Members of the Executive

Mark Nichter, President
Andrea Wiley
Suzanne Heurtin-Roberts
Ann Miles
Bill Dressler, Past President
James Trostle
Ruthbeth Finerman
Fred Bloom
Mark Luborsky, Secretary-Treasurer
Jim Kim
Catherine Panter-Brick
Craig Janes
Cheryl Mattingly
Sabrina Chase
Mac Marshall
Paul Farmer

President’s Report

The 2001 year has been an active one for the Society for Medical Anthropology. In addition to the regular program at the annual meeting; a couple of special offerings were developed. The first was a workshop on the development of proposals for submission to the National Institutes of Mental Health, following on the previous year’s successful workshop on a similar theme. This workshop was conducted by Dr. Emeline Otey from the National Institute of Mental Health, and focused on proposal development to fund dissertation-level research. In addition to this workshop, a special event was sponsored by the SMA for a wider range of NIH staff to meet with SMA members in a more informal discussion format around the issue of federal funding for anthropological research. Finally, a regular scientific session was developed to build on previous initiatives aimed at strengthening the position of medical anthropology within the NIH.

The SMA is considering hosting such sessions at routinely at annual meetings. To further SMA visibility and participation in government health initiatives, a committee is being set up composed of anthropologists working in government health agencies. An appointed (non-voting) liaison position to the SMA Board has been approved. This liaison member will keep the Board apprised of opportunities for collaboration, funding etc.

The SMA received and accepted an invitation from the Society for Applied Anthropology to meet jointly in Atlanta, GA, March 6-10, 2002. Ruthbeth Finerman has taken primary responsibility for the development of the SMA program, assisted by Mark Nichter and Bill
Dressler. The SMA is planning a plenary session on the first day of the meetings, with special papers sessions throughout organized by members of the Executive Board.

Two other new initiatives were launched this year. The first involves finding ways to decentralize the activities of the SMA and open up the process of nominations. While the final slate of nominees must be determined by the Nominations Committee of the SMA Executive Board, the nominations are now being actively solicited both during the annual meeting and the social network structure within the SMA afforded by the Special Committees. The special committees represent an untapped potential for expanding participation in the SMA. Bill Dressler and Mark Nichter met with the leaders of the Special Committees at the annual meeting to explore ways of increasing their participation in all aspects of the functioning of the SMA. One way to foster networking between the SMA and its Special Committees which will be explored during 2002 will be to set up an “SMA Leadership ListServ,” which will be open to all of the SMA executive, plus the heads of the Special Committees.

A second initiative which was approved at the 2001 Board Meeting is the reconstruction of the SMA web site making it a data rich source of information for teaching, research and funding as well as a home base for a series of bulletin boards and list serves. Funds were allocated to develop the web site under the leadership of Mark Nichter, Jim Kim and Craig Janes.

Financial Affairs

The budget of the SMA is sufficient to meet all of its current activities. As of Nov 30th 2001, revenues of the SMA were in excess of $98,000. Projections for 2002 suggest that the budget will balance. To meet expected rises in the cost of maintaining an active SMA web page, the SMA Executive Board plans to increase dues within the next two years.

Membership

Membership in the SMA is steady with 1,388 members in November 2001. Of these, roughly 700 are professionals and 600 student memberships.

The Medical Anthropology Quarterly

In the past year there were a total of 80 submissions top MAQ, of which 10 were accepted for publication, 30 were rejected, 22 were revise and reject, and 22 are still under review. The average time from submission to notification of the author is approximately 3 months. The calendar year 2002 will be the last volume of the current editor, Mac Marshall. An editor search committee was empanelled independent of the SMA executive and chaired by a former editor of MAQ. Unfortunately, the selection process has lagged behind schedule. At this point, the SMA executive is stepping in to become directly involved in the process. New candidates will be solicited through mid-February of 02; a final decision on a new editor will be made at the joint SMA/SfAA meeting in March of 02.

