

American Statistical Association Archival Activities The First Forty Years

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This is an effort to document American Statistical Association (ASA) activities across the last forty years relating to historical records. It also identifies many of the key individuals responsible for significant activities. As you will see, it is a “tale of 4 committees”. The timing and major activities of each committee will be described, along with mention of the major contributors. The concluding section contains thoughts about ASA future archival challenges and opportunities. It is planned that later appendices will reference important ASA documents and identify the participants during the last 40 years.

ASA has encouraged efforts to capture and preserve its records and those of prominent statisticians since at least 1967. In that year, ASA President Frederick Mosteller established the Committee on Preservation of Documents of Distinguished Statisticians. Dr. Mosteller had the excellent foresight to ask Churchill Eisenhart to chair the Committee, which started Churchill on a preservation journey that lasted at least 27 years.

In 1984, because of efforts underway to establish a permanent archive of ASA materials at a university location, a Committee on ASA Archives was established. Again, Dr. Eisenhart was the logical chairperson and he continued to lead both Committees until they merged in 1989.

The first proposed name for the combined Committee was the Committee on ASA Archives and Statistician’s Manuscripts. However, to broaden the focus on types of materials to be considered, the Committee was chartered with its present name of the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials.

The fourth committee started as an *ad hoc* ASA committee in 1978 to film (and later video tape) lectures by and conversations with prominent statisticians. That committee was very active (and proactive) for years but activity waned after the turn of the century due to the retirement of one major contributor and the death of the other major person. As you will see the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials has revived interest in the video program, and hopefully will make the program more accessible and useful.

This history should be considered as a work in progress. It highlights some activities of all four Committees. It chronicles the ASA collection of books and documents in Boston, along with efforts to acquire that collection and merge it with the present ASA Archives at Iowa State University. This write-up also identifies specific Committee activities—successes and otherwise.

Many details of Committee activities are sketchy and hopefully can be better documented in the future—as people use the present archives for targeted research.

COPODODS

In establishing the Committee on Preservation of Documents of Distinguished Statisticians (COPODODS), the first aim outlined by Dr. Mosteller was to assemble available information on “existing collections of statistical manuscripts, including correspondence on statistical matters and other historical materials.” An important approach that Churchill Eisenhart employed was to select Committee members positioned to have local knowledge of the papers of prominent statisticians. For example, the original members and their affiliations included T.A. Bancroft (Iowa State University), Allen Craig (Iowa University), Harold F. Dodge (Bell Labs), Helen M. Walker (Columbia University), and Stuart A. Rice (Federal Government). Paul J. Fitzpatrick, who had researched and written a number of historical articles, was the remaining original Committee member. As new leads were exhausted in one location, people rotated off and were replaced by individuals from other institutions and organizations. At least 20 additional individuals served on the COPODODS between 1967 and 1989.

The Committee relied largely on personal contact with living statisticians and family members of former statisticians. Committee members also checked reference sources such as the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections to determine where personal archives might be found. The Committee goal was not to acquire collections but to ensure that collections of significant papers were preserved in some location. Some documents found homes in University collections and others in locations such as the American Philosophical Society Library.

Since the Committee revolved so much around Churchill Eisenhart’s personal prodding and encouragement, progress ebbed and flowed with the press of his other commitments. For example, the Committee may have been almost inactive by 1976 but was revitalized in 1977 with the new members being Herbert Solomon and Persi W. Diaconis of Stanford University, Stephen M. Stigler (University of Wisconsin), and Judith M. Tanur (SUNY at Stony Brook).

One COPODODS outreach activity was the publication of “Appeal for Preservation of Archival Materials” in the December 1969 issue of *The American Statistician*. This was based on an effort by the Conference Board of Mathematical Sciences.

Federal Government Sub Committee

An interesting COPODODS approach in 1979 was establishment of a Federal Government Subcommittee, chaired by William C. Shelton. The reason was a concern about loss of significant historical documents relating to Federal statistical research and usage in the 20th Century.

At the urging of the Subcommittee, ASA President William H. Kruskal contacted the National Archivist in 1982 to outline ASA concerns. Robert M. Warner, Archivist of the United States, pledged his organization's cooperation with ASA on a mutual goal of "improving the selection of statistical records in the Federal Government for presentation."

