

**History of Science Society Business Meeting**  
**12 November 2017, 7:45-8:45 am**  
**Toronto**

**Minutes**

**Officers attending:** Janet Browne (President), Bernie Lightman (Vice President), Floris Cohen (Editor), Gwen Kay (Treasurer), Luis Campos (Secretary), and Jay Malone (Executive Director)

Meeting called to order at 7:48 am.

**President's Welcome** (Janet Browne)

Janet noted that the Business meeting was a useful and important way for members to learn about Council and Society business. Janet praised the Toronto meeting, and thanked the local hosts and the program organizers who were terrific. She called the program "super-special" this year. She noted that Council had met three times this past year, including electronic meetings that involved Council members from 12 or 14 different locations connecting online. She was happy to announce a formal Respectful Behavior Policy (RBP), which had been discussed over a number of years in Council, and was now a reality. She thanked Sally Kohlstedt for very graciously agreeing to be the Society ombudsperson for the RBP for the next three years. She noted that the Society will be seeking to staff a committee with its own independent chair to support the new Respectful Behavior Policy, and is looking for volunteers.

Janet noted that Jay would be mentioning the new contractual arrangements with Notre Dame and Oklahoma. She welcomed Luis Campos as our new Secretary, Gwen Kay as our new Treasurer, and Jan Golinski as our incoming Vice President. She noted that it was lovely to have consistent turnover, and bright new people staffing important Society positions. She also mentioned the new editors for *Osiris*, Suman Seth and Patrick McCray, and the new Society Coordinator, Ryan Feigenbaum. And she acknowledged the great support in the ND office that Greg Macklem had offered over the years.

Janet mentioned that cost-free efforts to implement the Strategic Plan have been underway, and noted that we will need to think very seriously about raising money to support other goals. She would like members to think about the benefits and opportunities of membership, and would be grateful for feedback. She solicited volunteers, and concluded by thanking everyone for coming.

**Secretary's Report** (Luis Campos)

Approval of the Business Meeting Minutes from November 2016. (Copies available in paper and online at [www.hssonline.org/Meeting/](http://www.hssonline.org/Meeting/).)

⇒ Motion to approve the minutes, as amended. Seconded and approved.

**Executive Director's Report** (Jay Malone)

Jay thanked everyone for attending, and mentioned that we were starting at an odd time so as to finish by 8:45am for those interested in attending Stephen Weldon's THAT Camp, with a free lunch.

(“There’s no such thing, Jay!” Lynn Nyhart called out. Jay insisted, *au contraire*, that the camp existed, outlined some of its aspects, and thanked Stephen for his efforts.)

Jay reported that the Toronto meeting reached 720 registered participants, which compares well to the average of 690 attendees over the past nine years. He noted that the outlier meetings were Boston (2013, with 857) and Phoenix (2009, with 571). He expressed concern about members needing to cross the American border, and hoped there would be no difficulties, but to let him know if there were difficulties.

Jay noted that next year’s meeting in Seattle will be the last joint meeting with PSA for the foreseeable future (though we may try to meet with them again). He noted that joint meetings require an extraordinary amount of extra coordination, and said that Council requested a cutback on joint meetings, with the exception that we attempt to have as many co-located meetings with SHOT as possible. Jay hoped that we might be able to meet in 2020 with SHOT, which would come a year after the Utrecht meeting, our first meeting outside of North America, which is tentatively scheduled for August 1-5, 2019, a Thursday-Monday schedule that will allow for a more leisurely meeting with perhaps fewer concurrent sessions. These dates were chosen to avoid overlap with other meetings, but it was unfortunate that the meeting could not be closer in time to ISHPSSB. Jay described visits by members of CoMP, who reported back that the Utrecht meeting will take place in university space, which will save money that can be devoted to beer and food. As August is low season in Utrecht, he thinks hotel rates should be affordable.

Jay expressed his gratitude that the hotel’s elevators this year were quick and efficient, as compared to last year, and he thought that Irish dancing competition added an unexpected flavor to the conference.

Jay mentioned contract renegotiations were underway with Notre Dame (our initial five-year agreement had converted to year-to-year renewal). During its meeting at Notre Dame this summer, the Executive Committee met with the dean to begin negotiating a new five-year agreement, and found him very supportive about Notre Dame remaining the Society’s home. Jay reported that there were significant benefits of being a Notre Dame employee, and that he had found Ryan to be a terrific addition to the Society. He is particularly grateful for Ryan’s expertise in digital humanities, which will help with that part of the Strategic Plan. Ryan was a real gem, who had all the requisite skills and could also add an intellectual component to the meeting.