Annual Meeting, 2001
In total, we had 28 SMA sessions at the 2001 AAA meetings. This was somewhat more than we had last year (25 sessions). There was also a modest increase in volunteered papers (87 vs. 83 in 2000) but a sharp decrease in organized session submissions (14 vs. 21 in 2000). As a result, a greater percentage of submissions made it onto the program this year compared to 2000.

**Invited Sessions** - Nine session proposals were reviewed. We were able to accept 6 of them, 5 of which we cosponsored with other sections (National Association of Student Anthropologists, Anthropology and Religion, American Ethnological Society, Association of Senior Anthropologists, Anthropology and Environment).

**Poster Session** - We had 1 poster session, made up of 7 very diverse posters. Eight poster abstracts were received and reviewed. The SMA will encourage more poster submissions, so that we might have more than one and the posters can be thematically related.

**Volunteered Sessions** - We received 14 organized session submissions; 10 were accepted for the final program.

**Volunteered Papers** - We received 87 volunteered papers. Seven papers were rejected as unsound, or irrelevant to SMA. The remaining 80 were organized into 12 sessions, 11 of which made it into the final program. Three were focused around geographic areas (Africa, Latin America, Native America).

**Student Sponsored Special Events** : Sabina Chase organized a well attended panel offering advice to anthropologists on how to get published. Offering advise was 7 current and former editors of medical anthropology journals.

**Prizes and Awards**

**Student and professional awards** – The judges for this year's SMA prize competition included Gay Becker, Gilles Bibeau, Ralph Bolton, Mac Marshall, David Napier, Kathryn Oths, and Lola Romanucci-Ross.

The Polgar Prize was awarded to Arushi Sinha, doctoral candidate at Southern Methodist University, for her paper entitled "An Overview of Telemedicine, The Virtual Gaze of Health Care in the Next Century." This was published in volume 14 of MAQ, pages 291-369, Sept. 2000.

SMA student prize manuscript submissions were up considerably over last year, with 11 submissions for the Rivers (undergraduate) prize, and 12 for the Hughes (graduate) prize. The winner of the Rivers prize was Sunita Puri, Yale, for her paper entitled "Immigration, isolation, and (community) identity." The winner of the Hughes Prize was Elizabeth Horton, U. of Arizona, for her paper entitled "Stories of aging, ideology and nation."
Eileen Basker Memorial Prize - We received 5 nominations for the 2001 competition, all from the USA. The 2001 winner is Dr. Susan Martha Kahn, for her book *Reproducing Jews: A Cultural Account of Assisted Reproduction in Israel*, published by the University of Michigan.

Nominations and Elections

Three slates of candidates to become members of the Executive Board for three years were put forth. These were: Slate A: Linda Hunt and Elisa Sobo; Slate B: Wenda Trevathan and Nancy Vuckovic; Slate C: Vincenanne Adams and Leslie Sharp. Linda Hunt, Wenda Travathan and Vincenanne Adams were all elected. In the coming year, the following slates will need to be put forth: President-Elect, 2 Executive Board members, and the Student Member of the Executive Board.

Anthropology News Column

This year the column faced a 50% cut in our size going from 1400 in the fall of 2000 to 700 by January 2001. This has meant some real changes in the column and increasing reliance on the website as a primary means of communicating information about SMA, announcements, calls for papers, resource sharing, etc. This year the SMA News column focused on Society news, especially awards and prizes, commentaries and conference information and reports. Commentaries and Research Reports were published in five of the nine columns. All of these were solicited submissions.

· Research Report: Rapid Assessment and Syphilis *(Bloom, Feb 2001)*

· How Relevant are the terms “public interest” or “applied” to medical anthropology? *Johnson and Koss, Apr 2001)*

· Is African Indigenous Therapy Equivalent to Biomedical Therapy? *(Green, May 2001)*

· Methods on my Mind *(Dressler, Sept 2001)*

· Hospital Work: An Anthropologist in Biomedicine *(Sobo, 2001)*

---

Co-Editor, AN SMA column, *ex-officio*
Webmaster, *ex-officio*
Editor of MAQ, *ex-officio*