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# the SAA Archaeological record

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Ruins from the Los Amarillos archaeological site, Quebrada de Humahuaca, Jujuy Province, Argentina. Courtesy Dr. Axel Nielsen.

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## EDITOR'S CORNER

John Kantner

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### Bibliometric Musings

Among the many contributions in this issue, Robert Rosenswig reports the results of bibliometric analyses of *American Antiquity* and *Latin American Antiquity* to not only show how the founding of the latter has impacted the content of the former, but also to discuss how the inequality of the two journals impacts the SAA membership. His article piqued my curiosity about the impact of articles from *The SAA Archaeological Record* (SAA-AR)

on the discipline, as measured by how often SAA-AR contributions are cited in professional journals. My brief investigation was much more rudimentary than the extensive analysis conducted by Robert Rosenswig, but the results are still intriguing.

For my simple analysis, I queried the ISI Web of Knowledge's Web of Science database (<http://isi4.newisiknowledge.com/>), which allows users to search for citations within journal articles. The queries I built allowed me to determine how many articles in dozens of archaeology-related journals cited contributions published both in the SAA-AR and in its predecessor, the *SAA Bulletin*. Journals queried ranged from *American Antiquity* to *Plains Anthropologist* to *Current Anthropology*, but the database only includes issues published since 1992.

A total of 71 journal articles published since 1992 cite articles in the SAA-AR. The frequency of citation has increased in recent years (Figure 1), a testament to the continually improving quality of the contributions submitted to the magazine. The majority of citations (19) are made in *American Antiquity*, with the *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *Antiquity*, and *Historical Archaeology* accounting for three citations each over the past decade.

What does this quick-and-dirty analysis mean? First, it shows that articles in the SAA-AR enjoy a deserving degree of respect in the discipline, with a number of journal authors judging the content to be meritorious of reference in their publications. Second, considering the applied nature of the SAA-AR content, the increasing citation rate shows the growing importance of this topic in archaeology. Finally, I hope this shows to potential contributors that the SAA-AR is read by the profession and its content taken seriously!

One final note that returns to Rosenswig's article on the marginal nature of *Latin American Antiquity*: contributors to *American Antiquity* cite SAA-AR articles nearly three times as frequently as they cite *Latin American Antiquity* articles! ☐

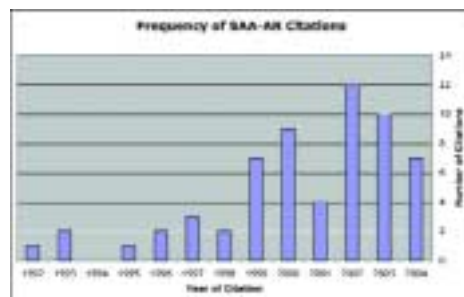


Figure 1: Citations to articles in *The SAA Archaeological Record* have grown over the past decade.

# A TALE OF TWO ANTIQUITIES

## EVOLVING EDITORIAL POLICIES OF THE SAA JOURNALS

**Robert M. Rosenswig**

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*American Antiquity* is one of the most frequently cited archaeological journals (Kohler 2002:3; 2004a). Eerkens (2003:29) observes:

As the flagship journal for archaeology in the Americas, *American Antiquity* (AA) represents the leading wave of method and theory in this hemisphere. Articles appearing in the journal often set the stage for later developments, serving to bring new ideas, methods, and data to a broad audience. In this respect, the journal plays a major role in structuring change in archaeological thought.

Why is it, then, that over the past decade, research focused almost exclusively on North America appears in this esteemed journal? The answer lies in the creation of *Latin American Antiquity* (LAA) and the ambiguity resulting from a professional organization with two journals that geographically divide its membership like a modern-day Treaty of Tordesillas.

In this article, I review the creation of LAA in 1990. Then, I document the geographic focus of articles published in AA before 1990, the focus of both AA and LAA after 1990, and the degree of cross-fertilization between the journals. Next, I outline the evolution of AA and LAA editorial policies and review their impact on Latin Americanists within the SAA. I end this article with two suggestions to spark further debate.