CoP has been focusing almost all its energy on search for new editor, to replace Floris who will be ending his editorship in June of 2019. The plan for the Society is to appoint an editor in June of 2018 so there will be a one-year overlap for the transition. The site visits will take place in the spring, and CoP will make a recommendation to the EC, which will then ask Council to vote on the nominee in June.

CoP also approved a Memorandum of Understanding with Aeon as “a way of bringing *Isis* to the masses.” The idea is to make history of science more accessible, by reworking pieces from *Isis*, *Osiris*, or even to commission pieces for the site. More public familiarity with the history of science is a personal goal for Jay, as some day his mother might understand what he does.

Jay expressed his gratitude for the work of many committees and volunteers. He mentioned that CoEE had some ideas for activities to focus on in Seattle. Jay also mentioned perhaps coordinating with National History Day, which is very big in Washington State, and that we can take whatever the topic is for this, in early September, and see how we can put a history of science spin on it. We may also think of ways to work with museums to bring historians who are experts in a given topic, into the museums, to use their distribution lists, invite teachers and students to come to the museum and try to engage people more

in history of science. Committee on Advocacy chair Marc Rothenberg is also looking for ways to synergize with CoEE, and looking to bring more especially to the K-12 population. Jay solicited nominations for CoHP for the Sarton Medal, continuing the simplified application process. He announced that Council had approved two new prizes: the Phil Pauly Prize and the Ron Rainger Prize. He encouraged donations to these prizes to get them fully endowed.

Discussion: John Krige proposed adding a donation button to the website.

### **Editor's Report** (Floris Cohen)

Floris expressed his gratitude to Bert Theunissen of the Descartes Center for his support. He noted that there were no delays in the *Isis* production schedule, due to excellent production control from UCP and the hard work of the managing editor, Desiree.

Jay made some comments in lieu of the Bibliographer's report. He mentioned that he was working with Hunter Heyck, chair of the department at the University of Oklahoma, to convert Stephen Weldon's position to tenure line so he is eligible for tenure. This required shifting money so OU is paying Weldon's salary in its entirety. The security offered to Stephen is well worth the slight increase in our commitment. Jay and Bernie visited OU in June, met with the provost and the various department chairs, and found them to be enthusiastic and supportive of the work Stephen is doing. We are also pleased with OU support, and are looking forward to a long-term relationship with them.

Discussion: Betty Smocovitis thanked Floris for the new look for *Isis*. Janet expressed her gratitude.

### **Treasurer's Report** (Gwen Kay)

Gwen described how recent transitions in the Executive Office meant that we didn't have as much prepared as we thought we would have had done, and there were some issues that emerged with the audit. Although we are in fine shape, as part of responding to the issues raised by the audit, we will be re-examining the role and function of the bookkeeper, so that we have more transparency, more monthly alignments, and so we will be appropriately prepared for the audit next year. We ended up with a lower draw from the endowment this year of 4.4% than we had budgeted, which is good since the draw was anticipated to be a bit high this year. Unexpected savings were realized in part from the absence of a Society Coordinator in July and August. EC and CoF have also been discussing recommendations for the endowment monies and possibly moving them somewhere else to save some money on the fees. Janet asked for approval of the Treasurer's Report, which was seconded and received general acclamation.

### **Committee Reports** (Synopsis by Jay Malone)

Jay also provided an update on development—an unanticipated bequest from Mark Levinson in the amount of \$42,000. Jay provided some biographical details and memories, and said that as a member of SHOT, Levinson “would approve of these co-located meetings we are trying to do.” Jay noted that it was EC's intention to use part of the money from the bequest to develop infrastructure for fundraising (software), to make it easy for people to put HSS in their will, or to make stock transfers that have been difficult in the past—“the goal is to make it easy to give us money.”

Jay expressed his gratitude to the hard work GECC is doing, and mentioned the heavily attended reception. He also renewed the call for mentors, saying “Our responsibility is to mentor these grad students.” Anyone should consider themselves qualified to be a mentor, and mentoring is not necessarily a lifelong commitment. It is about introducing mentees to other people, providing advice and perspective from outside of their programs.

Discussion: Lynn Nyhart reiterated Jay’s call for mentoring, and the importance of the Society being welcoming and supportive. She was quite concerned, however, that HSS@Work did not have anything on the program this year, and sees its role as vital for the future of the Society. Jay noted that the group was struggling a bit. Jessica Baron is co-chair, and Matt Shindell has volunteered to step forward. Jay asked the membership to support any requests for help that might emerge, as he sees lots of opportunities for caucus at the Seattle meeting in the stalwart examples of Carin Berkowitz and Audra Wolfe.