Specific activities proposed for a joint Subcommittee-National Archives and Records Service meeting included:

1. Identification of important collections of Federal statistical records and assistance in their evaluation;
2. Development of techniques for the identification, appraisal, and disposition of the personal and official papers of significant individuals in Federal service;
3. Identification of record keeping problems in statistically-oriented agencies; and
4. Assistance in the development of valid statistical methodology for the appraisal and sampling of large-volume series of Federal records.

The Subcommittee adopted the basic COPODODS organizational approach by selecting members to pursue specific topics. At its January 1983 meeting, it was decided that William C. Shelton would work directly with the Office of Management and Budget on retention of Office of Statistical Policy Records, Marvin A. Schneiderman would check the status of records at the National Institutes of Health and the National Center for Health Statistics, David Rosenblatt would contact the Library of Congress about its role in preservation of individual statisticians records, and the ever-present Churchill Eisenhart, who was a National Bureau of Standards leader, was to make recommendations on what to do with records of the history of experiment design, quality control, and design and administration of inter-laboratory testing.

The last reference to the Subcommittee which has currently been found is for 1984. However, several significant activities were noted that year, including the fact that the professional papers of Julius Shiskin had been deposited in a presidential library.

ASA Archives - Round 1

There were two separate Twentieth Century efforts to establish a permanent archive for ASA materials. The first, short-lived effort involved the University of Texas (UT) at Austin.

In 1978, the curator of the UT History of Science Collection contacted the COPODODS Chairman, the ASA Executive Director, and approximately 20 other prominent ASA members proposing that an ASA archive be established at UT. That January the Board of Governors of the Mathematical Association of America (MAA) had approved a proposal to establish the Archives of American Mathematics at UT. Dr. Albert C. Lewis, who was a MAA member, was appointed as curator and was the individual contacting ASA members.

In 1980, the ASA Executive Director Fred C. Leone visited UT to meet with Dr. Lewis and discuss possible arrangements. The ASA Board of Directors voted to authorize the Executive Director to proceed with negotiations.

Arrangements seemed very favorable and, during 1981, some 14 boxes of H.O. Hartley materials were shipped from Duke University to UT. Plans were also nearly complete for shipping Harold Hotelling's papers from the University of North Carolina and Jerome Cornfield's materials had apparently been shipped.

The end of 1981 saw the abrupt dismissal of Dr. Lewis at UT and a stop to the ASA Archives plans. A *Science* article of February 25, 1983, described UT problems and the cancelled plans.

ASA Archives - Round 2

After the article about the failed UT archives efforts appeared, the Parks Library at Iowa State University (ISU) contacted ASA and proposed they be considered as the ASA archive site. ASA President R. L. Anderson and Churchill Eisenhart visited ISU to see the facility and discuss arrangements that ISU would make if they got the ASA collection.

Plans progressed deliberately but steadily for the archives at ISU. The 1984 ASA Board of Directors recommended a joint ASA-ISU Committee. A contract between ISU and ASA was signed by Fred C. Leone on May 29, 1984 and by Dean of Library Services Warren B. Kuhn on June 5, 1984. The contract specified a "Committee A" composed of ASA members, with the curator of the statistical collection as an ex-officio member. In 1985 the Executive Director was asked to pursue National Science Foundation funding to develop a plan for the ASA Archives Collection. ASA was successful in retrieving the Hartley and Cornfield papers from the University of Texas and those were among the earliest materials sent to ISU.

The ASA Boston Collection

One continuing ASA frustration has been that a huge collection of books and documents assembled by ASA and its members is not available to be added to the ASA/ISU Archives. Since ASA started as a Boston-based organization, many 19th Century textbooks and other references were given to the Boston Public Library. It has been documented that by 1901 about 5,000 documents had been transferred, cataloged as "ASA," and shelved. Later donations were made to the Boston Public Library, with an estimate of 15,000 total volumes, but it appears that most of the later items were dated but not labeled as ASA.

The Boston Public Library did not maintain a separate ASA collection and, in fact, sent many ASA materials to the New England Depository Library (NEDL). The NEDL facility is not believed to be climate controlled and holdings are apparently not well cared for.

