Annual Report of the Association for Political and Legal Anthropology
Submitted by Jan Hoffman French,
APLA Secretary-Treasurer
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During 2001, the Association for Political and Legal Anthropology published two issues of PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review, held its annual student paper prize competition, welcomed a new President-Elect and two new Board members, sponsored important sessions at the AAA meeting in Washington, DC, published columns in the Anthropology Newsletter, and welcomed a new President, Barbara Yngvesson. APLA’s business meeting in November was well attended, with lively participation by the membership. APLA remains in sound financial standing and continues to advance political and legal anthropology both within and beyond the American Anthropological Association.

PoLAR

Susan Hirsch and Susan Coutin continued as Editor and Associate Editor of PoLAR, with the production site at Wellesley College. Two issues of PoLAR have been published in May and November 2001. The May issue included a symposium on NGO’s, Power, and Development, and the November issue includes the first part of a two-part symposium titled “Putting Law in its Place in Native North America.” This is an exciting collection of articles, book reviews, grants, and syllabi developed under the guest editorship of Susan Gooding and Eve Darian-Smith. There are plans to advertise widely the symposium issues (which will include the May 2002 issue) to reach scholars with a particular interest in the subject. This is the final year of the editors’ three-year term, so there is currently a search for new editor(s) to be selected before the November 2002 annual meeting.

Elections and Officers

APLA’s Nominations Committee, chaired by Mindie Lazarus-Black, ran the election process in the Spring 2001 for the new President-Elect and two new Board members. June Nash was elected new President-Elect, and Michelle Bigenho and Tom Biolsi were elected to the Board. These new officers are outstanding scholars and represent the quality and expertise that APLA attracts to its ranks. They join Mindie Lazarus-Black and Madelaine Adelman who will continue to serve for one more year on the Board. Special thanks are due to Teresa Caldeira and Rebecca French as out-going Board members for their hard work and considerable energy to the success of APLA’s activities.

A new Nominations Committee has been appointed, chaired by Rebecca French, for the purpose of nominating two candidates each for the position of two members-at-large of the Board. Carol Greenhouse completed her term as President and deserves warm thanks for her fine leadership. Barbara Yngvesson became the new President at the close of the November meeting. Also during 2001, Eve Darian-Smith stepped down as Secretary-Treasurer and Jan Hoffman French was appointed in her stead.
Program

Jeanne Guillemin, APLA Program Coordinator, organized sessions for the 2001 Annual Meeting of the AAA: “Truth and Reconciliation” and “Law at the Margins: Legal Anthropology from Periphery to Center.” Jeanne has agreed to continue as Program Coordinator for the 2002 meeting.

Student Paper Prize

Harry West ran APLA’s annual student paper contest. Other members of the evaluating committee were Nadia Abu El-Haj and Jane Collier. Eleven papers were received. The prize was awarded to Kimberley Coles of University of California at Irvine, with her paper titled, "Ambivalent Builders: Europeanization, the Production of Difference, and Internationals in Bosnia-Herzegovina.” The paper will be published in PoLAR. An evaluating committee is currently being constituted.

AN Column

Bill Maurer was Anthropology Newscoordinator and kindly has agreed to continue in that role through 2002. The column has provided a key source of information about issues of interest to political and legal anthropology, and under Bill’s consistent and diligent coordination, has encouraged junior scholars to place into the public sphere descriptions of work in progress.

APLA Website and Communications

Harry West, Communications Liaison, performed a major upgrade to the APLA website in 2001 and maintains the APLA List serve. The website and list serve are cost-effective and efficient methods of communication that APLA intends to continue using regularly. Thanks to Harry the website is kept up-to-date and has become a fine resource for members and those interested in becoming members.

Continuing Activities into 2002

During 2002, APLA will continue to publish PoLAR, conduct its student paper prize competition, organize sessions for the AAA, publish columns in the Anthropology News, and maintain its website and list serve. Members will elect two new Board members and will vote on proposed revisions to APLA’s by-laws. The Board will continue to pursue the possibility of having PoLAR put on-line with Lexis and Westlaw. There are also ongoing discussions about membership outreach and the possibility of a distinguished speaker at the next annual meeting. Through these and other activities, APLA remains a strong, healthy, and lively section of the AAA.

With revisions suggested by Carol and Barbara 1/6/2002 10:56 AM