### **The Creation of *Latin American Antiquity***

In the first issue of LAA, the reason stated for separating the journals was to “relieve some of the pressure that *American Antiquity* has felt over the years” (Sabloff 1990:2). LAA was to be more inclusive of scholars living in Latin America so that the perception that the SAA was “really a society of North American archaeologists will begin to dissipate” (Sabloff 1990:2). Further, Sabloff (1990:2) did not want future editors of AA to “be accused—as I was when I was editor—of actually running a journal of Maya Studies!” (also see Pendergast 1994:191).

When the journals separated, there were “high hopes for the quality and interregional appeal of articles that will appear in *Latin American Antiquity*” (Rice 1990:3). The editorship of AA viewed the creation of LAA as an:

opportunity to publish the important regional research being reported in Spanish and English and to work closely with Latin American scholars. Consequently, *American Antiquity* will be able to expand discussion of issues and ideas of immediate relevance to academic, private, and government archaeologists [Reid and Wood 1990:5].

What a change from only three years earlier, when Wood (1987:449) had optimistically observed that: “Our journal is today a healthy, well-rounded one that serves, for the most part very well indeed, the current needs of the profession. If it does not, dissatisfied parties are encouraged to communicate with me.” Apparently, dissatisfied parties responded, as three years later, LAA was created. Each journal was to appeal to underrepresented constituencies of the SAA, with LAA reaching out to Latin American scholars and AA reaching out to CRM and government archaeologists.

**Bibliographic Analysis of AA and LAA**

In order to assess changes to AA and LAA, I employ two bibliographic analyses: content analysis and citation analysis. Bibliographic analyses are methods of library science employed to assess the social and academic context of a discipline as it is reflected in its publications (Rosenswig 1997). Below, a content analysis tracks the geographic focus of the articles published in the two journals (see Reid 1990; Eerkens 2003). My content analysis documents how the creation of LAA has affected the number of pages devoted to each region. A citation analysis also was undertaken to approximate the degree of cross-fertilization the journals have had on each other. To measure inter-journal fertilization, the number of references that authors publishing in one journal cite from the other was tabulated from 1990 to 2003.

*Geographic Focus of AA Before the 1990s*

The geographic foci of articles and reports published in AA were documented from the first volume through 2003 (Figure 1). I tabulated the number of pages devoted to each region using the geographical list that SAA uses on its membership forms. Methodological and theoretical articles were ascribed to the region of their case studies or placed in an “Other” category. If data from two continents were presented, or if a new methodology was presented with examples from more than one region, the number of pages was split between geographic areas. Following current editorial practices, articles from the north of Mexico were included in the North American category. The results are presented by editorial terms that extend actual terms by two issues into the next editor’s term (Table 1). By doing this, editors are lined up with complete calendar years and this accounts for articles accepted by one editor yet published during the following editor’s term. Data are presented by these slightly modified editorial terms and standardized by the total number of pages published during each editor’s tenure.

From these data, it is evident that AA has returned to the geographical emphases seen in the 1930s–1950s, with a progressive increase in the number of pages devoted to North American subjects since Watson’s editorial term in the mid-1980s (Figure 1). Generally, from Woodbury’s editorial term in the late 1950s through Dincauze’s term in the early 1980s, there were roughly equivalent numbers of pages devoted to North and Latin America in the pages of AA. The number of pages devoted to the “Other” category, which is higher from Wilmsen’s to Wood’s terms (i.e., 1971–1990), is because more experimental archaeology and statistics discussions without geographical content were published during those years. The 1970s and 1980s generally saw the most pages devoted to studies from outside of the Americas.

These data show that the alleged over-emphasis on the Maya in AA is not born out quantitatively. The number of pages treating the Maya (as part of those dealing with Latin America) actually drops signifi-

