Society for Medical Anthropology (SMA) Annual Report
January 1, 2007-December 31, 2007
Submitted by Marcia C. Inhorn, SMA President

Section Officers: Marcia C. Inhorn, President (minhorn@umich.edu); Kitty Corbett, Treasurer (kcorbett@sfu.ca), Ellen Gruenbaum, Secretary (elleng@csufresno.edu); Carolyn Sargent, President-Elect (csargent@smu.edu)

Board Members: Robbie Davis-Floyd; Douglas Feldman; Alan Harwood; Vinay Kamat; Thomas Leatherman; Lenore Manderson; Carolyn Smith-Morris; Elisa Sobo; Catherine Timura (Student Representative)

Ex-Officio Members: Mark Luborsky and Andrea Sankar (MAQ Editors); Kathleen Ragsdale (AN Column Editor); Lauren Wynne and Ben McMahan (Webmasters)

Retiring Board and Ex-Officio Members (as of 11/30/2007): Robbie Davis-Floyd; Douglas Feldman; Elisa Sobo; Catherine Timura

Incoming Board and Ex-Officio Members (as of 12/01/2007): Ralph Bolton; Beth Conklin; Adriana Petryna; Amorita Valdez (Student Representative)

1. Status, Activities, and Accomplishments (2007): The Society for Medical Anthropology (SMA) had an extremely productive and dynamic year in 2007. Major accomplishments included:
   • successful implementation of an SMA by-law change, which split the joint Secretary-Treasurer position into two separate offices;
   • successful separation of the annual SMA Business Meeting into two separate events: a Friday noon SMA Open Members Business Meeting, and a Friday evening SMA Awards Ceremony and Presidential Address;
   • completion of an SMA practicing medical anthropologist survey, with more than 350 practicing medical anthropologists responding;
   • development of a new SMA logo and promotional materials (t-shirts and canvas book bags), which were sold at the 2007 AAA meetings;
   • transfer of the SMA website to a new SMA webmaster, who has redesigned the site to incorporate the new SMA logo, as well as other updates in the web design;
   • initiation of an SMA Institutional Memory Project, intended to develop a formal history of SMA;
   • further development of the newly formed (in 2006) Medical Anthropology Students Association (MASA) to serve SMA student members;
   • inauguration of a MASA Dissertation award, given for the first time at the 2007 AAA meetings in Washington, DC;
   • a 20th anniversary celebration of the SMA’s Eileen Basker Prize, with a double session and reception at the 2007 AAA meetings;
   • further development of the newly formed (in 2006) Science Technology and Medicine (STM) special interest group, which formally merged with the Pharmaceutical Studies and Clinically Applied Medical Anthropology special interest groups in 2007;
   • development and dissemination of an SMA “Takes a Stand” policy statement on the global gag rule;
   • development of a new on-line, global medical anthropology directory;
   • planning of two major conferences: (1) a joint SMA-SfAA in Memphis, March 25-29, 2008, on the theme of “The Political Construction of Global Communicable Disease Crises”; and (2) an independent SMA conference, the first in 20 years, in Ann Arbor, Michigan, October 1-3, 2009, on the theme of “Medical Anthropology at the Intersections: Celebrating 50 Years of Interdisciplinarity.”

Other SMA activities and accomplishments during 2007 are as follows:
1a. Membership Numbers: SMA membership in November 2006 was 1,296, increasing by nearly 40 members to 1,335 in November 2007. In comparison, membership levels exceeded 1,500 earlier in the decade, indicating that SMA membership has declined slightly over the years. Two major efforts have been undertaken to bolster SMA membership: (a) formation of MASA, chaired by the SMA student representative and focusing on skills-based workshops and special events at AAA and SMA-SfAA meetings; and (b) development of a global medical anthropology directory, reaching not only SMA members, but medical anthropologists outside of North America (see sections below).

