

# **SIG HFIS Meeting at AM 2015 - St Louis MO USA**



**9th November 2015 - 4pm-5:10pm Stirling room**

## **1. Attendees (6)**

Ken Herold (remote), Jenna Hartel, Fidelia Ibekwe-SanJuan, Kathryn La Barre, Ronald Day, Lynnsey Weissenberger

Apologies were received from Julian Warner, Michael Buckland, Trudi Hahn, The meeting agenda had been distributed well ahead of the meeting via the SIG-HFIS mailing list. The meeting commenced by general introductions and then by going through the agenda items.

## **2. Activities during FY15**

The outgoing chair (Fidelia) recalled the activities that took place during her mandate (which are mainly outlined in the points below and were sent out in the October newsletter).

## **3. Outreach activities to Members and to students**

What types of activities can we do during the year to engage our members? This year, I tried iStories, Webinars. Other ideas?

K. La Barre made the observation that members joining the SIG are not automatically added to the mailing list. Fidelia observed that this has been a persistent headache which HQ has not been able to solve, it also plagues regional chapters. She suggested that the chair, or outreach officer, send welcome emails to new members on a quarterly basis. We haven't had more than 20 new members yearly. This welcome email could be a standard text, informing members about the listserv and giving directions to enrol.

## **4. The ASIST History Fund Research and Best Paper Awards**

It was recalled that the awards are administered by HFIS and that the chair of the SIG is the chair of those awards. It's up to him/her to set up the jury for each year for these awards, to get out the call for proposals on time and judge the submissions with the help of HQ. It was further recalled that the History Fund Research has been raised to \$2000 during FY15.

The awards jury voted unanimously to award the History Research Fund to Professor Ronald Day of Indiana University at Bloomington for his project on a book exploring the relationship between *"Documentarity, the Literary and the Right to Truth"*. While Professor Ronald Day acknowledged his pleasure and gratitude to the jury awards for this distinction, he has very graciously and generously offered to forfeit the monetary part of the award which can then be funnelled back to support such historical and discursive research, in particular undertaken by students or junior faculty in need of financial support.

The Best paper award remains at \$500 but was not awarded this year due to lack of worthy submission.

Regarding the future of the best paper award, Fidelia put forward Michael's suggestion which she received by email:

The History Fund Best Paper Award is simply not working for lack of competitive levels of submissions. I think that we should convert it into a "Best Published Paper of [the previous calendar year] Award", with or without a cash award - and anyone can nominate any paper. That pretty much guarantees an award and visibility. Given the lack of volunteers (other than Bob Williams) to do fundraising for the History Fund, I think that if given for published papers it could serve its purpose as a consciousness-raising device without an associated cash award, thereby strengthening our ability to sustain the Research Award. – Michael Buckland

A discussion ensued based on this idea.

Kathryn La Barre thinks that the Best paper award can be a way to give a spot to the paper to be presented at ASIST Annual Meetings because a disservice to the Best Paper Award is that it can't be presented. However, there is no way to guarantee a spot for the author to present at the annual meeting as this decision would be up to the paper reviewers, ASIST will not guarantee a spot on the program for the winner of this award. The impact would be a recognition by your peers, this is important for tenure, peer review.

Ronald Day also thinks that it's a way of leveraging power and "colonizing" areas that are absent currently in the SIG by choosing papers that are at the boundary, for example whole areas of the digital cultural theory that are absent. The ASIST community and SIG need to look beyond the history of documentarity within the context of the Anglo-American tradition of information science. While this has produced good work in the past, larger areas need to be investigated. He suggested a change the name of the SIG to something like "History, Culture, and Theory" because foundations in the SIG almost always referred to the historical foundations of ASIST and its Anglo-American documentation/information science orientation. We need something more inclusive of communicative and media perspectives, social networks, algorithms, and non-static records, etc., from cultural, theoretical, and historical points of view, and from non-Anglo-American perspectives.

Kathryn La Barre suggested that we can have the person that wrote the article to host a webinar.

Ken Herold suggested the hosting as a synchronous webinar or asynchronous online session as a means of additionally showcasing our information communications credentials among our colleagues.

