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J. Gordon Daines III
Brigham Young University - Utah, gordon_daines@byu.edu

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Tilting at Windmills: Reflections on the Establishment of the *Journal of Western Archives*

J. Gordon Daines III

ABSTRACT

This article discusses how associations form professional identities and reflects on the establishment of the *Journal of Western Archives*. It highlights the ways in which the establishment of the journal is a manifestation of the development of a Western regional archival identity and underscores the role that individuals play in the creation of associational identities.

One of the most compelling vignettes in world literature, found in Miguel de Cervantes' classic novel Don Quijote, deals with the difficulties of establishing identity. In the novel, Don Quijote forges a new identity for himself as a valiant knight errant; he is accompanied by his neighbor Sancho Panza, whom he has made his faithful squire, as he goes on various adventures. In the incident referenced, Quijote and Panza have just come upon thirty or forty windmills. Quijote declares that the windmills are giants and that they must be vanquished before they can cause more misery and suffering. The following conversation, illustrative of the difficulty of forming a new identity, occurs.

> "What giants?" asked Sancho Panza. "The ones you can see over there," answered his master, "with the huge arms, some of which are very nearly two leagues long." "Now look, your grace," said Sancho, "what you see over there aren't giants, but windmills, and what seem to be arms are just their sails, that go around in the wind and turn the millstone." "Obviously," replied Don Quijote, "you don't know much about adventures. Those are giants—and if you're frightened,

> take yourself away from here and say your prayers, while I go charging into savage and unequal combat with them."[1]

Quijote, in reality a retired country gentleman named Alonzo Quijano, is clearly deeply invested in the new identity that he is creating for himself, while Sancho Panza is struggling to adapt to his new identity as a faithful squire. Panza is far more comfortable with his former identity as Quijano's neighbor. Over the course of the novel, Panza comes to accept the new identity that Quijano has created for him and recognize the benefits that this new identity has given him.

The process of identity formation is particularly interesting to me, as I have been deeply enmeshed, over the last two decades, in the process of transitioning from an identity of a student studying to enter medical school to the identity of a professional archivist. Identity is composed of various meanings that we and others attach to ourselves. These "meanings, or self-conceptions, are based on the social roles and group memberships a person holds (social identities) as well as the personal and character traits they display, and others attribute to them, based on their conduct (personal identities)."[2] In professional settings, identity development "often involves tailoring one's identity to a prototypic role identity."[3] This is a difficult task for archivists working in the United States, as our archival identity is currently in flux.

Rand Jimerson has argued that the "most striking feature of the American archival profession in recent years is its ongoing search for identity and for public acceptance as a socially significant profession."[4] The archival profession's concern with identity development is not unique. Other professions have also struggled to create cohesive professional identities that are seen as socially significant by the general public.[5] Jimerson identifies three broad manifestations of American archivists' search for professional identity as "developing internal standards for professional recognition; enhancing the public image of archives and archivists; and strengthening the research and theoretical foundations of the profession."[6]

1. Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quijote: A New Translation, Backgrounds and Contexts, Criticism/ Miguel de Cervantes*, trans. Burton Raffel; ed. Diana de Armas Wilson (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), 43–44.
2. Herminia Ibarra and Jennifer L. Petriglieri, "Identity Work and Play," *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 23, no. 1 (2010), 11.
3. Ibid., 21.
4. Randall C. Jimerson, ed., *American Archival Studies: Readings in Theory and Practice* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2000), 1.
5. Other professions struggling with professional identity include teachers, nurses, journalists, and information technology specialists. See, for example, Jon Nixon, "Professional Identity and the Restructuring of Higher Education," *Studies in Higher Education* 21, no. 1 (1996) 5–10; Mark Deuze, "What is Journalism?: Professional Identity and Ideology of Journalists Reconsidered," *Journalism* 6, no. 4 (2005): 442–464; May Solveig Fagermoen, "Professional Identity: Values Embedded in Meaningful Nursing Practice," *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 25, no. 3 (1997):434–441; and Geoff Walsham, "IT and Changing Professional Identity: Micro-Studies and Macro-Theory," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 49, no. 12 (1998): 1081–1089.
6. Jimerson, 1.

Since 1936 the Society of American Archivists (SAA) has taken a leading role in the establishment of archival identity through a variety of programs at the national level, including the establishment of guidelines for graduate education, advocacy efforts with the United States Congress, promotion of Archives Month, and the publication of the *American Archivist*. SAA has been very successful in promoting membership in their organization as an important component of American archival identity.