Because the ASA materials originally given to the Boston Public Library are not readily usable (plus the concerns about condition) there have been several attempts over the years to obtain the full collection and transport it to ISU.

ASA Executive Director Fred C. Leone prepared a 1985 request for National Science Foundation funding to develop plans for the new ASA Archives, included the Boston materials. However, that proposal was not funded. In 1987, the Executive Director appointed Meyer Fishbein as the ASA Archivist. Meyer enlisted the assistance of John D. McKenzie, Jr., an ASA member from Boston with a strong interest in archival issues in determining more about the Boston Public Library holdings. At John's urging, Meyer made a 2-day trip to Boston in November 1988 to evaluate the former ASA materials. The Boston Public Library Supervisor of Research agreed to Meyer's visit but, when he arrived, Meyer found he would have needed to provide 2-days notice to examine any of the New England Depository Library holdings. Meyer examined the pre-1976 reference card catalog and found three large trays of cards in what the Library labeled as their 9000 series. Half of those items had been transferred to the Depository Library but Meyer was able to examine some of the books donated by ASA.

The Archives Committee meetings in 1989 and 1990 discussed alternatives for getting the New England Depository Library books. Also, in 1990, ASA made an application for Federal Assistance to the National Historical Publications and Research Commission. The first application goal was to survey and inventory all holdings in Alexandria, Virginia; Boston; and Iowa State. The second was to schedule disposition and consolidation of all appropriate materials. In 1991, ASA received a letter from the National Commission on Preservation and Access. That Commission was encouraging all societies to preserve what they called "unique brittle books." ASA used this new request to update their application to the National Historical Publications and Research Commission in 1991. ASA's application was turned down, even though (or perhaps, because) the American Mathematical Association had earlier received funding for a similar request.

In 1995, the Research Librarian at Iowa State wrote to the Assistant Director of the Boston Public Library requesting the ASA holdings. Boston responded that they were not interested in transferring any books to Iowa State. About the same time, John D. McKenzie, Jr., by then a Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials member, made his own inquiries about the ASA materials and got essentially the same answer.

The holdings and quality of the materials in Boston were revisited in 2006 when ASA Archives and Historical Materials Committee member John Paul Deley contacted several staff members at the Boston Public Library. John Paul was able to get a fairly complete accounting for the various books and other materials but it appears that little, if anything has been done to better consolidate or improve the cataloguing and conditioning of the ASA materials.

Committee on ASA Archives

The short lived (1984-1989) Committee on ASA Archives essentially served three interrelated roles. A major effort was to inventory and catalog historic materials located in the ASA office.

Because of that work, the Committee was the logical ASA contact with the Iowa State University Archives (Role 2) and was instrumental in determining what materials would be initially transferred to Iowa State.

The third effort was to coordinate Archives activities for the ASA Sesquicentennial meeting held in Washington, D.C. in 1989. Selected books and other historic documents were displayed during the meetings. In addition, chapters, sections, committees, and Federal agencies were invited to display materials or posters in the Archives room at the meetings. A specific feature was a "Statistics Week" exhibit by Federal statistical agencies at the Longworth House of Representatives Building foyer. The Committee also coordinated efforts to obtain proclamations by States and cities recognizing the ASA-150 efforts.

Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials

As mentioned earlier, Churchill Eisenhart had been serving as chair of both the COPODODS and the Committee on ASA Archives so it seemed logical that he should head up the new Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials. He was joined originally by H. A. David, Margo Anderson, and Meyer Fishbein, with Stanley Yates of the Iowa State University Library as an ex officio member and Fred C. Leone as a consultant.

Structure and operations of the new Committee have been affected by the new ASA Constitutions of 1991 and 1999. Membership on committees is now limited to six consecutive years, although reappointments to the committee might be considered after a hiatus. Thus, no member should be in a committee lead role for such an extended period of time as Churchill Eisenhart was of the history and archives efforts.

In the early 1990's, a number of people (such as key Library staff members at Iowa State University) served in Liaison, ex officio, or consultant roles. Under the 1999 Constitution, some individuals have assisted the Committee as consultants.

