

**2012 Program Committee Final Report
MAC Annual Meeting April 19-21, 2012—Grand Rapids, MI**

By

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Committee Members:

Beth Myers (co-chair), Loyola University Chicago
Rachel Vagts (co-chair), Luther College
Cynthia Ghering, Michigan State University
Glenn Humphreys, Chicago Public Library
Susan Jacobs, Wayne State University
Stephanie Keys, Minneapolis Institute of Art
Chelle Somsen, South Dakota State Historical Society
Laura Sullivan, Iowa State University
Joel Thoreson, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Ex-Officio Members (2013 Program Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs):

Meg Miner, Illinois Wesleyan University
Anne Thomason, Earlham College, Lilly Library

Assessment/Structure/Themes:

The 2012 program appears, anecdotally, to be a success. The conference as a whole was well attended and all sessions well populated, including those on Saturday. A clear majority of the feedback comments were very positive and constructive.

The Theme for MAC 2012 was “MAC at Forty: The Future is Now!” This served to recognize the 40th anniversary of MAC as well as point to a profession that is also forward-looking.

The Program Committee received 24 formal proposals and approximately 9 partial submissions. The submission rate does show a 12% decrease over the 2011 submission rate despite promotion through MAC Blasts, the newsletter, and posts to the MAC website. The type of proposals selected was a direct reflection of the results of a Survey Monkey created by PC member Cynthia Ghering to query MAC members on what they wanted to see at MAC 2012. Those results reflected the same variety of interest in the profession as a whole. A majority responded expressing interest in all things digital including digital curation and digital content management. Other areas of strong interest included copyright, description, defining the future of the profession, institutional archives, automating workflow, primary source instruction, project management, privacy, communicating with IT, grant writing, web 2.0, and commemoration and celebration. Many of these topics were ultimately reflected in the sessions accepted for the final program. Other notes of interest from the survey included a desire to keep the traditional 90 minute format but add more workshops, roundtables, lightening rounds, debates, and case studies. A small, but vocal group of respondents supported one-minute (lightening) round

sessions and PechaKucha format. PC 2012 was unable to accommodate these suggested variations, but we support their use at future conferences.

The conference had 18 standard panel sessions lasting 90 minutes. We continued the student research panel which was very well received and attended. The student panel paired well with the student poster session of which Jeremy R. Katz was named the winner. Held in the same space as formerly occupied by the vendors, the student poster participants experienced a particularly high traffic rate. Susan Jacobs once again served to coordinate much of the student poster session and did an amazing job.

After reviewing the panel survey results, some general observations can be offered. The panels that statistically were the highest rated (4.50 and above) were not necessarily the panels with the highest attendance rate. In fact, the highest rated panel (End of Time or New Life?) ranked 14 out of 18 in terms of attendance. One possible interpretation is that though there might not be widespread appeal of some of the narrower panel topics, there is a dedicated following and clearly expressed interest in the panels themselves, especially when the panel quality is also high. Worth noting, this pattern repeated for panels related to outreach, reference, and student research. A majority of the comments for all of the sessions were complimentary, even allowing for an expected range of constructive criticism. Much of the criticism was focused on specific room acoustics and lack of mics on the tables to allow for more effective question and answer sessions.

PC 2012 communicated primarily through email despite some best efforts to adopt the memberclicks forums. We also met in person during SAA 2011 at the Harold Washington Library, hosted by PC member, Glenn Humphreys. MAC Vice President Mark Shelstad, who attended that meeting, proved a very helpful addition to our deliberations and discussions. Once the panel submissions were in, co-chair Beth Myers transferred the content into Access in order to create more readable content for committee members. The Access files were distributed to all the committee members with deliberations following via conference call. Final proposals were randomly distributed to committee members to shepherd and from that point on, the shepherds were the principle point of contact for the panels and panelists.

It must be noted that PC 2012 greatly benefited from the sharing of information and forms with PC 2011. Both Alison Stankrauff, Indiana University South Bend, and Lynn Smith, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, were exceptionally helpful in sharing their time, work, and experiences with us. PC 2012 reused virtually all of the formatted documents produced by PC 2011 including session evaluations, submission evaluations, shepherd guidelines, and most other documentation. Their willingness to share their templates saved us many hours of labor.

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the extra work and special efforts of Program Committee members Susan Jacobs, Cynthia Ghering, and Glenn Humphreys, related to student participation, the survey, and hosting our meeting at SAA, respectively. We would also like to recognize the great help and sense of community fostered by both Alison Stankrauff and Lynn Smith. Finally, thank you for Mark Shelstad for his helpful work. THANK YOU!

