AAA Has Zero Tolerance for Sexual Harassment

In response to the recent survey about sexual harassment in anthropology, reported by Kathryn Clancy (U Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), Katie Hinde (Harvard), Robin Nelson (U California, Riverside), and Julienne Rutherford (U Illinois, Chicago) the American Anthropological Association has issued the following statement on behalf of its more than 11,000 members.

The American Anthropological Association (AAA) is shocked and dismayed to learn about the results of a recent survey reported at the April 2013 meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists in Knoxville, TN. The AAA has zero tolerance for sexual harassment in academic, professional, fieldwork or any other settings where our members work. While the AAA does not have adjudicatory authority over these matters, our Statement on Ethics: Code of Professional Responsibility sets out our clear expectation that anthropologists "...have a responsibility to maintain respectful relationships with others. In mentoring students, interacting with colleagues, working with clients, acting as a reviewer or evaluator, or supervising staff, anthropologists should comport themselves in ways that promote an equitable, supportive and sustainable workplace environment."

We deplore the reported incidents of sexual harassment, and expect employers and institutions of higher education to enforce the law as well as their specific anti-harassment policies for implementing the law. While sexual harassment is an issue that affects men and women alike, women bear the greatest burden of these incidents by far. The AAA has a long-term commitment to monitoring the status of women in anthropology through the Committee on the Status of Women in Anthropology, renamed in 2011 the Committee on Gender Equity in Anthropology. We encourage harassment victims who do not feel that adequate protections are available through their employer or home institution to contact the Association’s Committee on Gender Equity in Anthropology confidentially for advice.