Unfortunately, a large number of archivists do not participate in SAA and do not benefit from the archival identity that SAA is helping create. Informal conversations with archival colleagues working in the West reveal why they have not joined SAA. They feel that the cost to join SAA is more than they can afford, and that the benefits offered by membership in the organization offer no real value to them. They are unable to participate in annual meetings or workshops because of the relatively high costs associated with traveling to the East Coast, which is where the bulk of the SAA meetings and workshops are held.[7] They also believe that the *American Archivist* does not publish very many articles that meet their specific needs and, if pushed on this issue, state that they can get access to the journal if they really need it. They also believe that it is difficult to become involved in the governance of SAA or influence the organization's activities.

These individuals have typically turned to regional archival associations in the process of formulating their archival identities. They do this because these archival organizations are relatively inexpensive to join and they see them as offering very tangible benefits. These benefits include annual meetings that they can attend and participate in, the opportunity to network with colleagues working in their region, the ability to attend and offer workshops geared to their specific needs, and the ability to influence the activities of the association. However, these regional archival associations have had a much more difficult time than SAA in establishing clear identities with which archivists and the public in the region can identify.

This search for identity has been particularly poignant in the American West, as archivists have faced numerous difficulties in creating their own regional identities. Among these difficulties are the challenge of vast geographic distances between their institutional repositories and the scarcity of archival practitioners. Archivists have also faced the challenge of discovering a unifying theme around which to coalesce. Some have chosen to view these difficulties as windmills, while others have chosen to view them as giants to be conquered. In the early 1970s, archivists in the Western United States began to come together around the concepts of archival continuing education, professional socialization, and advocacy. These concepts are important components of professional identity development. It has been argued that

7. While SAA does periodically hold meetings on the West Coast and a number of SAA workshops have been held in the West in recent years, the general perception remains among many western archivists that SAA is primarily an East Coast organization.

professionalism as a concept "is intrinsic to issues surrounding continuing professional development and staff training"[8] and that professional standing "relates to the way that information professionals can project their understanding and skills."[9] Professional socialization and development "is a social learning process that includes the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills that are required in a professional role and the development of new values, attitudes, and self-identity components."[10] Western regional archival associations play an important role in the socialization of archivists into the profession by providing networking and other opportunities for new archivists.

As archivists began to coalesce around common purposes, they began forming regional associations as a way to build professional networks, provide advocacy platforms, and provide continuing archival education specific to their members' needs. The Society of California Archivists, founded in 1971, was the first western regional association.[11] It was followed by the Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists in 1973,[12] the Northwest Archivists, Inc. in 1977,[13] and the Society of Colorado Archivists in 1979 (which became the Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists in 1992).[14] Each of these associations provides professional meetings, networking opportunities, newsletters, and other services in their specific geographic region.

These regional associations began to look for ways to strengthen their regional identity in the early part of the 21st century, and collaboration between the regional associations seemed like a good place to start. In early 2002, Steve Sturgeon, president of the Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists (CIMA), initiated discussions with the Society of California Archivists (SCA), the Northwest Archivists, Inc. (NWA), and the Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists (SRMA) about a possible joint regional meeting.[15] By mid 2003 plans were underway for a joint regional

8. Kerry M. Wilson and Eddie Halpin, "Convergence and Professional Identity in the Academic Library," *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 38 (2006), 79.

9. Gray Southon and Ross Todd, "Library and Information Professionals and Knowledge Management: Conceptions, Challenges, and Conflicts," *The Australian Library Journal* 50, no. 3 (2001), http://www.alia.org.au/publishing/alj/50.3/full.text/conceptions.challenges.html (accessed March 19, 2010).

10. Pamelia E. Brott and Lawrence T. Kajs, "Developing the Professional Identity of First-Year Teachers through a 'Working Alliance,'" http://alt-teachercert.org/working%20alliance.html (accessed March 19, 2010).

11. Society of California Archivists Web site, http://www.calarchivists.org/pubs/SCA_PYH.html (accessed February 19, 2010).

12. Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists, "Fact Sheet" (Salt Lake City, UT: Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists, 2002). Copy in the possession of the author.

13. Northwest Archivists, Inc. "Bylaws," Northwest Archivists, Inc., http://www.lib.washington.edu/nwa/documents/Bylaws_revised_5-06_000.pdf (accessed February 19, 2010).

14. Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists, "Welcome!" Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists, http://www.srmarchivists.org/index.php?q=content/welcome (accessed February 19, 2010).

15. Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists, Council "Newsletter, October 2002," http://cimarchivists.files.wordpress.com/2002/10/2002_oct.pdf (accessed February 19, 2010).

meeting to be held in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Western Roundup 2005 provided an opportunity for archivists from SCA, SRMA, NWA, and CIMA to meet and share their experiences as well as gain valuable ideas about how to do their work—particularly as related to the challenges that archivists face working in the western United States.[16]

It was in this milieu of regional collaboration and identity building that I first broached the concept of a journal for archivists working in the western United States. Providing a venue for archivists working in the region to publish scholarship dealing with issues of particular interest to them solidifies the professional foundation of the regional associations (which already offer continuing education, networking, and advocacy opportunities to their members). The journal also continues the trend toward inter-regional cooperation that began in the early 2000s. I had become interested in continuing education opportunities for archivists while a student at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington, under the direction of Randall Jimerson. Dr. Jimerson gave us a research assignment to utilize the archival literature to write a short paper on a key archival concept. This exercise introduced me to the *American Archivist*, *Archivaria*, and *Archival Issues*. Besides learning a lot about appraisal and documentation strategies, I also discovered that the majority of the articles in these journals described archivists working in the eastern United States and how they were applying archival principles to their work. I began to wonder why archivists from the western United States were so underrepresented in the archival literature. I also began to think about ways to get these archivists to participate more actively in the archival discourse community. I was also introduced to the concepts of identity development in Jimerson's classes and began to wonder if my personal identity as a Westerner had an impact on my archival identity. I also became aware of the existence of both national and regional archival associations and began to examine their different roles—particularly as they impacted my own identity as an archivist.

I didn't pursue these ideas then due to the simple fact that I was busy completing my archival education, working as an intern at the Oregon Historical Society, and looking for my first archival position. Unfortunately, I was not able to find an archival position right out of school, but I did manage to obtain a position as a records analyst at the Utah State Archives and Records Service in 2000. Working as a records analyst forced me to think seriously about my developing identity as an archivist and whether or not I should become a records manager. While working as a records analyst I was encouraged to join CIMA and my colleagues urged me to run for Council. In 2001, I was elected to CIMA Council and began active participation in this regional archival association. This proved to be a key point in the development of my identity as an archivist, as it provided numerous socialization opportunities for me. I was assigned to work on the continuing education programs of the CIMA and was

16. Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists, Council "CIMA News, Winter 2005," http://cimarchivists.files.wordpress.com/2005/10/2005_win.pdf Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists, Council "Newsletter, October 2002," (accessed February 19, 2010).

also assigned to a committee investigating a potential merger between CIMA and the Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists. It was while serving as a council member that I met John Murphy, then president of CIMA, and mentioned that I was interested in possibly establishing a journal for archivists working in the American West. He was enthusiastic about the idea and encouraged me to pursue the concept.

In late 2001, I became the University Archivist at Brigham Young University (BYU) and began to think about publication opportunities for archivists working in the western United States more seriously—mainly due to the fact that I was expected to publish in professional journals as a faculty member. During early 2002, I engaged my colleagues at Brigham Young University as well as members of the CIMA Council in discussions about why archivists in the western United States didn't publish as much as archivists in the eastern United States. I also began to consider the idea of a journal for Western archivists again.

In early 2002, I approached the CIMA Council about establishing a task force to investigate the idea of a journal for archivists working in the American West. In April 2002, the CIMA Council created the Journal Task Force and charged it with investigating the establishment of a journal that would deal with Western archival issues. The original task force was composed of three CIMA council members—myself, John Murphy (BYU), and Su Kim Chung (University of Nevada, Las Vegas). The CIMA task force quickly realized that we would need input from other regional associations as well and invited Steve Fisher to join the group as a representative from the Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists, Peter Blodgett to represent the Society of California Archivists, and Amy Rule to represent the Society of Southwest Archivists. The expanded task force met via teleconference in May 2002 and decided that the regional associations in the western United States needed to be contacted to gauge their interest in the project before creating a business plan. We also decided to start contacting other archival journals to begin gathering the information necessary to create a business plan. We established a deadline of September 1, 2002, to gather this information and re-assemble as a group.[17]

Over the course of the next several months, task force members contacted the Society of California Archivists, the Northwest Archivists Inc., the Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists, the Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists, and the Society of Southwest Archivists about whether they would be interested in entertaining a proposal to establish a Western archives journal. By mid-September enough information had been gathered to suggest that the majority of the Western regional associations would be interested in seeing a proposal to establish a new journal—the sole exception was the Society of Southwest Archivists. The extended task force decided that the original CIMA task force would put together a proposal and submit it to the various regional associations.

17. Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists Journal Task Force minutes, May 17, 2002. Copy in the possession of the author.

Recognizing that the successful establishment of a journal required the support and buy- in of archivists in the West, task force members again approached the governing bodies of SCA, NWA, CIMA, and SRMA about potential support for the journal in December 2002. Each of these associations expressed interest in further investigation of the feasibility of the journal and requested that copies of the documentation produced by the CIMA task force be sent to them for discussion by their governing boards.

In November 2002, John Murphy, Su Kim Chung, and I met via teleconference to discuss steps for creating a business plan. John Murphy was tasked with writing a mission statement for the new journal and with developing a marketing plan. Su Kim Chung was asked to draft an editorial policy and devise editorial procedures for the journal. I was charged with creating a financial plan for the journal. Each of these tasks needed to be completed by January 2003.[18]

In February 2003, I took the information and drafts created by the task force members and created *The Journal of Western Archives and Curatorial Studies: A Proposal*.[19] The proposal outlined the purpose of the journal, the rationale for creating a new journal, the new journal's editorial policy, and its financial plan. An important component of the proposal was the fact that the journal would cost $25 dollars for individuals and $50 dollars for institutions on a yearly basis. This meant that each regional association wishing to offer the journal to its members would need to raise dues between $15 and $20 dollars. In March 2003, the Journal Task Force presented the proposal to the governing body of the Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists, and we were encouraged to submit the proposal to each of the interested regional associations.

Initial response to the proposal was positive, and the task force was asked to give a presentation at the combined meeting of the Society of California Archivists and the Northwest Archivists Inc. in Sacramento, California. In April 2003, I gave a presentation entitled "Tilting the Windmill: The Creation of a Journal for Western Archivists and Curators" on the proposed new journal and discussed the proposal prepared by the CIMA task force.[20] Over the course of the next eight months the governing bodies of the interested regional associations considered the proposal and evaluated the willingness of their memberships to accept a dues increase in order to finance the journal. By December 2003, it became apparent that the costs associated with publishing a print journal were too great for the project to continue and the project was tabled by CIMA's governing body.

18. Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists Journal Task Force minutes, November 21, 2002. Copy in the possession of the author.

19. Conference of Inter-Mountain Journal Task Force. *The Journal of Western Archives and Curatorial Studies: A Proposal*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists, 2003). Copy in the possession of the author.

20. Program for the Joint Meeting of the Society of California Archivists and the Northwest Archivists Inc., 2003. Copy in the possession of the author.

I was deeply disappointed that the regional associations had decided not to support the *Journal of Western Archives and Curatorial Studies* but understood the financial realities that led to their decisions. I was encouraged that each regional association agreed that a need existed that should be filled and I was hopeful that the financial obstacles could be overcome in the future. I continued to think about a journal for Western archives and discussed the concept with my colleagues.

In March 2007, I attended De Lange Conference VI—Emerging Libraries and participated in several sessions that discussed the role of open-access journals in the sciences.[21] These sessions got me thinking about the possibility of establishing an open-access Western archives journal. In November 2007, I approached two of my Brigham Young University colleagues, Cory Nimer and John Murphy, about investigating the possibility of establishing an open-access journal to deal with Western archival issues. I recognized that open-access publishing offered the possibility of producing an archival journal within a reasonable cost framework. After several discussions, Murphy and Nimer agreed to form a project team with me to investigate the feasibility of open access for the proposed journal. In February 2008, we met with Jeff Belliston, scholarly communications librarian at Brigham Young University, about using the Open Journal Systems (OJS) that the library had recently acquired and were allowed to create a test journal in the OJS.[22] In the process of inputting information into the OJS test instance, we realized that we needed to create a better justification for the proposed journal and that we needed a business plan.

