Accomplishments during the period covered

SANA had three major accomplishments and undertook several major initiatives during the calendar year 2007. First, we sponsored a very successful conference in New Orleans on the theme of “Unnatural Disasters.” This three-day conference involving more than 120 scholars provided an important outlet for the dissemination of new research findings and for scholarly conversation and debate around an important emergent theme in the discipline at large. It also helped us to maintain our membership and extend out membership footprint, particularly among scholars in the Southern United States. In addition to paper presentations, plenaries and a keynote address by Eric Klinenberg (Sociology NYU), the conference was notable for its interface with scholars, activists and public intellectuals from the Gulf Coast region. Local scholars led study tours of the city and we held a series of sessions involving community activists, journalists, local artists and musicians. Overall, the conference promoted our section, attracted new members, and increased the depth of scholarship and intellectual exchange across the academic/community divide. Importantly, despite the formidable challenges and risk of hosting a conference in New Orleans, this conference paid for itself.

The second major initiative was the rehabilitation of our bibliography and syllabus project. Led by Rachel Heiman (New School), we collected syllabi and teaching materials for publication and circulation via our website.

The third initiative involved a bylaws change that enables us to add a third representative at large position to the SANA board. We added this position in order to facilitate broader representation on the SANA board by historically under-represented groups, including scholars of color, scholars who work in – and study – Mexico and Canada, and sexual and gender minorities. Diversification of our board has been a major SANA priority since the section’s inception. The membership overwhelmingly approved this bylaws change on the spring 2007 ballot, and we are currently in the process of electing someone for this new position, which will be filled for the first time in November 2008.

We also continued ongoing projects and traditions. We awarded the SANA Prize for the Critical Study of North America to Lynn Stephen (U of Oregon). We are getting more nominations and this prize is now perceived as a major competitive prize. We also continued our student “travel grants” program. Each year, SANA offers 5 grants for student travel to the SANA spring meeting and 5 grants for student travel to the AAAs. We call the travel grant the St. Clair Drake Fellowship and its recipients are Drake fellows. These grants are very competitive and serve as a great way to introduce graduate students who are pursuing research in North America to the organization. Our three SANA student board representatives administrate the travel grant program. We also gave out volunteer of the year awards to three outstanding SANA members: Elizabeth Chin (Occidental), Susan Hyatt (U of Indiana), and Chris Caruso (CUNY). Also, our website has been a great success. We transferred the website from its former host server at Duke University to a non-profit community server, and it continues to be managed by an outside consultant, who we pay out of our funds.

This year our membership numbers did not fluctuate much. We continue to have between 450 and 500, and our fund balances are in good shape. We continue to work closely
with other cognate units in and outside of the AAA to help sponsor our spring conferences as well as co-cosponsor our sessions at the annual meetings. SANA is an exceedingly well run and healthy unit because of the indefatigable effort and commitment of its membership. We continue to provide service and leadership to the AAA as well, and to maintain a critical voice in the field and to promote cutting edge scholarship, all of which in the end makes the AAA a more responsive and inclusive organization.

**Future plans or activities (3-5) year time frame**

Next year will award our biennial book prize. We have plans on hosting a spring conference in Wrightsville Beach, NC, in April 2008 on the theme of “Democracy, Disorder and Discontent.”