Angela mentioned that while Council is now more reflective of the membership in terms of international representation, it continues to be the case that numbers of underrepresented minorities in governance are quite low. The importance of a welcoming atmosphere for students of color is particularly important, and SHOT may provide a model. Territorial acknowledgment may be one step forward “to simply acknowledge that we are living in a white settler society.”

Jay mentioned that GECC has a diversity officer, and that we are trying to figure out how to move forward with that role. A sponsored roundtable tried to focus on a number of different types of diversity in HSS, including disability, race, GLBT, and institutional geography. But we need the support of senior members to help develop other approaches, such as a toolkit to help address issues in diversity. Audra thanked GECC for their work and for taking the lead, but was concerned that “we are effectively asking for those with least power to do this.” She was glad to hear that Council is going to work on this more clearly, and proposes appointing a diversity officer at the Society level. Jay noted that “Diversity is hard in part because we don’t have a good definition of what’s diverse. I think we are all pretty clear that we are not diverse now.” He will liaise with SHOT and ASEH, and see what other examples we can draw upon.

Audra commented on the mission statement of HSS@Work, which has as a notable absence an actual constituency of people who do the history of science but not from positions within the academy: “If we could make sure that we are actively positioning in a way to reach out to potential members, they might also increase the appeal.” Janet added that she thought the mission statement of the Society might also be re-examined at some point, despite the fact that “we all get into terrible tangles when we try to formulate what we do and why we love it.” Jay said we had just done this, and it was painful. “But pain goes away after a while.”

Janet publicly acknowledged the work of Michael Barany, Mary Mitchell, and Luis Campos who once again reviewed the bylaws of Society. She noted that we have reworked the bylaws, a long process that never ends, and thanked Michael in particular for being kind enough to point out things that were clarified and also some typos that have been presented to Council for corrections. Once 10 days have passed, these will be sent to Council for approval, and these bylaws corrections will be on the ballot for next spring. She encouraged everyone to make sure that they have renewed their memberships before April 1 so that they can vote on the typos in the bylaws.

## **New Business**

Rosanna Dent, a Mellon postdoctoral fellow in indigenous studies at McGill University, would like to make a proposal to the Society about the question of land acknowledgement as part of our annual meetings: “how we might engage with that as a Society, and maybe go beyond simply having a text that goes beyond acknowledging the land will be on for next meeting, to think of other ways of expanding that conversation and making resources available to society members—what that means, complications, implications of it, may be even some kind of engagement locally in Seattle which I think would fit quite nicely with other initiatives that the Earth and Environment Forum (EEF) is working on and thinking about.” Marissa Petrou, a student at NYU, is writing guidelines for museums that do territorial acknowledgement and extending that to thinking about conferences. And Elaine LaFay (UPenn) is also interested in working on this.

Janet thanked Rosanna, and said that we were remiss in letting that slide for this meeting, but we did make a later acknowledgment, and that it would be a smart thing for the Society to do so in the other places where it meets.

Jay asked Rosanna to get in touch with him to try to work something out, as he feels this might tie in with his ongoing concern that the meetings be sustainable. He shoulders a lot of guilt for all the carbon it took to bring everyone together, and wants to see if metrics can be put in place. He encouraged everyone to take the train to Seattle.

Janet reiterated her thanks to all the Council and committee members, the chairs of the committees, our current officers, and especially to Jay, “without whom nothing would get done.” She welcomed Bernie as the new President. Bernie, in turn, said he was looking forward to working with EC, and thanked Janet for the wonderful job she has done in her two years, and for the regal presence she has brought to our meetings and other public occasions.

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 am.

Minutes duly recorded by Luis Campos, Secretary

**In attendance**

Pnina Abir-Am  
Adam Apt  
Kevin Chang  
Karine Chemla  
Desiree Capel  
Rosanna Dent  
Daniel Goldstein  
Jan Golinski  
Pegy Kidwell  
Sally Kohlstedt  
Rich Kremer  
Daniel Liu  
Emmie Miller  
Lynn Nyhart

Brian Ogilvie  
Maria Elice B. Prestes  
Marsha Richmond  
Marc Rothenberg  
Peter Schimkat  
Karen Scholthof  
Jole Shackelford  
Betty Smocovitis  
Edith Sylla  
Phil Sloan  
Robin Scheffler  
Frank Stahnisch  
Bert Theunissen  
Liba Taub  
Audra Wolfe