In order to create an adequate business plan, we looked for a template that could guide our activities. In early March 2008, we found one that met our needs and began to develop the *Journal of Western Archives* business plan. The template called for an executive summary, a situational analysis, a project history, a description of the proposed journal, a funding model, editorial policies, the planned uses of technology, a marketing plan, an organizational plan, a financial plan, an operating plan, and a growth plan.[23] Each member of the project team was assigned several sections of the business plan and a completion date in April 2008 was targeted. Three sections of the business plan were seen as particularly important by the project team: the justification for the journal, the editorial policy, and the funding/financial model.

Cory Nimer was assigned the task of determining how the proposed journal would relate to the existing archival literature and justifying the need for a new journal. In March 2008, he put together a survey to gauge the "reading and publishing

21. De Lange Conference VI—Emerging Libraries program, March 5–7, 2007. Copy in the possession of the author.

22. Jeffrey Belliston, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, John Murphy, and Cory Nimer, February 19, 2008. Copy in the possession of the author.

23. Cory Nimer, e-mail message to Gordon Daines and John Murphy, March 24, 2008. A copy of the template used to generate the business plan is available at: http://www.soros.org/openaccess/oajguides/oaj_supplement_0703.pdf (accessed 8 February 2010). Copy in the possession of the author.

habits of archivists and archives employees" to help the project team better understand what the exact needs of archivists working in the western United States were when it came to a journal.[24] He used the information from this survey to demonstrate that archivists in the American West were limited in their publication outlets and that they would welcome a journal tailored to their specific needs. The survey also indicated that archivists were publishing for two primary reasons: (1) to contribute to the profession and (2) to establish their professional credentials. It also revealed that archivists were very interested in participating in the open-access movement.[25] The survey demonstrated that the journal had the potential to become an important component of the identity of archivists working in the western United States by providing them with a publication venue tailored to their needs.

John Murphy was charged with developing an editorial policy for the proposed journal and drew on work that he had done with the CIMA Journal Task Force. He drafted a policy that focused on the particular needs of archivists in the West. The policy stated that the journal would focus on "important Western regional issues in archives and manuscripts repositories; unique archival developments in the Western United States; technological innovations and their effect on archival theory and practice; the history and development of the archival and curatorial professions in the American West; and collaborative efforts and projects between various cultural institutions."[26] The editorial policy showed that the journal aimed to strengthen regional identity by providing a platform for archivists to publish their work related to Western issues.

We spent a great deal of time discussing the proposed editorial policy, and we all felt strongly that the most important part of the policy was its focus on Western issues. The major purpose behind this focus on archives and the American West was our intent to provide a natural outlet through which archivists working in the West could publish. A careful analysis of publishing patterns in the major archival journals was prepared as part of the creation of the business plan, and this analysis revealed that, during the period between 2004 and 2009, "archival journals have not published articles by authors from the Inter-mountain West or most of the Plains states, and have been predominantly publishing articles by authors associated with institutions in the East."[27] We did not feel that this was due to deliberate bias, but that it was due to two facts: (1) anecdotal evidence that archivists in the West didn't feel like they had a place to publish and (2) a failure by these journals to solicit or encourage submission of content from archivists working in the American West, due to their

24. Cory Nimer, e-mail message to John Murphy and Gordon Daines, March 28, 2008. Copy in the possession of the author.

25. J. Gordon Daines III, Cory L. Nimer, and John M. Murphy, "*Journal of Western Archives* Business Plan," version 2.3 (Provo, UT: L. Tom Perry Special Collections, 2009), 7. Copy in the possession of the author.

26. Ibid., 20.

27. Ibid., 8.

focus on their own constituencies. The *Journal of Western Archives* was designed to fill a perceived gap in publishing opportunities for archivists working in the West and for the study of Western topics. We clearly articulated this purpose in the business plan by stating that the journal "will be focused on important regional issues and will have direct relevance for its target audience. It will focus on case studies and work-in-progress reports that Western archivists will be able to use in their archival work."[28] We felt that having a journal publishing on topics of concern to archivists working in the West would encourage them to publish more.

I was tasked with analyzing and planning the financial aspect of the journal. Getting the finances right was incredibly important because it was the expected financial commitment from the regional associations that had killed the original proposal. Utilizing an open-access platform provided several benefits. First, the journal would be delivered electronically, and therefore associated printing costs would be eliminated. Second, the technological costs for hosting the journal electronically were relatively small, and the Lee Library at BYU had indicated that it would absorb those costs for any journal that they decided to host. Finally, the automation of the submission and review processes eliminated the need for postage and associated costs. The only real costs that needed to be shared with the associations were those associated with copyediting. The project team investigated the costs of copyediting and decided that a yearly commitment of $1,000 dollars would be asked of each participating regional association.