1b. Financial Balances (SMA and MAQ):

**SMA:** The financial situation of SMA is far better this year than in the previous few years. As AAA had anticipated, AnthroSource revenues have increased and expenses are lower. With projected revenues of $68,556 and expenditures of $83,857, we are projected to end 2007 with a deficit of $15,300. As we have done in the past few years, we will have to draw on SMA assets to do this. However, the deficit is less than anticipated and thus can be framed as good news. As well, better news is on the horizon: we expect to come out ahead by the end of 2008 by about $14,000. Overall, the fund balance as of November 30, 2007 was $121,107. The fund balance for the SMA’s Basker Prize (maintained as a separate fund) was $13,249 on November 30, 2007, a slight improvement over 2006.

**MAQ:** SMA provided MAQ with a budget of $34,490 to run the academic editorial office during 2007. These funds were used to pay the salaries of the Managing Editor, as well as $500 designated for the Book Review Editor. Wayne State University provided the remainder of the operating expenses, including the salary of the Editorial Assistant and a one-course reduction for co-editor Andrea Sankar. As of November 30, 2007, revenues were less than the amounts budgeted by $38,284, but expenditures were also lower than projected amounts. Final figures should show a slight improvement, given improvements in AnthroSource income as of December 2007.

1c. AAA Meeting Highlights (Washington, DC): The SMA program co-chairs received 8 proposed invited sessions (2 accepted); 16 proposed organized sessions (all accepted); 92 individual abstracts, organized into 21 sessions (all accepted by AAA); and 11 posters, organized into 2 sessions (both accepted). The SMA program also included a AAA presidential session on “Inequalities, Chronic Illness and Chronicity: Dedicated to the Memory of Gay Becker.” Two SMA invited sessions, on "Bodies and Economies: Ethnographies of Value in Biomedicine and Global Health" and "20 Years of the Basker Prize: Winners Reflect on Gender, Feminism and Health and Their Near Futures," attracted large crowds. (A celebratory, SMA-sponsored anniversary reception was also held after the Basker event). MASA held a workshop for student members on post-doctoral fellowships in medical anthropology, and a second workshop focused on advocacy and non-academic writing for medical anthropologists. At the Friday evening SMA Awards Ceremony, Marcia C. Inhorn delivered the presidential address, “Medical Anthropology Against War,” which highlighted the public health costs of war in Iraq and the need for medical anthropological intervention (both research and activism). The address, which received a standing ovation from the large assembled audience, will be published in *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*. Inhorn's home department also sponsored a gourmet cheese reception (with cash bar) following the awards ceremony. Prizes awarded, including the inaugural Medical Anthropological Students Association (MASA) Dissertation Award, were:

- **MASA Dissertation Award:** Junko Kitanaka for *Society in Distress: The Psychiatric Production of Depression in Contemporary Japan*
- **New Millennium Book Award:** Sharon Kaufman for *And a Time to Die: How American Hospitals Shape the End of Life*
- **Eileen Basker Memorial Prize:** Sophie Day for *On the Game*
- **Rivers Prize (Undergraduate):** Irit Rasooly for "Planting Healthy Stores in Food Deserts: An Anthropological Study of Obesity, Consumption, and Public Health in East Baltimore"
• **Charles Hughes Prize (Graduate):** Kate Goldade for "Health is Hard Here' or 'Health for All?: The Politics of Blame, Gender, and Health Care for Undocumented Nicaraguan Migrants in Costa Rica"

• **Steven Polgar Prize (Best Article in MAQ, 2006):** Robin Root for "Mixing' as an Ethnoetiology of HIV/AIDS in Malaysia's Multinational Factories"

• **Career Achievement Award:** Ronnie Frankenberg and Margaret Lock

• **George Foster Memorial Prize in the Practice of Medical Anthropology:** Susan Hunter

• **MASA Mentoring Award:** Lenore Manderson

• **Rudolph Virchow Professional Award** (Critical Anthropology of Global Health): Philippe Bourgois and Jeff Schonberg for "Intimate Apartheid: Ethnic Dimensions of Habitus among Homeless Heroin Injectors"

• **Rudolph Virchow Graduate Student Award:** Krista Schumacher for "Beyond Cultural Competency: An Analysis of Key Variables Affecting Diabetes Care among Patients at an Urban Indian Health Clinic"

• **Rudolph Virchow Undergraduate Student Award:** Aki Nakanishi: "Protecting Indigenous Medical Knowledge: Confronting Biopiracy and Neo-cultural Imperialism"