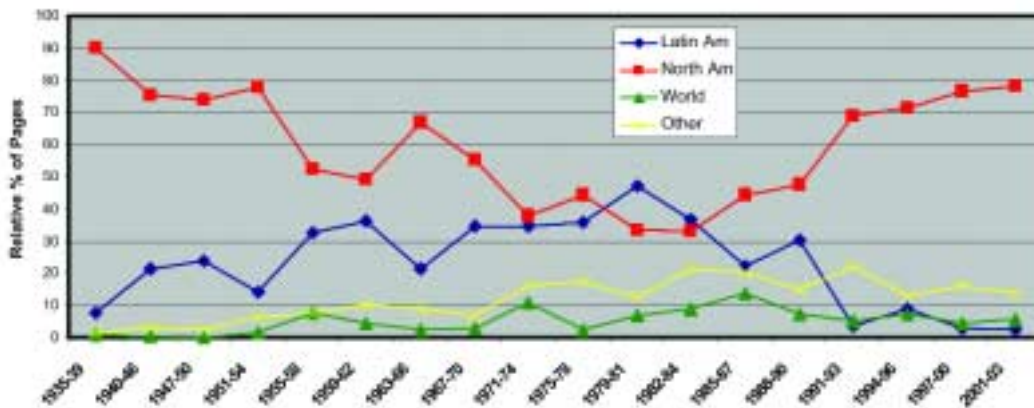


Figure 1: Geographic focus of articles published in AA (total number of pages from Table 1).

Table 1: The editors of *AA* and *LAA*, the years they served, and the total number of pages devoted to research published during their respective terms.

<i>American Antiquity</i>			Editorial Term Since Separation	<i>Latin American Antiquity</i>		
Editor	Years	Total Pages		Editor	Years	Total Pages
McKern	1935–39	880				
Byers	1940–46	1789				
Rouse	1947–50	713				
Jennings	1951–54	935				
Woodbury	1955–58	948				
Thompson	1959–62	1226				
Cambell	1963–66	1327				
Bell	1967–70	1096				
Wilmsen	1971–74	1530				
Hole	1975–78	1771				
Sabloff	1979–81	1660				
Dincauze	1982–84	1589				
Watson	1985–87	1841				
Wood	1988–90	1621				
Reid	1991–93	1541	1	Rice	1990–93	1291
Graves	1994–96	1650	2	Pendergast	1994–96	915
Goldstein	1997–00	2157	3	Feinman/ Manzanilla	1997–99	987
Kohler	2001–03	1813	4	Schreiber/Fournier	2000–02	981

cantly during Watson's and Wood's editorial terms in the late 1980s. Beginning at the end of the 1950s, the pages of *AA* contained more archaeology from around the world, and theoretical issues occupied increasing numbers of pages. The first article not concerned exclusively with the Americas was Robert Adams's (1956) paper comparing the evolution of early civilizations from both the New and Old Worlds. This paper marked a turning point in the journal, after which a broader geographic perspective was evident in the pages of *AA*.

Despite the strain provided by the diverse subject matter (or perhaps because of it), *AA* was a lively forum where archaeologists working in countries from around the world shared the results of their work. In 1974, Wilmsen noted a strain on *AA* publication space, dating the beginning of a flood of articles back more than a decade. This corresponds with Woodbury's and Thompson's editorial terms, and to the increased number of pages devoted to Latin American subjects (Figure 1). From 1979 through 1989, a special feature of *AA* was devoted to reviewing Old World archaeology with the hope of forging closer ties with archaeologists working in other areas of the world. The termination of these Old World review articles and the founding of *LAA* during the same year contributed to a marked geographic narrowing of the content of *AA* beginning in the early 1990s (Figure 1).

#### *Geographic Focus of AA and LAA After 1990*

Also documented in this study were the total number of pages published in *AA* and *LAA* after 1990 (Figure 2). My assumption was that if the two journals combined carried on the tradition of geographic coverage seen earlier in *AA*, then the number of pages published should be roughly equivalent for North and Latin America topics. To measure this, I employed the same criteria described above and recalculated the results from the last four editorial terms of each journal (Table 1). Because page counts from both journals were combined, the relative proportion of pages from North America is lower in Figure 2 than in Figure 1. A comparison of the figures shows that the decrease in pages published on Latin American topics in *AA* during the late 1980s was corrected with the creation of *LAA*. Therefore, in terms of pages of publication, the two parts of the Americas were equally represented by the *SAA* journals, as had been the case from the late 1950s through the early 1980s.

*Cross-Fertilization Between AA and LAA*

One question remains, however: do the two journals carry the same prestige? My assumption is that if the two journals are perceived as possessing equivalent prestige, then the number of citations to the sister journal should be roughly equivalent. To evaluate this, I tabulated the number of times authors cite articles from the journal in which they are publishing and how many times they cite articles from the sister journal (Table 2). The citation to AA articles with Latin American subjects in 1990 and 1991 by LAA authors were not counted, as they were submitted prior to 1990 and were simply working their way through the AA system. Furthermore, citations were not counted when authors cited themselves in the other journal. Citations to book reviews and comments were included; however, citations were only tabulated from articles and reports. As more papers were published in AA than in LAA, and total pages published changed over time, citation counts were standardized by multiplying the counts by 100 and dividing the result by the total number of journal pages for that term (Figures 3 and 4).

