

Minutes of the Meeting of the
ASOR Committee on Publications
April 16, 2000 • 7:30am–9:00am
Woodlawn Room • Wyndham Washington Hotel

Present: Al Leonard, Eric Cline, Nancy Lapp, Victor Matthews, James Weinstein, Peter Feinman, Billie Collins. Guest: John Camp. Absent: Gloria London, Brian Hesse, Piotr Michalowski, David Schloen, Ann Killebrew, Michele Daviau.

Leonard called the meeting to order at 7:35 am.

1. The minutes of the November 2000 meeting were approved unanimously.
2. Names were solicited from the Board for potential candidates for COP to replace Gary Herion who resigned, and to fill the Class of 2002. Names that were put forward to be given to Ann Killebrew (nominations subcommittee) as potential candidates were Pat McGovern, Tim Harrison, Jeff Zorn, Andy Vaughn, Liz Bloch-Smith, and Rachel Hallote.
3. Director of Publications Report. Collins reported on the status of the offices in Atlanta. A photocopy machine has been purchased for under \$10,000. Publications may be moving into larger offices in the building shortly.
4. Status and discussion of *World of the Bible*. Leonard and Collins provided an update on the decision of Bayard Presse to discontinue the magazine and of ASOR's plans to take over two of its issues to promote *NEA* (see attachment, point III). A lengthy discussion about *NEA* followed during which concern was expressed over the delays in getting the magazine out. The discussion also centered on the need/potential for making *NEA* more appealing to a lay audience. There was a consensus that it might be in the best interests of the magazine if a full-time editor were hired as early as possible in coordination with plans (outlined in attachment) for a marketing initiative to locate and keep new subscribers. It was agreed that a clear plan and definite goals for *NEA*'s future must be prepared for confirmation and adoption at the November meeting, if not sooner.
5. Publications Awards. Collins reported that ASOR's opportunity fund is now earning sufficient returns for Publications to announce the awards it had voted on a year or so ago. Implementation and timing were discussed. It was generally agreed that *NEA*'s needs should take priority, however. Thus the implementation of the awards will be postponed until such time as we are certain the funds are not needed for *NEA*-related purposes.
6. Budget. Collins provided account balances. Currently Publications has about \$100,000 in cash on hand. Nine months of *NEA* subscription income will have to be deferred this year. A preliminary projection for FY2001 was also handed out.
7. ASOR Publications' goals for 2001 and beyond. At the prompting of ASOR Treasurer Ingrid Wood, Publications was asked to provide a list of goals and priorities for the next year and beyond. These are outlined on the attached sheet. It was generally agreed that there is a need for an additional--commercial--component in ASOR's book program. This was discussed at some length. A small committee needs to be formed to determine where the needs and gaps are in books on archaeology, and authors need to be solicited on a royalty basis to write these books. Ideas were solicited.

8. Reduced SBL membership. The Committee voted unanimously to reciprocate on SBL's plan to offer reduced membership to ASOR members wishing to join SBL. It was decided that ASOR would offer \$10 off its membership to any SBL member wishing to join ASOR. This amount was settled on because to make the combined total of the two memberships the same regardless of which society one joined first.

9. Old Business. Leonard reported that negotiations with the BASOR Editor regarding a stipend (as discussed in the previous November's meeting) would be concluded at these meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50am.

Respectfully submitted,

Billie Jean Collins

ASOR Publications in 2001 and Following

Now that ASOR has taken over full responsibility for its publication program, it is time to define our goals as a publisher for the coming years. The following list outlines our plans and hopes for the future of ASOR Publications:

- I. Streamline production of ASOR journals. For 2001 we plan to “shop around” for more competitive pricing for both the composition and printing of *NEA* in particular. An alternative under discussion is to hire a designer fulltime to take over all of ASOR’s composition and typesetting needs (BASOR, JCS, NEA, AASOR, etc.), including special marketing and advertising needs.
- II. Formalize relationship between ASOR and its journal editors. If we are to become a true force in archaeological publishing, it is imperative that ASOR formalize its relationship with journal editors, providing fair and reasonable remuneration for services performed on behalf of ASOR. These arrangements must be spelled out clearly in letters of agreement.
- III. Build the circulation of *NEA*. We propose a five year plan to increase the subscription base of *NEA* by 10.5% (from 3800 to 4200; or 100 subscribers per year in years 2 through 5).
Strategy: In year one, when the subscription rate increases from \$45 to \$75 for institutions, we send a complementary (WB) issue on Qumran to those who resubscribe. This will minimize any loss in subscriptions due to the rate hike. The Ugarit issue, also courtesy WB and with full color, will keep these subscribers coming back for another year. Strategies for subsequent years will involve costs for mailing, direct mail postage, composition of direct mail pieces, and list acquisition. It will be imperative before proceeding with any such plan, that we have something to offer that will not only get the attention of potential subscribers but hold it and keep them coming back. In other words, *NEA* must become more popular. [Any plan for special marketing of *NEA* requires that it be on schedule.]
- IV. Books. Currently ASOR publishes only books that are submitted to it unsolicited. ASOR does not offer royalties to authors on books it publishes. ASOR’s book program should be allowed to grow through the solicitation of manuscripts on topics planned and organized in advance. The topics solicited should fulfill a serious need, and libraries and institutions should be targeted in the planning. Such manuscripts would be solicited on a royalty basis giving authors incentive to turn their manuscripts in quickly. Income earned on such titles could then support the publication of excavation reports, which is the main focus and contribution of ASOR’s book program.
- V. Membership. Another long-term goal is the building (or rebuilding) ASOR’s membership. ASOR has suffered attrition in recent years. Where have our members gone? What do we have to do to get them back? Outreach will be critical in trying to achieve this goal. ASOR lecture series would bring ASOR to the attention of the lay public.