection of five or six plays. I discovered that while Penguin has an anthology of early plays available, it includes only three from the Early Republic, and none from before 1787. If professors wish to teach plays from the early period, either those plays must be taught on line, which means, as many of us know too well, rough images, expensive printing from downloads, and antique, often hard-to-read punctuation, or they must use expensive individual editions, few of which are available.

By the time this newsletter is received, I will have put out a call requesting suggestions for plays to include. That way, I can know I am serving our membership as it should be served. My goal is to have available a line of inexpensive books from which any professor can teach a complete course for a cost in books to the student of about $50–60, complete.

Beyond the collection of plays, I think it’s time that more of Mrs. Rowson’s work be published. As the cliché goes, Watch this space.

How can books be purchased and how does one contact the press?
Books can be purchased from Alibris or any of its allied listings. But the least expensive way is directly through the press itself. All information can be found on the website: earlyamericanreprints.worpress.com.

Richard Pressman Interview con...
The long road passing the several beaches nestled at Sandy Hook in Fort Hancock, New Jersey ends in a small parking lot where, situated upon a grassy hill, looms the nation’s oldest lighthouse. With the bayside to the left and the crumbling Fort Hancock barracks to the right, it still stands as vigilant as it did several centuries ago, serving as a landmark and warning beacon for incoming ships.

Today, park rangers, children riding their bikes, and beachgoers alike walk past Sandy Hook Light on a daily basis without realizing the significance of its history. A solid piece of colonial American history, standing alone in its grandiosity, it tends to blend into the background of yet another summer vacation. Still, as I approach the lighthouse, with the evening breeze circulating the scent of salt water through the air, I can’t help but admire its solidness, as though it was always meant to stand in that very space, long before anyone had thought of erecting it in the late 17th century.

Governor Andreas of New York was the first to suggest building a lighthouse in Sandy Hook in 1680; however, his idea was not seriously considered until 1761. By that time, the south end of New York Harbor had become a notoriously dangerous passage for ships and boats, especially in the dark with no guiding light.

Over time, it became one of the most common places for shipwrecks and it was then that plans for the lighthouse’s erection began.

When the British came in through New York Harbor during the Revolution, they commandeered the lighthouse for their own war efforts. Colonists had removed the glass to render it useless to the British; however, the British were able to reconstruct the light and keep it glowing to guide their ships. Following the war, the lighthouse went back to serving its original purpose.

Sandy Hook Light has a long history of keepers, dating from 1809 to 1950. There are also many stories about the lighthouse, including the tale of a skeleton sitting at a desk buried beneath the lighthouse keeper’s quarters. In 2000, the lighthouse was restored to its former glory and remains operational today. So the next time you happen to be in New Jersey, plan a visit to Sandy Hook Light. You won’t be disappointed.

Kaitlin Tonti
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

A new feature of the SEA Newsletter highlights a smaller or little-known early American site or resource. This series kicked off in the spring 2015 newsletter with Gordon Sayre’s column on two sites in Washington: the Whitman Mission National Historic Site and the Lower Frenchtown historic site. The fall 2015 newsletter contained an essay by Tom Hallock on Eboe’s Landing in Georgia, and the fall 2016 issue will feature a piece from Michael Drexler on the site in West Virginia where John Brown was hanged.

If you have an item you believe would be of interest to the SEA membership, please send a query to mary.balkun@shu.edu. Essays should be 500-750 words, and include an image or two, if appropriate.
Indigenous Archives in the Digital Age

Registration is now open for the SEA-sponsored Workshop Indigenous Archives in the Digital Age, at Dartmouth College September 9-10, 2016. Our line-up of speakers is varied and international, bringing together scholars of Early American Studies, Native American Studies, American literature, digital humanists, librarians, curators, historians, storytellers and activists. For information on travel and lodging, please visit our website at http://sites.dartmouth.edu/indigenousarchives-conference/.

Keynoter speakers are Tim Powell (Director of Center for Native American and Indigenous Research (CNAIR) at the American Philosophical Society; University of Pennsylvania), and Rick Hill (Director of the Deyohaha:ge: Indigenous Knowledge Center at Six Nations Polytechnic in Ontario, CA).