In the first few years of operations, the Committee spent considerable time debating strategies concerning the Boston Public Library holdings. As described earlier, no efforts have been successful. The Committee also helped the ASA office in answering questions about specific materials to send to Iowa State. An interesting question came to the 1998 Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials. In identifying materials to transfer to ISU or to discard it was found that nearly all original membership applications and renewals had been kept. They were not cataloged or sorted in any particular fashion. The Committee was asked whether they should be archived. A point was made that there might be interest in just few of the applications. (For instance, at that point in time there was likely interest in anything with an original signature by W. Edwards Deming.) There seemed to be little research value, particularly since renewals probably had no signatures and the ASA Office staff was encouraged to discard all of the old copies that had been found.

One common Committee issue was discussion of the need to hire a professional to design ASA records retention policies. No decisions for funding or action were ever approved. However, in 1995 the Committee received the answer to this issue. That was when Pat McClellan joined ASA as the Executive Secretary to the Executive Director. With Pat's background as an Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, she was used to detailed planning and having well defined and documented procedures. Pat created a draft ASA records retention manual based on one from another similar professional organization. The Committee reviewed the draft and procedures were implemented, with Pat taking the lead role in helping others in the ASA office identify which records needed to be retained, destroyed, or periodically sent to archives.

Suggestions for and conclusions about proper archives policy for ASA came from a number of directions. Often, providing a logical answer to a member's inquiry resulted in an unofficial de facto policy. One important input was provided by the 1997 Board of Directors Strategic Planning Subcommittee on Archives. A summary written by Ingram Olkin addressed confidentiality of ASA records. The basic tone was that (correspondence) files should remain closed as long as any of the individuals concerned were alive. However, the Subcommittee clarified that Minutes of the ASA Board meetings and all exhibits would be open for review. Also, Presidential or Executive Director correspondence would be open if the originating correspondence was open—such as a “letter to the editor.”

Once again, Pat McClellan was a key participant in creating a draft ASA Archive Policy and Guidelines document. That was drafted by 1999 and went through multiple levels of review by the Committee. The proposed policy for ASA archives was presented to the Board of Directors in August 2003 by Committee Chair Margo Anderson. The Board had some questions or concerns and the 2004 Committee, headed by Ray Waller, focused on revising and polishing the wording section by section. The final document was approved by the ASA Board of Directors at its December 2004 meeting.

Rather than continuing to pursue big issues such as the Boston Public Library holdings, which might lead only to frustration, Committees in the late 1990's focused on smaller, doable projects. One was to develop a complete listing of all ASA Fellows, by year. Pat McClellan had already done a fair amount of research on the existing ASA files in helping to answer specific inquiries. She was able to create a complete file that could be attached to the ASA Web site. The listing is now searchable by name or year, and is even more useful than originally envisioned.

A significant focus from 1998 to 2000 was a history writing effort in an effort to “not lose historic details” concerning ASA sub-organizations. The project was proposed to the ASA Board of Directors and approved. Promotional materials, including suggestions for compiling and writing chapter (section) (committee) histories and example histories, were prepared. Presentations were made at the 1999 and 2000 annual Council of Chapters, Council of Sections, and New Committee Chairs meetings. Considerable interest was generated during those meetings but apparently only a few histories have been written. In a few cases, history information is now available from ASA Sub-organization web pages. The original suggestions for compiling histories have been incorporated into the boiler plate materials on all chapter (section) (committee) web home pages.

Communication with the Iowa State University Library

The major efforts of the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials have focused on identifying and preserving ASA related documents and information at Iowa State. Specific funding has been provided to ISU on occasion for preparing more detailed inventories of the materials which have been sent. However, a major effort to develop modern finding aids that would be electronically available has not yet been implemented.

Occasionally, questions have been asked of the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials or the Iowa State Library which have helped to define the limits of holdings that are appropriate to the ISU archives. The Library has emphasized that they visualize truly being an archives of ASA related materials—not an archive to capture materials from any and all American statisticians.

Tania Zanish-Belcher in 1990 expressed the basic ISU policy of individual statisticians arranging for their personal papers to be preserved at their associated university or organization. Furthermore, Tania emphasized that ASA chapter historic files should be preserved in a local site. Her statement was “...we still prefer that local chapters find a local site; due to the potential local use (it is always good for archival collections to remain where they may be used), as well as our own space considerations.”

Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials Operations

In the early years of the new Millennium, the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials benefited from the revitalization of the ASA Committee on Committees (COC). The COC started a policy of well planned, but short, monthly teleconferences for its own business dealings and has encouraged other Committees to follow suit. Those teleconferences, coupled with hard work by the Committee Chair and the Committee ASA Liaison, resulted in more definitive actions.

In addition to using this approach to finalize the ASA Archives Policy and Guidelines document, the same technique was very successful during Ray Waller’s year as chair in 2004. That year’s Committee was able to resurrect interest in the Distinguished Lecture program (described later), including drafting a new 3-way partnership contract for Board approval.

Organization operating procedures are often shaped through answering questions that are received from members and others. That certainly has been the case for the ISU Library and the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials. Earlier mention was made of the ISU Library response concerning not accepting local chapter archives. Similarly, the ISU Library has been clear about maintaining the “ASA Archives” and not an archive of all statisticians—even if they happened to be ASA members.

The 2005 Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials dealt with an interesting request that successful nominations for ASA Fellowship be archived. The request was based on the fact

that family members or future researchers might be interested in the peer comments included in the nomination and seconding letters. The Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials felt that, if such a change in policy was to be implemented, “informed consent” to future nominators and seconding letter writers would be needed and archiving of each year’s nominations should be delayed at least 3 years (the life cycle of Committee on ASA Fellows membership). A draft proposal building in those suggested provisions was sent to the 2005 Committee on Fellows for consideration, after they concluded their 2005 selections. That Committee unanimously rejected the proposal and no request went to the Board of Directors.

Videos of Distinguished Statisticians

As mentioned earlier, a fourth committee was important to ASA archival effort. The concept was originally referred to as the ASA Project for the Filming of Distinguished Statisticians. Dr. Harry O. Posten, a professor at the University of Connecticut-Storrs (UConn), served as the Project Director from its inception in 1978 as an ASA *ad hoc* committee. Also vital to the success of the filming effort was the continued financial and professional support of Dr. David S. Salsburg of Pfizer Global Research & Development (Pfizer). The Project operated with a “National Committee” of about 20 scholars from academe, industry, and government, chaired by Dr. Posten, which suggested and ranked lists of prospective candidates to capture on film (and later video). While the National Committee provided valuable support, it was clear that the Project depended on the passion and continued efforts of Drs. Posten and Salsburg—just as much of the early work of the COPODODS depended on the leadership of Churchill Eisenhart.

Details are somewhat murky but the Project stopped being listed as an official committee of ASA. However, ASA continued to provide some financial support and served to handle video storage and distribution. Some 54 programs were recorded from 1979 to 2004. Most programs included both a lecture by the subject and a separate conversation about the person’s career and accomplishments. Following the death of Dr. Posten in 2001 and the retirement of Dr. Salsburg, Project activity considerably languished. Dr. Nitis Mukhopadhyay of UConn and Dr. Naitee Ting of Pfizer did step in as program leaders for their respective organizations and some recordings continued to be made at UConn in conjunction with a Pfizer sponsored colloquium series.

In addition to the lower level of interest and activity following Dr. Posten’s death there were concerns about the technology available for the video tapes which had been completed. All recent recordings were done as high quality video master and the original films had been converted to video masters. However, most potential users would now probably prefer DVD’s.

Dr. Dipak Dey, a member of the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials brought the concerns about continuation of the program and the proper media to be used to the 2004 Committee. Committee Chair, and former ASA Executive Director, Ray Waller was very familiar with the video project and led the efforts to work with UConn and Pfizer to prepare a contract to ensure the continuation of the program, including responsibility for ongoing funding. The ASA Board of Directors was kept informed of the efforts underway and a 3-way contract was drafted by December 2004. That contract renamed the program as “Videos of Distinguished Statisticians—A Joint Program of Pfizer, University of Connecticut-Storrs, and the ASA.” The

presentation videos are to be subtitled as “Colloquia of Distinguished Statisticians in Honor of Dr. David S. Salsburg” and the conversation videos as “Conversations with Distinguished Statisticians in Memory of Dr. Harry O. Posten.”