The data show that authors cite articles from the journal in which they are publishing considerably more often than they do their sister journal. It is also evident from Figure 3 that authors publishing in AA tend to cite papers in that journal more often than authors publishing in LAA cite papers in LAA—and that the discrepancy has increased since the late 1990s. One explanation for the relatively higher citation rate of AA authors to AA articles might be that they view this journal as more prestigious than LAA authors view LAA. This citation analysis also shows that authors publishing in LAA are citing AA papers more than the reverse (Figure 4). Initially, AA was included with SAA membership and LAA was optional, so part of this pattern may be because Latin Americanists received both journals while few North Americanists received LAA. However, a total of only seven citations have ever been made from AA authors to LAA when self-citations are eliminated.

In sum, these bibliometric results suggest that the creation of LAA has had the effect of equalizing the number of pages published on Latin America after having decreased during the late 1980s. However, there is a one-sided rate of citation between AA and LAA that suggests that AA authors are not reading, or at least not citing, LAA articles, whereas the reverse is not the case. This lends quantitative support to the impression that AA is read by a broader audience whereas LAA is of more regional interest. If this is the case, could it be at least partly due to the editorial policies of the two journals?

**Ambiguous Editorial Policies**

The AA Notice to Authors in 1990 stated: “*American Antiquity* publishes papers on the archaeology of the Western Hemisphere and closely related subjects.” The first LAA “Notice to Authors” stated that it “publishes papers on the archaeology, prehistory, and ethnohistory of Latin America...” Did this mean that the work done in Latin America with relevance to *all* archaeologists should be published in AA and work relevant only to *other* Latin Americanists published in LAA? This appears to have been the case:

Table 2: Counts of AA and LAA self- and cross-citation since 1990 used to create Figures 3 and 4.

Editorial Term	AA to itself	AA to LAA	LAA to itself	LAA to AA
1	35	0	26	3
2	79	2	38	3
3	216	1	38	22
4	236	4	75	25

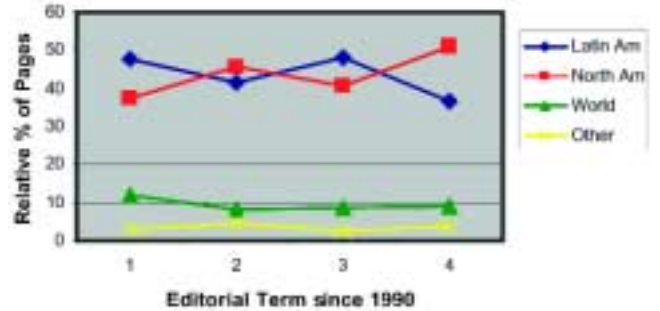


Figure 2: Total pages of research published by the SAA since 1990, recorded as the last four editorial terms of both journals (total number of pages from Table 1).

[A]uthors of papers on Latin American regional topics submitted to *American Antiquity* are referred to *Latin American Antiquity*...Papers on archaeological theory and method or on broadly relevant themes, issues, and problems continue to be actively sought for publication in *American Antiquity* regardless of whether they use Latin American examples and data (Reid 1990:449).

Editorial ambiguity was indeed a problem, and when Feinman and Manzanilla (1996:99) took over co-editorship, they clarified:

If ever the notion has been held that *Latin American Antiquity* was strictly a journal for regional manuscripts, with anything of broader relevance destined for *American Antiquity*, we wish to dispel it. On the basis of numerous professional conversations, it is clear to us that the former practice, in which select Latin American archaeology articles in English appeared with regularity in *American Antiquity*, precipitated unnecessary confusion and a residue of bad feeling.

In the pages of AA, a total of 20 articles presenting Latin American data have been published since 1992. Feinman and Manzanilla's comments cited above seem justified, because from 1992 through 1996, 11 articles by well-known Latin Americanists were published in AA. A different pattern is evident since 1997, when six of the nine papers with Latin American data deal with Paleoindian studies and the peopling of the New World.