By early April 2008, the business plan was complete and the project team felt ready to approach the administration of the Harold B. Lee Library about hosting the proposed journal. We needed to have preliminary approval from the library before approaching the university. I approached Randy Olsen, the University Librarian, and asked him if the library would be willing to host the journal. He indicated that the library was interested in potentially hosting the journal and informed me that he would need to take the journal's business plan to the university administration to see if they would allow the library to host the new journal. Olsen agreed to take the plan to the administration and let the project team know the university's decision. Simultaneously, I approached the presidents of the Society of California Archivists, the Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists, the Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists, and the Northwest Archivists, Inc. about supporting the journal, both financially and with manpower.[29]

In June 2008, the project team was delighted to learn that the Society of California Archivists had decided to support the journal financially and otherwise. Jane Rosario wrote "[t]he SCA Board voted and approved: ' . . . that the Society of California Archivists sponsor the *Journal of Western Archives* in the amount of $1,000

28. Daines, Nimer, and Murphy, 16.

29. Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Jane Rosario, April 23, 2008; Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Patty Rettig, April 23, 2008; Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Kristi Young, April 23, 2008; Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Terry Baxter, April 23, 2008. Copies in the possession of the author.

per year, for 2008, 2009, 2010, to get the Journal started, with the consideration to renew our sponsorship after that.'"[30] Two weeks later, Patty Rettig wrote the project team to "notify you that the membership of the Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists voted to support the Journal of Western Archives at our recent meeting. The membership had a lengthy discussion, but the end vote was to support the journal and to commit $1,000 a year for three years to it, provided it is in operation all those years."[31] In August, the project team received notification that the Conference of Inter -Mountain Archivists had also voted to support the journal.[32]

In July 2008, Randy Olsen notified the project team that the university administration had asked for more information on why Brigham Young University should host the proposed journal. The project team compiled a lengthy list of reasons and submitted them to Olsen to take to the university administration.[33] Later that month, Olsen notified the project team that the university administration had decided to postpone a decision for the time being. In October 2008, I approached Olsen to see if he had any news on a decision. He approached the university and then notified me that the university "would be willing to evaluate your proposal again next year after we have more experience actually managing journals through OJS [Open Journal Systems]."[34]

Upon receiving this discouraging news, I reconvened the project team and we decided to ask the regional associations if there were institutions in their areas that might be able to provide an open access platform for the journal. The regional associations were unable to find a suitable host and encouraged the project team to continue working with our administration.[35] After much consideration, we decided to re-approach the BYU administration about hosting the journal in summer 2009.

In June and July 2009, the project team spent considerable time revising the proposed journal's business plan to meet several concerns raised by the university administration. In late July 2009, I sent the proposal to Randy Olsen and asked him to take it to the university administration again.[36] He reported back two days later that "I have both bad and good news for you. Brent Webb [BYU associate academic vice-president] did not approve moving ahead with your new journal due to the current economic situation. . . . On the other hand, Brent is supportive of your new journal in

30. Jane Rosario, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, June 9, 2008. Copy in the possession of the author.

31. Patty Rettig, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, June 23, 2008. Copy in the possession of the author.

32. Karen Kearns, e-mail message to CIMA membership, August 7, 2008. Copy in the possession of the author.

33. Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Randy Olsen, July 15, 2008. Copy in the possession of the author.

34. Randy Olsen, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, October 13, 2008. Copy in the possession of the author.

35. Patty Rettig, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, March 11, 2009; Jane Rosario, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, November 19, 2008. Copies in the possession of the author.

36. Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Randy Olsen, July 21, 2009. Copy in the possession of the author.

concept and, when the budget situation improves, will likely approve moving forward at a future date. Please be prepared to resubmit your proposal when the financial outlook improves and is stable."[37]

After receiving this news, I met with the project team and we decided to consider other ways to launch the journal. The project team also authorized me to contact the regional associations and update them on the situation, which I did.[38] The regional associations again encouraged us to continue pursuing ways to launch the journal.