There will be panels, a roundtable, and a workshop on Digital Repatriation and Digital Tools; exhibits of 6 digital projects; guided tours of the Orozco and Hov-ey Murals, as well as a dinner overlooking beautiful Occom Pond, and a continuous exhibit of primary materials from the Occom archives at Dartmouth.

For questions or more information, contact organizer Ivy Schweitzer (Ivy.Schweitzer@dartmouth.edu) or administrator Kelly Palmer (Kelly.L.Palmer@dartmouth.edu).

The Society of Early Americanists 10th Biennial Conference

The next SEA Biennial conference will take place in Tulsa, Oklahoma, March 2-4, 2017. The main conference venue will be the Hyatt Regency Downtown, with a closing reception at the University of Tulsa’s Helmerich Center for American Research. Two plenary talks will be open to the public, as well as a panel the evening of Wednesday, March 1, on the topic of “The Public and the Past: Finding and Connecting with Early America.” The deadline for individual proposals is August 30, 2016. Proposals for accepted sessions should be sent directly to the session chairs no later than 15 September 2016. For more information, visit http://sea2017.wordpress.com/.

SEA 2018 Thematic Conference

Abram van Engen will host the next SEA thematic conference in 2018. The theme will be “Religion and Politics in Early America,” March 1 - 4, 2018, in St. Louis, MO. The conference will be sponsored by Washington University.

Erickson to Join American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Paul J. Erickson, who has served as the Director of Academic Programs at the American Antiquarian Society (AAS) for the past nine years, has accepted a position as Program Director for Arts, Humanities, and American Institutions at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in Cambridge, MA, to commence after Labor Day. His responsibilities will include managing commissions, research projects, and other initiatives in the arts and humanities at the Academy, as well as overseeing their Visiting Scholars program.

We would like to extend our congratulations to Professor Erickson and our appreciation for all he has done for early American studies.

Call for Nominations and Applications for the Position of SEA Executive Coordinator

The Society of Early Americanists announces our biennial election to choose our thirteenth Executive Coordinator. Serving in this capacity requires a six-year commitment: after two years as Executive Coordinator, the person serves for two years as Vice President and then two as President.

- The chief duties of the Executive Coordinator involve maintaining accurate subscription and membership records, keeping the SEA’s bank account and handling its finances, overseeing mailings, and coordinating registration for the SEA’s conferences.
- The Vice President is primarily responsible for coordinating panels at conferences of SEA affiliates and supporting the organization in cooperation with the Executive Coordinator and President.
- The President is expected to provide leadership, coordinate SEA activities, organize the biennial conference, liaise with the other officers, continue to develop the organization, and foster other areas of interest to the membership.

A majority vote from SEA members decides the successful candidate.
Announcements con’t…

Any candidate should provide a letter from his or her home institution, addressed to the SEA President, indicating the willingness of that institution to support the work of the organization for the full six years. This support can take various forms, including travel to meetings, office supplies, staff support for conference planning, as the SEA budget does not fully cover these expenditures for officers. We recommend that candidates negotiate with their home institutions about these matters and would be happy to provide more information.

The deadline for nominations or applications is December 1, 2016.

If you have any questions or would like to nominate someone for this position, please email the current President, Laura Stevens (laura-stevens@utalsa.edu), and the current Vice President, Gordon Sayre (gsayre@uoregon.edu).

Society of Early Americanist 18th Annual Essay Competition

The SEA is pleased to announce our Eighteenth Annual Essay Competition. If you have presented a paper on an Americanist topic, broadly conceived, during the academic year 2015-2016 at the Society of Early Americanists Special Topics Conference, Baltimore and Washington DC, June 2-5, 2016; or at an American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies conference 2015-2016, including the Annual Meeting of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, Pittsburgh, March 31-April 2, 2016, or that of any ASECS affiliate conferences, we invite you to enter.

By “Americanist topic, broadly conceived” we mean that the competition is open to papers that address America in terms of both the long and the wide (i.e., circum-Atlantic) eighteenth century. Our panel of judges will see each entry through a simple system of blind reviewing; your name goes only on a separate cover sheet, and we recommend that you reread any self-citation, either in the body or in notes, to the third person. Note that we accept revised papers and that the maximum length for an entry is 6,000 words.