Ambiguity on the part of AA editorial policy persists to this day, as the current Notice to Authors states:

*American Antiquity* publishes original papers on the archaeology of the New World and on archaeological method, theory, and practice worldwide. Authors of papers on Latin American topics are encouraged to submit their work to *Latin American Antiquity*. Papers on Latin American archaeology addressing broad methodological, theoretical, or comparative issues may be accepted by either journal after consulting with the editors.

This means that the two editorial policies are contradictory as long as AA claims to publish "papers on the archaeology of the New World." There is not necessarily anything wrong with LAA being a regional journal, but it does have implications for the role of the Latin American constituency of the SAA. If it is the case that AA is an international journal and LAA is a regional journal, then will one receive less credit (for promotion, etc.) for publishing in LAA than a colleague who works in North America would for publishing in AA? The official answer may be "no," but that is not the word on the academic streets.

Over the past decade or two, there has been a proliferation in the number of archaeological journals. Many of them are international in scope and provide all archaeologists, including those working in Latin America, with new publishing outlets. LAA, for its part, has been successful in increasing the total number of pages of Latin American archaeology published by the SAA (Figure 2). In addition, *Ancient Mesoamerica* began publication in 1990, providing a counterpart for *Andean Past* as another regional venue for some of the Latin American scholars. As a result, there are more journals than ever before in which Latin American archaeologists can publish. However, does the current *de facto* editorial policy mean that Latin Americanists must look beyond

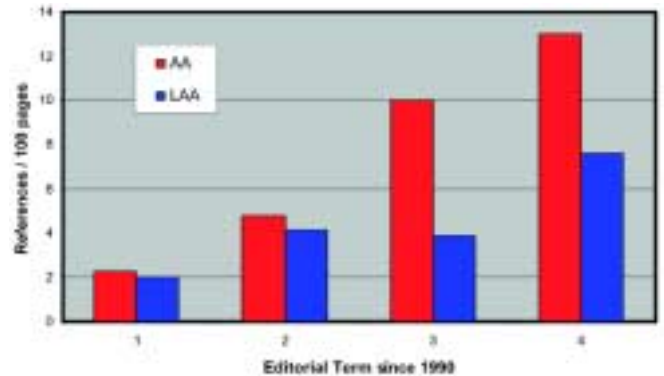


Figure 3: Citations in AA and LAA of articles published in the same journal (total pages from Table 1 and citation counts from Table 2).

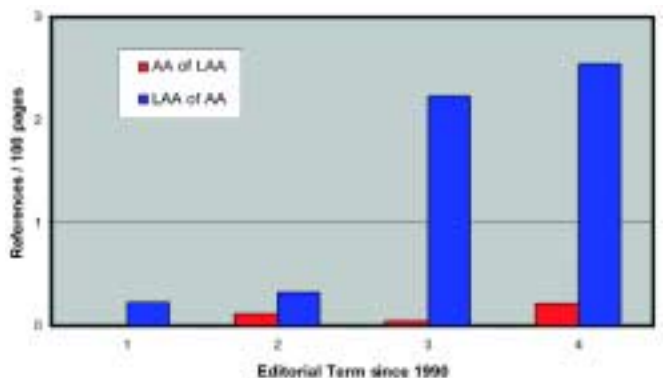


Figure 4: Citation in AA and LAA of articles published in the other journal (total pages from Table 1 and citation counts from Table 2).

their SAA publications to have their results reach an audience as broad as that of their North American colleagues?

### The Role of Latin Americanists in the SAA

Over the years, I have discussed the relationship between archaeologists working in North and Latin America with many (primarily Latin Americanist) colleagues. However, it was a recent Editor's Corner (Kohler 2004b) that prompted me to wade through the journals and assemble some quantitative substance to my impressions. In that editorial, Kohler thanked and listed the 50 people who had reviewed three or more manuscripts for *AA* over the past three years. This was certainly an appropriate gesture. However, he then states: "That these reviewers, and not others, are on this list is partly a simple artifact of their having expertise in one or more areas in which papers happen to have been submitted. But I suspect as well that it is a tribute to their centrality in our discipline" (Kohler 2004b:5). This last sentence made me wonder how "our discipline" was being defined.