Plenary:

Several suggestions were made concerning the Keynote speaker but ultimately PC 2012 settled on Kate Theimer. Her presentation, “Participatory Archives: Something Old, Something New,” was very well received and attended. We kept with the previous year’s practice of only one plenary in order to have more time for other conference activities. Kate Theimer is the author of several books, articles, and the blog ArchivesNext. She is widely considered to be an expert in web 2.0 technologies and adoptions in the archival field. Formerly of NARA in College Park, MD, Theimer holds a MIS from the University of Michigan and a MA from the University of Maryland. As noted in the 2012 program and the SAA website, she is also currently serving on the Council of the Society of American Archivists.

Sessions:

As session development and context have already been addressed in the general assessment above, this section will address some of the unique particulars of the 2012 conference. First, the topics ranged widely from digital curation and content issues to outreach, intern management, and the variation of content management (e.g., crime, popular culture). Second, speakers came from a variety of institutional backgrounds—government, academic, religious, corporate, and special interest. It may be noted that some panels more heavily reflected one type of institution, but as a whole, the panelists across the conference were diverse. Third, all sessions were generally well attended (see appendix A for more detail).

Workshops:

PC 2012 had only marginal input to the design of the workshops. We worked closely with the Education Committee co-chairs—Amy Cooper Cary and Karen Spilman—and forwarded ideas for workshops to them that came through the memberclicks submission system. In total there were three workshops offered:

Society of American Archivists Preconference Workshop: Basic Electronic Records, presented by Geoff Huth, New York State Archives

MAC Basic Workshop: Introduction to Records and Information Management, presented by Caryn Wojcik, State of Michigan, Records Management Services

MAC Intermediate Workshop: Legal Issues for Archives, presented by Menzi Behrnd-Klodt, Klodt Associates and Xyte, Inc.

Other Issues:

PC 2012 strongly recommends that future conferences continue the student-led and student oriented content including the panel and poster session. One option is to better integrate student-instigated social media into the program itself perhaps around an open mic session or similar. While there were some other issues, mainly acoustics in some of the larger rooms, these issues were beyond the control of PC.

What Worked:

Building from the work done by PC 2011 proved exceptionally helpful. The sharing of form templates in particular saved us a great deal of time and energy. As well, the theme of “MAC at Forty: The Future is Now” was well received and reflected a conference program that paid homage to the past while acknowledging that the profession was also looking to its future. In addition, the communication and camaraderie between the co-chairs worked exceptionally well and it should be noted that the panel as a whole worked very well together—each member bringing enthusiasm, intelligence, and commitment to the work. The use of Survey Monkey also worked well insofar as we were able to better gauge what the MAC community was interested in and make community-driven, informed decisions as a result.

What Did Not Work:

We were unable to fully embrace memberclicks during the life span of the committee. While great effort was exerted by co-chair Rachel Vagts to move the committee onto the system, ultimately the committee continued to communicate mainly by email. As the committee was also modestly sized, email was the most effective and fastest way to communicate. Another issue, from a purely logistics point of view, was the lack of microphones on the panelist’s tables. There was frequent comment concerning the lack of ability to hear panelists when answering questions or wasted time for each panelist to get up and move back to the podium to answer a question.

Respectfully submitted,
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Appendix A

	Session	Score	Attend
1	Archival Content Management Systems: The Future of Collection Management	4.32	159
2	Archival Survival Kit: Getting and Keeping That Professional Job	4.46	68
3	Archives 2.0: Using Social Media to Connect Collections with Users	4.56	140
4	Building Both Academic and Corporate Internship Programs: The Value of Mentoring and Networking	4.53	32
5	Collecting Chicago Crime: Researching, Exhibiting, and Preserving Murder, Bootlegging, and Deviant Behavior	4.32	85
6	Connecting Students and Primary Sources: National History Day as Outreach	4.60	40
7	Digital Preservation Comes of Age: Reports from the Field	4.13	83
8	Hands-On Plus: Working/Teaching with/about Manuscripts	4.22	65
9	Helping Hands: How Using Students and Community Volunteers Can Benefit Your Archives	n/a	n/a
10	Juggling Act: Managing Small Shops	4.05	58
11	Mind the Gaps: Leveraging Networks to Learn	3.98	71
12	New Grantsmanship: Digital Sustainability, Open Access, and Consortial Arrangement	3.43	58
13	Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Re-Examining Remote Reference Services	4.57	57
14	Popular Culture Archives in a Global Context: Challenges and Opportunities	4.31	52
15	Student Research Presentations	4.54	35
16	The End Times or New Life?: The Future of Religious Archives	4.74	41
17	This Calls for a Celebration: Engaging Your Archives in Institutional...	4.34	56
18	Website Preservation: Archival Principles and Strategies	4.53	112