The 2005 Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials continued work on finalizing the contract and tackled the issue of upgrading the available media. The Committee originally proposed purchasing some hardware and having the video masters converted to DVD's in house. Instead, ASA Executive Director Bill Smith encouraged the Committee to contract the conversion in order to have a consistent product and to complete the project more quickly. Committee Liaison Megan Murphy obtained conversion bids and asked vendors to convert a portion of one master as a proof of concept. A vendor was selected and all existing video masters were converted to DVD masters by the end of 2005.

The ASA Office of Statistical Education will handle DVD copying, storage, and sales. Rick Peterson from that Office prepared two copies of each DVD so one set could be sent to the ASA/ISU archive and one set stored off site. Before embarking on a new publicity campaign, the current Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials effort is to create a distinctive design for the jewel case holding each DVD. In addition, each jewel case will have a Video Program explanation, a listing of all available DVD's, and a specific bio of that DVD subject.

The National Committee for the Video Program is being reconstituted and plans are in place to create new recordings about every 18 months.

The Future of ASA Archives

It is always impossible to clearly predict the future and to foresee what events and technologies will affect an activity such as archives. No one in 1967 could have predicted the electronic capabilities that are now available for researchers and other users of information. However, there are some specific challenges to the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials which can be described. There also are some possible opportunities for future enhancements that the Committee might consider.

New 2006 Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials member John Paul Deley concluded that ASA has done a commendable effort in identifying and preserving archival materials. However, little attention has been paid to making the archives more accessible and easy to use. In fact, it seemed that almost no one had been using the ASA/ISU Archives for research. With more thought, the Committee realized that ASA materials have been used for considerable research but that has been done in Alexandria, Virginia since the ASA Office has retained a full set of such common research tools as all Board of Directors minutes and publications. Many “researchers” have been Board of Directors members and ASA elected officers and it has been more convenient for them to review materials in Alexandria than at ISU.

Thus, the top priority for the Committee in the near future should be to improve the usability of the present archival collection. The basic approach is to develop more and improved finding aids. Some finding aids can be created or coordinated by the Committee. To be most helpful, it

is likely that additional work needs to be done on improving the description of many materials in the present collection. Complete and accurate records have been kept of the material which was sent to ISU, with most of those records available electronically. However, some contents descriptions may be too vague to provide good finding aid details. It may be necessary to fund part-time library student assistants at ISU to better catalog present holding and to improve the contents descriptions.

Another way to improve usability is to create special features and improved search links to information of relatively common interest. Once again, Pat McClellan has been a leader within ASA. She, and staff members at the National Opinion Research Center, created a site that links to all past ASA Presidential Papers and related materials. Pat has also drafted a prototype Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials web page that would link to the Presidential Papers, ASA Fellows information, etc. Additional materials may need to be converted into electronic formats. Much of the ASA Presidential Papers materials needed to be converted but there clearly was enough interest in such materials to make the effort worth while.

As the usability of the ASA/ISU archives is improved, ASA members should be kept informed of possible applications. A publicity campaign is planned for the newly designed Distinguished Statisticians DVD collection as soon as the final jewel case formats are ready. That publicity will include articles in Amstat News and “drop in” ads in multiple publications. A similar multiple publication approach would likely be best for publicizing the archives features. Some articles will describe the breadth of the holdings in the ASA/ISU Archives. Other articles might take a “what’s in it for me?” approach to illustrate how an individual can utilize the archives. The Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials should also publicize the numbers of users and types of analyses and research being conducted at the ASA/ISU archives—and with archival type materials at Alexandria, Virginia. (Because of privacy and intellectual property concerns for the members using the ASA archival materials it might necessary to broadly classify the types of uses being made and not provide many details on the specifics.)

Future Committees on ASA Archives and Historical Materials should strive to adopt new technologies that will be applicable to enhanced use of archival materials as they become feasible. For example, the Distinguished Statistician Video series is not intended to become a profit center for ASA (because of the concern that royalties would need to be paid to the subjects if undue profits were created). Instead, ASA wants to offer a product at a fair value to the whole professional community. ASA Executive Director Bill Smith has expressed his view that the DVD presentations should eventually be available in some type of on-line “streaming video” delivery system—when the technology and affordable user interfaces are commonly available.