While the people on Kohler's list are certainly prominent archaeologists, it is conspicuous that prominent Latin American scholars were not included on a list of people supposedly central to *our discipline* in a journal that purports to publish on the "archaeology of the New World." It is true that a few people on the list do work in Latin America, but it was presumably not in relation to that work that they had reviewed articles for *AA*. If "our discipline" is interpreted to mean Americanist archaeology (or at least the membership of the SAA), it is significant that the segment of "our discipline" working in Latin America was not included. If "our discipline" refers to archaeology practiced by those *living* in the New World, then the people excluded from this list increases significantly. First, there are all of the archaeologists employed in Latin America. Second, there are the scholars trained and/or employed in North America whose research is conducted outside of the Americas; approximately 65% of archaeology Ph.D. dissertations written at North American universities treated Latin America and the Old World, whereas, by late 1990s, only 30% dealt with North American topics (Eerkens 2003: Figure 3).

Another telling issue comes from *AA* Volume 68 Issue 2 that was distributed for free at the World Archaeological Congress. In his introduction, Kohler (2003:211) states: "To quote from our back pages, *American Antiquity's* goal is to publish original papers on the archaeology of the New World, with an emphasis on North America, and on the archaeological method, theory, and practice worldwide." This actually might be a revealing misquotation, as the clause "with an emphasis on North America" was added to what actually appears on the back page of *AA*. He continues:

The present issue, with articles bracketing the entire period of occupation of North America predating European contact, is a fair representation of our usual contents. Papers drawing on data from the Old World are welcome as well—especially when they tackle themes that resonate with North Americanists... [Kohler 2003:211].

That Kohler specifies North America and North Americanists (four times in three sentences) instead of the Americas in general is significant. This is especially true in the context of providing *the* voice of the SAA for an international audience. It is not my intention to single out Kohler for criticism in what I can only imagine is the thankless task of editing a major journal. In fact, I only use these quotations from his Editor's Corner as I believe them to be indicative of some generally held attitudes of archaeologists working in the U.S. and Canada.

### Conclusion

The current *AA* editorial policy states that it publishes "papers on the archaeology of the New World." However, we have seen that this is not actually the case. First, this inclusive geographic statement is immediately qualified in *AA's* own Notice to Authors by declaring the majority of Latin American subjects as inappropriate for publication in the journal. Second, an inclusive publication program contradicts the editorial agreement between the two journals that began in 1996. Third, and most importantly, this editorial policy is not consistent with what has actually been published in the pages of *AA* (Figure 1).

The role of Latin Americanists within the SAA is an important issue. SAA membership is changing, with more CRM and government archaeologist members as employment in those areas has outpaced academic positions. Responding to the needs of this segment of the SAA membership was part of the post-1990 objective of AA (see Goldstein 2000). This diversification of SAA membership is certainly a positive development. However, as all CRM and government jobs deal exclusively with the archaeology of the U.S. and Canada, this has changed the proportion of archaeologists whose research is in these two countries compared to earlier generations of archaeologists. I have written this paper to explicitly grapple with the reconfiguration of SAA membership and hopefully open debate. To that end, I conclude this commentary with two proposals, the first presented (mostly) tongue in cheek but the second for serious consideration.

If Latin American and Caribbean nations are removed from the list of countries that constitute the New World, we are left with Canada and the U.S. Following the same logic used to designate Latin America (and thus LAA), the colonial history of Canada and the U.S. would designate the region in question as “Anglo America.” Would it then not be appropriate to change the name of AA to *Anglo American Antiquity*? Fairer, but perhaps less financially viable, AA could return to its pre-1990 role of publishing on the archaeology of all the Americas, and *Anglo American Antiquity* could be a third SAA journal that publishes articles of regional interest to North Americanists while LAA publishes articles of regional interest to Latin Americanists.

My second suggestion is to amend the AA editorial policy and bring it into line with that of LAA. AA is not publishing articles from Latin America and its Notice to Authors should explicitly say so. A false claim of unity does not contribute to a productive discussion of the evolving nature of the SAA and its journals.


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📧 ROENSWIG, continued on page 38

is similar to the Rules contained in the UNESCO Convention. This Convention, though not without its flaws, is much more carefully tailored to suit the needs of the protection of underwater cultural resources. Regardless of any action or inaction on the part of Congress, if entered into, UNCLOS becomes the “supreme law of the land” and can be used as some authority to further protect underwater cultural resources.

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