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July 5, 2012

*Sent by post to the addressee and by  
e-mail attachment to those copied*

Bill Block  
Executive Director, Social Science History Association  
Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research  
391 Pine Tree Road  
Ithaca, NY 14850

Dear Bill,

I have received your letter of notice dated June 22, 2012. I am a bit confused by the wording of your first sentence, in which you state that the SSHA "wishes to discontinue its participation with Duke University Press in publishing its journal *Social Science History*." This wording does not seem to match up precisely with the language of our publishing agreement, which states that the agreement "shall be automatically renewed each year until one of the parties provides notice to the other that it wishes to discontinue its participation in the journal."

I certainly regret receiving this notice, because it is my sense that the publication of *Social Science History* has proceeded very well over the nearly thirty years that the Press and SSHA have been partnered through an Editing and Publishing Agreement that had just been put into place at the time I came to the Press as its journals manager in 1984. In fact, I was the one who worked closely at that time with Howard Allen to create a smooth transition of the journal to Duke. And I was the one who worked closely with Erik Austin to draw up a new Editing and Publishing Arrangement in 1995, after the Press had provided an infusion of cash through a new set of journal arrangements that enabled the SSHA to survive a serious financial crisis. I would love to work closely with you to find a way to keep this editing-and-publishing partnership going, if you can explain to me just what is pushing SSHA to the point of sending a notice that it wishes to discontinue its participation in this fine (and to my mind stronger-than-ever) journal.

I know that you owe me no explanations. I am quite willing to accept the timely notice you have provided for termination of the current agreement, whether you provide explanations or not, and whether or not you are willing to spend time with us discussing how the partnership might be continued in some form that is mutually satisfactory. But I do want to make sure you know that our understanding of your letter is that SSHA will fully discontinue its participation

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in *Social Science History* at the end of the 2013 volume, and that Duke University Press will assume full ownership of and responsibility for the journal as of the 2014 volume (as the one remaining party, out of the two parties that signed the Editing and Publishing Agreement).

Is this also the way you understand the situation?

If so, we at Duke University Press will begin soon to seek out a new sponsoring arrangement for the journal. We do hope that, even with the discontinuation of SSHA's sponsorship, Anne McCants will agree to fill out her current five-year editorial term, which runs through June 2017; but we know that we will need to check that out directly with her, and that we will need to seek out a new editor as well as a new editorial sponsor if she prefers not to continue her editorship under these circumstances.

If not, I suggest that we set up a telephone conversation that includes you, Rob Dilworth, and me. I do want this separation to be an amicable one in every way, and I think for that to happen we need to ensure that the two parties to the agreement have (or develop, if need be) a set of shared understandings about how the discontinuation of participation in the journal by SSHA will play out as the agreement comes to a conclusion.

Sincerely,



Stephen A. Cohn  
Director

c: Kate Hendricks, Deputy University Counsel  
Camden R. Webb, Esq.  
Rob Dilworth  
SSHA Executive Committee