

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Documentary Editing: Journal of the Association
for Documentary Editing (1979-2011)

Documentary Editing, Association for


2010

Life Service Award Presented to Rich Leffler

John P. Kaminski

University of Wisconsin-Madison, jpkamins@wisc.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/docedit>

 Part of the [Digital Humanities Commons](#), [Other Arts and Humanities Commons](#), [Reading and Language Commons](#), and the [Technical and Professional Writing Commons](#)

Kaminski, John P., "Life Service Award Presented to Rich Leffler" (2010). *Documentary Editing: Journal of the Association for Documentary Editing (1979-2011)*. Paper 46.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/docedit/46>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Documentary Editing, Association for at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Documentary Editing: Journal of the Association for Documentary Editing (1979-2011) by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

Life Service Award Presented to Rich Leffler

John P. Kaminski



I have known Rich Leffler for more than forty years. We both came to the University of Wisconsin in 1967 as graduate students in the Department of History. He came from New York and I from Chicago. Rich started to work informally with the Ratification project in 1969–70, when he went to Raleigh, North Carolina, to do research on his dissertation. He searched libraries for the Ratification project, the First Federal Elections project, and the First Federal Congress project. Officially, Rich started to work full time on the project in 1973, first as a researcher, then as assistant

editor, associate editor, senior associate editor, and finally as co-editor. He contributed importantly to the publication of twenty-one Ratification volumes. He just retired in July.

Rich has served the ADE long and hard. He has served a couple of stints as director of publications and is now co-editing with Ron Bosco *Documentary Editing*, the Association's journal. He has been on the nominating committee, and served as chair. He was on the meetings committee, and served as chair of that committee. He was president of ADE in 1994–95.

He also served the profession as a long-time faculty member, frequent resident advisor, and commencement speaker at the annual Institute for the Editing of Historical Documents. He has applied his skills as an editor and his knowledge of the history of the process of ratifying the Constitution more broadly. He has been a reviewer for the NHPRC and the NEH. He has edited, along with me, two different volumes for general use on Ratification, one derived from weekly newspaper articles published during the Bicentennial of the Constitution. He has written articles for various journals. He has been a consultant to the Chicago Historical Society, and he was recently the co-curator for the New-York

Historical Society for an exhibit on the ratification of the Constitution by New York.

But it was at a session of the ADE Convention about twenty years ago that Rich's presence in the ADE was trumpeted. I was serving on a panel with James Hutson, director of the manuscripts division of the Library of Congress and, at the time, a commissioner on the NHPRC. Hutson was critical of the job being done by documentary editors. He thought that merely getting the texts on-line was sufficient. He unfavorably compared John Catanzariti, the new editor of the Thomas Jefferson papers, with Julian Boyd, saying that John was no Julian Boyd. When we got to the question-and-answer period, Rich told Hutson that he should be ashamed of himself. He told Hutson "You sir, are no J. Franklin Jameson." Ever since that moment, Rich has served as the conscience of the ADE.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am honored to have the privilege of conferring upon Richard Leffler the ADE's Life Service Award.