One major challenge for the future is the effective handling of electronic records. As mentioned earlier, some historic materials have been converted into electronic media. Many current outputs such as Board of Directors minutes and supporting materials, listings of new fellows, and journals are already created in electronic formats. However, there are issues with determining what electronic materials to keep and how to differentiate between multiple versions of the same document. For instance, the 2003 and 2004 Committees on ASA Archives and Historical Materials essentially created a new version of the ASA Archives Policy and Guidelines each

month as they reviewed and “word smithed” it section by section. It is quite likely that a search of ASA files might turn up some of the interim draft versions when the important copy is the one presented to and approved by the ASA Board of Directors. It may be difficult to develop an electronic system which automatically “grabs” the correct files when multiple versions exist. The solution might be to develop a parallel to the original ASA paper records retention guidelines in which the responsible parties for a particular type of record do need to review files once a year for gleaning and transfer to archives.

A special approach to finding aids might be needed for ASA sub-organization records. Almost all applicable actions by the ASA Board of Directors are captured and archived. However, the records for some committees such as the Committee on Energy Statistics are not kept by the ASA but are the responsibility of organizations like the Energy Information Administration. If those records are open for review and use, finding aids could be created. Even within committees such as the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials most materials are not openly available. Anyone can electronically access an ASA committee web page and find its charge and basic committee information. However, minutes of meetings and most activities of the committee are only accessible to committee members. Future researchers preparing a more complete history of the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials may need special access to the records that already exist in the “Committee Members Only” electronic files.

In the future, ASA and the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials should revisit old ideas and approaches to archives. For instance, would it be beneficial to again try a COPODODS approach to encourage better planning of the final locations for the personal papers of statisticians? If such an approach is developed it might first try to locate the papers of each individual in the Distinguished Statisticians Video Series. At a minimum, the Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials should publish periodic articles encouraging individuals to give thought to plans for the eventual disposition of their papers.

One possible simple initiative for future Committees on ASA Archives and Historical Materials is to contact each new ASA President Elect to determine if the committee can assist that person in preparation for special initiatives during their year as President. That would provide a leg up if the person has some ideas for products such as the ASA Presidential Papers.

One old suggestion for the ASA/ISU archives was to periodically display some original archival materials at Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM). To display originals of letters, publications, photos, etc. which may be a hundred years old or so is a daunting logistic and security undertaking—which is probably one reason it has only been done for the Sesquicentennial observance. Is there now some way to create a “virtual archives” display of top quality copies of materials or perhaps a DVD which photographs and explains key items in the archives?

The present ASA/ISU archives is very strong as far as preserving copies of all ASA related journals and other publications. What should be the priority for statistics related books? Those might include rare books (such as many which must have been given the Boston Public Library) and others that may not be rare but are particularly topical. The issue of books raises many questions. Is the ISU Library equipped to include a special book collection as a feature of the

ASA/ISU Archives? Could ASA be successful in conducting a call for donations of sought after statistics books? How would transportation and other expenses be paid? What would happen to books donated but deemed to be duplicative or not of sufficient value for the archives?

In closing, it might be interesting to revisit one of the oldest goals for the ASA Archives—the materials at the Boston Public Library (BPL). While it may never be feasible to extract the materials from the BPL and add them to the collection at ISU there may be some new approaches that could salvage value from these virtually unused materials. For example, perhaps the present staff at BPL might be amenable to work with ASA to develop good quality finding aids. In carrying out the work to classify the materials and create the finding aids, the result might be some better cataloging and, hopefully, better care for the oldest materials. An even more optimistic idea would be to work with the BPL to set up special displays of ASA materials. ASA plans to have the 2014 Joint Statistical Meetings in Boston to celebrate the organization's Bicentennial. Perhaps the BPL could participate in that observance by hosting some type of open house at which the rarest of the ASA donated materials would be displayed. We can always dream but perhaps we can work to finally make the BPL dreams somewhat of a reality.

APPENDICES (Planned)

- A. Committee of Preservation of Documents of Distinguished Statisticians (COPODODS) members, by affiliation and year.
- B. Distinguished Statisticians documents pursued by COPODODS.
- C. Committee on ASA Archives members, by affiliation and year.
- D. Committee on ASA Archives and Historical Materials members, by affiliation and year.