

WSA Dissolution Question, 21 February 2021

For some time, the officers and board of the Whedon Studies Association have been discussing the possible dissolution of the organization, questioning whether an association named for Joss Whedon is appropriate in the contemporary landscape. (The editors of the *Slayage* journal, which was started before the WSA, have been discussing a possible revision of the journal's purview, as the recent Call for Papers for a School of Whedon issue indicates.) In 2020, some officers and board members wished to dissolve the organization without a vote of the membership; others wished to have the decision made by a vote of the membership, and to have that vote made during a time of less worldwide stress. Three officers resigned in 2020; President Lorna Jowett and Vice-President/President-Elect Kristopher Woofter (in collaboration with Cofounder, Board Member, and Treasurer Tanya Cochran) gave particular emphasis to anti-racism in their joint letter of resignation. It was determined that the membership needed to decide on any proposal to dissolve the organization, and the officers and board forebore to make such a proposal, choosing to wait for less oppressively difficult times to ask members to confront a painful choice.

The world is still in serious stress, but with a bit more hope in sight. Recent reports about Joss Whedon's conduct have also added significant issues to consideration of the questions: Should the WSA be dissolved? Should it be re-envisioned and re-named to indicate a different focus?

The officers and board wish to provide further information relating to their earlier deliberations (text and PDF versions of relevant communications are provided below, including Jowett and Woofter's resignation letter and Mary Ellen Iatropoulos and Samira Nadkarni's open letter to the WSA). A week subsequently, a questionnaire will be sent to survey views about the organization's fate.

Thank you for your serious consideration of these matters, and thank you for your years of thoughtful engagement.

WSA Officers and Board Members