In September 2009, Cory Nimer and I attended a workshop at Utah State University that was cosponsored by the Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress) and learned that Utah State had access to a journal platform through their use of bepress' Digital Commons. After the workshop, Nimer approached a colleague at Utah State University to ask a few questions about bepress and was informed that Utah State might be interested in hosting the *Journal of Western Archives*. In October 2009, Nimer and I were invited to attend a meeting in Salt Lake City for a grant project that we were involved with. The lead investigator on the grant project was a colleague from Utah State University, Brad Cole. Nimer contacted Cole and asked if it would be possible to discuss the "possibility of it [the *Journal of Western Archives*] being hosted in USU's bepress installation."[39] Cole responded positively and agreed to discuss the possibility at the grant project team's meeting in Salt Lake City in early November. At the meeting, Cole informed us that he had talked to his administration and that they were indeed willing to host the *Journal of Western Archives*. He also informed us that no major changes would need to be made to the journal's business plan and that the organizational structure established by the project team was acceptable to the Utah State University administration.

Following this meeting, I reassembled the project team in Provo to talk about modifying the business plan to reflect the sponsorship of Utah State University and the new electronic journal platform and also to talk about modifying the organizational structure to include a permanent editorial board member appointed by Utah State University.[40] The project team used information on EdiKit, bepress' journal software platform, to rework the technology considerations section of the business plan.[41] I also contacted the presidents of the four regional associations interested in the journal and informed them that "Cory and I had a meeting with staff from Utah State University about hosting the *Journal of Western Archives* through

37. Randy Olsen, e-mail message to GD, July 23, 2009. Copy in the possession of the author.

38. Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Michael Frazier, Trevor Bond, Lucinda Glenn, Patty Rettig, et al., July 28, 2009. Copy in possession of the author.

39. Cory Nimer, e-mail message to Brad Cole, October 23, 2009. Copy in possession of the author.

40. A copy of the *Journal of Western Archives* Business Plan is available at http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/westernarchives/vol1/iss1/1/ under Related Files.

41. Trevor Alford, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, November 17, 2009. Copy in possession of the author.

their bepress installation and they have agreed to host the journal."[42] I also asked the presidents to reconfirm their associations' sponsorship of the journal and indicated that we were reworking the business plan. I quickly received confirmation from the regional associations that they were still committed to the journal and that they were pleased with the good news.[43] Upon receiving confirmation that the associations were still willing and able to sponsor the journal, I sent out another email asking the associations to identify editorial board members and peer reviewers.[44] A follow-up email was sent to the associations in late December asking that editorial board members be identified by December 22, 2009 and peer reviewers by January 15, 2010.[45]

By late November, the project team had completed revisions to the business plan and decided that we needed to travel to Utah State University to have a more detailed discussion about the hosting of the journal. We arranged to meet with Brad Cole and Heather Leary, Digital Commons coordinator at Utah State, in early December to finalize hosting arrangements with Utah State University. The meeting was very productive and informative for the project team members. Following the meeting, Heather Leary sent us the documentation that needed to be completed in order to set up the *Journal of Western Archives* with bepress.[46] The project team met and completed the documentation and authorized Nimer to begin working with Benny Nyikos, Utah State University's bepress liaison, to create a test instance of the journal. Nimer began working with him the day following our meeting in Logan, and a test instance of the journal was available later that afternoon.[47]

The meeting in Logan also reinforced to the team members the idea that we needed to find another way to manage the finances of the *Journal of Western Archives*, as Utah State University did not want to provide services other than that of the technological platform for the journal. I had begun contacting the various regional associations to see if one of them would be willing to manage the journal's finances in late November, and in late December received word that the Conference

42. Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Terry Baxter and Trevor Bond, November 17, 2009; Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Linda Meyer, November 17, 2009; Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Michael Frazier, November 17, 2009; Gordon Daines, e-mail message to, November 17, 2009. Copies in possession of the author.

43. Michael Frazier, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, November 17, 2009; Linda Meyer, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, November 19, 2009; Jane Rosario, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, November 18, 2009; Tiah Edmunson-Morton, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, November 19, 2009. Copies in possession of the author.

44. Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Michael Frazier, Laura O'Hara, and Linda Meyer, November 19, 2009. Copy in the possession of the author.

45. Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Tiah Edmunson-Morton, Linda Meyer, Michael Frazier, and Laura O'Hara, December 10, 2009. Copy in the possession of the author.

46. Heather Leary, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, December 9, 2009. Copy in possession of the author.