Papers should be double-spaced, 6,000 words maximum, with the following information appearing only on the cover sheet: your name; institutional mailing address and e-mail address; panel title; chair’s name; date of presentation; and name of conference. Please send your essay as an email attachment to Professor Steven Thomas at SEAES-essayContest@gmail.com. Please visit http://www.societyofearlyamericanists.org/contest.html for more details.

Deadline: Friday, October 7, 2016
Making Early American Literature ‘New’ in the Classroom: Pedagogies, Prognoses, and Practices

This roundtable focuses on the perennial issue faced by so many teachers of early American literature: how to make the field interesting, stimulating, and engaging for students who might otherwise avoid it on account of its challenging language, detailed historical contexts, and often lengthy or unfamiliar content. Successful solutions to this quandary are important for students’ academic enrichment because early American literature provides insightful perspectives on social, economic, and political issues that are central to the current world as well as students’ everyday lives. Solutions to the issue are also essential to the future of early American studies as a discipline—the texts, voices, and historical situations that we teach today will hold a lasting influence on both the reception of early American literature by future generations and on the shape of the field itself (its canonical authors and texts, its thematic focuses, its perceived relevance, etc).

This roundtable will discuss various strategies aimed at increasing student engagement with early American literature, and it may also address other ongoing, unresolved concerns of teachers and scholars of early American literature. It welcomes discussion concentrating on pedagogical practices and activities, but is also open to more theoretical discussions about the current and future states of early American studies.

**Deadline: September 30, 2016**

Teaching the Puritans in the Twenty-first Century

This panel considers innovative approaches to teaching the history and literature of the New England Puritans in the undergraduate classroom. Two developments have contributed to the declining rate at which Puritan literature is being assigned to undergraduates. First, recent trends in early Americanist scholarship—in particular, resistance to the conventional narrative that identifies the origins of America with the continent’s European colonization, and the rise of transatlantic and hemispheric studies—have meant that the Puritans no longer comfortably occupy the place they once held as originators of the American experiment.

Second, as new media and digital literacies have increasingly come to shape our students’ engagement with texts, Puritan literature often appears more remote from their lived experiences than ever.

We maintain, however, that the Puritans offer a rich resource for the undergraduate classroom. Precisely because they fit uncomfortably into the stories of America that resist a nationalist and exceptionalist orientation, they create opportunities for critical reflection. The darker elements of the Puritan experiment—such as antinomianism, the Indian wars, or the witch trials—can also present openings for engaging undergraduates intellectually.

Most Americans are somewhat familiar with selected elements of Puritan society by way of popular depictions such as Arthur Miller’s The Crucible or the story of the first Thanksgiving. But eliminating Puritan texts from the canon has not resolved the problem of representation. Our founding myths continue to shape perceptions of American history. Thus, teaching the Puritans in undergraduate classrooms destabilizes popular notions of our national origins, prompting students to interrogate constructions of American identity. We are interested in papers that share successful pedagogical strategies for introducing undergraduates to the New England Puritans and fostering engagement with their literature, particularly strategies that make use of alternative media or bring the Puritans into productive dialogue with aspects of popular culture,

**Deadline: September 30, 2016**

For more information about these and other NeMLA panels, visit: [http://www.buffalo.edu/nemla/convention.html](http://www.buffalo.edu/nemla/convention.html)

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**Executive Officers, 2015-2017**

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To Our Members

The SEA thanks its new and renewing members for their invaluable support of our Society. Your contributions make early American studies thrive. Please remember to keep your membership current and direct any membership inquiries to the Executive Coordinator Patrick Erben (seacoord@gmail.com).

You can also help build our membership by referring colleagues in the field to the Society’s homepage: http://www.societyofearlyamericanists.org

Society Information/Membership

The Society of Early Americanists provides a forum for scholarly and pedagogical exchange and professional support among scholars of various disciplines who study the literature and culture of America to approximately 1800. Our membership of over 350 individuals enjoys a bi-yearly newsletter detailing activities in our field, a website that links to many documents of interest to early American scholars and teachers, and a listserv. We also offer opportunities for networking and dissemination of professional work. If you are interested in joining the Society, please see the membership information on our homepage: http://www.societyofearlyamericanists.org/membership.html

Opportunities for Giving

In addition to keeping your SEA membership active, you can contribute to the Fund to Honor Excellence in Teaching: http://www.societyofearlyamericanists.org/honored_teachers.html

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