Jenna Hartel observed that ASIST appears to be in transition, as a senior tier of information science scholars has stopped attending the Annual Meeting. This senior cohort was decently versed in the intellectual history of information science and also fluent in its core research areas of information retrieval, information behaviour, and knowledge organization, thereby contributing a certain stability and common

perspective to the community. As this seasoned group becomes less active and visible, the next generation is gaining in influence and setting a different tone. The next generation is more closely aligned with the iSchool movement and other disciplinary traditions and has a more eclectic sensibility, theoretically and methodologically speaking. Perhaps SIG-HFIS could capitalize on this sea change and provide leadership by hosting the conversation about new theoretical and methodological influences and commitments.

There was general agreement amongst those present that we should seize the opportunity to re-energize the SIG, increase member participation through various actions during the year and turn the SIG around to be more inclusive in its themes. In particular, we could include in its themes culture.

It was decided to open up these suggestions to the SIG membership at large.

### **5. Communication with HFIS members**

Fidelia observed that the HFIS mailing list is vastly spammed and presents a difficult job filtering messages. There is not much activity/response from members when mails are sent out.

The HFIS is still an opt-in mailing list, so the mailing list is to be reworked (see comments above about people not being automatically signed into the mailing list when they join the SIG). Right now the list is set to hold all messages for approval. It is possible to change the filter to allow subscribers to post to the list without approval. There are other configurations possible, Dick Hill can assist with this. In the past HFIS has had a listserv manager. In the recent past these duties have fallen to the Chair, perhaps this is something to reconsider

### **6. Updates from SIG Cabinet Meeting**

The SIG Meeting took place on Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> November at 10am. A summary of the salient points discussed:

*Officers that need to be elected:* chair-elect, secretary, the following are appointed, not elected according to the bylaws>> treasurer, communications officer. Elections (not nominations) need to be carried out for these officers (chair elect, only). HQ can help set up the electoral process if asked on time (at least 6 weeks before the AM). After that, you can nominate or appoint other officers, as you deem necessary.

*SIG Publication of the year:* there was some discussion about what this involved, i.e., which types of publications were eligible for this award, about the definition of a publication in this sense, whether the name should be revised because some people understood it the classical way (articles, chapters; not newsletters or media communications). It was recalled that newsletters were the minimum basic type of publication that can be considered (this was the only one produced by HFIS this year). To run for this award, you can upload all of a SIGs publications as 1 PDF file or point to your website where they have been deposited. The publication needs to be by the SIG, not by individual members of a SIG.

*Strengthening link between SIGs and JASIST:* someone suggested that it would be possible to do a topics paper for JASIST in the article series that has replaced ARIST, but this is

really dependent on the policy chosen by the new editor of JASIST and peer-review process. No special treatment may be awarded to SIGs for this. The Bulletin is probably a better venue for disseminating SIGs publication, it is also more accessible.

*SIG reserve funds:* this is a fund that SIGs can request for special projects, they can ask for up to \$5000 for a project. This year only \$1000 was awarded, so the SIG cabinet was asking from SIGs to tell them how this fund can better serve them. A survey will be carried: questionnaire sent to SIG officers and recommendations made to the steering committee. So please HFIS respond! Perhaps HFIS can think of a project that is worth asking the award for.

#### *Affordability of SIGs event and presence at ASIST events*

An issue was raised about how to fund SIG outreach activities: Fidelia made the suggestion that ASIST review its policy of not funding ASIST member travels to ASIST events. The response was that this should be taken to the Board to address it.

Finally, a discussion ensued about SIG financing of workshops: how the costing is done and how this impacts travel expenses. Some SIGs requested a more transparent decision process about how the cost of a workshop is fixed, how the billing of rooms, catering services are determined by the hotel because SIGs who run workshops don't make any money from it, they actually lose money because of the exorbitant rates charged by the hotel for renting rooms and for Wi-Fi, etc, HQ apparently keeps the balance from the workshop. This issue should also be discussed further between Board and HQ, via the SIG rep at the Board.

#### **7. Officers: Changing of the Chair**

Fidelia officially passed the torch to Ken Herold, incoming chair and to Jenna Hartel, chair elect ; Ken outlined plans for the coming year. First, he would tackle the issue to outreach to the SIG members by emailing them.

#### **8. Advisory board for next year :**

Trudi is resigning. Ken as incoming chair will form a new advisory board

As no further points were raised, the meeting formally concluded at 5:10pm