47. DC Support, e-mail message to Cory Nimer, December 10, 2009. Copy in the possession of the author.

of Inter-Mountain Archivists would be willing to manage the journal's finances.[48] I began working with Walter Jones, CIMA treasurer, to establish policies and procedures for managing the journal finances. Associations began sending in their financial contributions in February 2010.

During late December 2009 and early January 2010, the project team began testing the bepress instance of the *Journal of Western Archives*. We worked closely with Benny Nyikos in designing the look and feel of the site and in learning how to use the automated peer review process. By mid February, the project team was ready to finalize the automated text and preparing to switch over to a live site.[49]

By mid January 2010, each of the regional associations had identified their editorial board members, and the project team arranged for the first editorial board meeting to occur via teleconference in late January.[50] During the inaugural board meeting, editorial board members introduced themselves, discussed what their roles would be, examined the test Web site, and approved the editorial policy with minor modifications. They also identified a projected timeline to launch the journal site prior to the 2010 Western Roundup in Seattle, Washington. I informed the board members that I had begun the process of soliciting content for the inaugural issue and Cory Nimer informed them that he was making arrangements for training the editorial board on how to use bepress for sometime during the month of February.[51]

With the preparatory groundwork for launching the *Journal of Western Archives* completed, we turned our attention to soliciting content for the journal. We also began the process of handing the day-to-day operations of the journal over to the managing editor and the journal's editorial board. The editorial policy, approved unanimously by the editorial board at their inaugural meeting, states that "[t]he *Journal of Western Archives* will give archivists, manuscript curators, and graduate students in the American West a place to publish on topics of particular interest and relevance to them. The Journal will consider, for publication, research articles, case studies, work-in-progress articles, and book, exhibit, web, and film review essays that address: important Western regional issues in archives and manuscript repositories; unique archival developments in the Western United States; technological innovations and their effect on archival theory and practice; the history and development of the archival and curatorial professions in the American West; and

48. Michael Frazier, e-mail message to Gordon Daines, December 9, 2009. Copy in the possession of the author.

49. Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Cory Nimer and John Murphy, February 17, 2010. Copy in the possession of the author.

50. Gordon Daines, e-mail message to Dan Davis, D. Claudia Thompson, Tom Sommer, Tiah Edmunson-Morton, Cory Nimer, John Murphy, and Gordon Daines, January 13, 2010. Copy in the possession of the author.

51. John Murphy, e-mail message to Dan Davis, D. Claudia Thompson, Tom Sommer, Tiah Edmunson-Morton, David Lewis, Cory Nimer, John Murphy, and Gordon Daines, February 10, 2010. Copy in the possession of the author.

collaborative efforts and projects between various cultural institutions."[52] This statement clearly identifies the role that the *Journal of Western Archives* aims to fill. It will provide publication opportunities for archivists working in the Western United States and allow Western archival organizations and institutions "to improve archivists' engagement with professional reading."[53]

The *Journal of Western Archives* is a further manifestation of the development of a Western regional identity for archivists. It continues a process that began in the early 1970s with the formation of regional associations that offered continuing education, advocacy, and networking opportunities to their members. The journal will foster the continuing development of a unique regional identity for archivists working and living in the American West by promoting an improved discourse about archival work and providing another venue for the socialization of new archivists. It will promote the collaborative efforts between the four major Western regional archival associations that began with the 2005 Las Vegas Western Round-up, as each association has a major stake in the success of the journal. The fact that the journal is sponsored by the four major regional associations is significant. The potential for additional collaborative efforts between these associations will be enhanced by the interaction that representatives from each association will have while sitting on the editorial board of the journal. Because the journal will be able to respond directly to the needs of archivists in the Western United States, it will further strengthen the regional identity of those archivists. The *Journal of Western Archives* has tremendous potential and will improve the archival discourse in the American West. It will also strengthen the developing Western archival identity and further the professionalization of the archival profession in the United States.

On a personal note, the establishment of the *Journal of Western Archives* has further solidified my own identity as an archivist and given me hope that the archival profession can, and will, reach its full potential. As long as SAA and the regional archival associations continue to provide professional socialization opportunities for new archivists, the profession will thrive and grow. It is my hope that the *Journal of Western Archives* will play an important role in the continuing development of our profession.

52. John Murphy, e-mail message to Gordon Daines and Cory Nimer, February 10, 2010. Copy in the possession of the author.

53. Cory L. Nimer, "Reading and Publishing within the Archives Community: A Survey," *American Archivist* 72, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2009), 325.