1d. Spring Meeting Activities: Several members of the SMA Executive Board met in Tampa in March 2007 to discuss the upcoming SMA-SfAA Joint Meeting, to be held in Memphis, March 25-29, 2008. Ruthbeth Finerman, University of Memphis, is the SMA 2008 Program Chair. She has organized a plenary session with six speakers on "The Political Construction of Global Infectious Disease Crises." In addition, there will be 7 SMA featured sessions, an SMA poster session, and a student poster competition. Through the SfAA, there will be 18 organized sessions on health topics, and 64 volunteered health-related papers organized into 10 sessions. Social events will include an SMA welcome reception following the plenary, and a Friday evening SMA-members-only Mississippi riverboat cruise.

In addition, the SMA Executive Board met in July 2007 in Ann Arbor, MI, at Inhorn's home institution. Much of the meeting was devoted to future SMA conference planning, to the development of a new SMA logo and promotional materials, and to the design of a survey of practicing medical anthropologists. Many other items of ongoing business were also covered at the meeting, which was held concurrently with the Ann Arbor International Art Fair. (Per a decision made in 2005, an SMA meeting will be held at the current president's home institution every other year. This was the successful inaugural meeting.)

1e. Internal Communications (Website and Listserves):

**Website:** More than 1.1 million people have visited the SMA website since its inception. From January 1-December 31, 2007, the site received approximately 350,000 visitors, roughly 100,000 more than the same period in 2006. Monthly visitors averaged 33,000 during February-August, with more than 41,000 visitors during the 2 busiest summer months. This represents a 13,000-person/mo increase from 2006. In December 2007, following the website redesign, visitors stayed on the site longer than expected, following an invitation to explore the new site. The website redesign, which was unveiled at the AAA meetings, involves a new color scheme (light yellow) built around the new SMA logo (black, red, and white stylized letters). A number of new plans for round 2 of the site redesign will be implemented in 2008.

**Listserves:** SMA participates in two listserves: a) an H-Net MEDANTHRO listserve maintained by a group of medical anthropologists from a variety of universities. The purpose of this listserve is to inform those who join about news items of relevance to medical anthropology; and b) an SMA membership listserve constructed at the University of Michigan and maintained by the SMA president. The latter listserve was used effectively in 2007 to post updates on SMA activities and events, to circulate the SMA practicing member survey, and to solicit member feedback regarding the new logo and website redesign. In 2007, the SMA listserv will be moved to the incoming president's home institution.
1f. Outreach Efforts: 2007 was a very busy year for SMA’s external outreach to policymakers and media outlets, and internal outreach to SMA professional members, students and foreign medical anthropologists.

SMA Takes a Stand: SMA has an active Policy Committee, with eleven working subcommittees. In 2007, two official SMA policy statements, on US ratification of the international treaty on child rights and the global tobacco control treaty, were published in MAQ and circulated to the media as press releases. Statements on the global gag rule and genocide in Darfur are currently being developed. The global gag rule statement has received extensive review through the SMA website and Executive Board. Following final approval, it will be submitted for publication in MAQ and circulated as a media release.

SMA Practicing Member Survey: The SMA responded to the 2006 Practicing Anthropology Working Group (PAWG) report suggesting that the AAA and its affiliates need to attend to the interests and concerns of practicing anthropologists. Given the large number of practicing medical anthropologists, the SMA Board decided to conduct a survey of its practicing members. With significant board input, board member Vinay Kamat designed the survey, which consisted of 24 questions and took 5-10 minutes to complete on-line. The survey was launched on November 5 and closed on November 30, 2007, with 3 announcements via the SMA and AAA listserves. More than 350 practicing medical anthropologists began the survey, with 224 completing it, 73% of whom were current SMA members. Questions on professional nomenclature, current employment, and higher degrees were asked. In addition, several questions about SMA services were posed, with the opportunity for open-ended responses and suggestions. Hundreds of qualitative responses were collected for SMA board consideration. The results of the survey were posted on the SMA website and will be discussed further by the board in 2008.

MASA Dissertation Award: In 2007, Inhorn recommended the development of a MASA Dissertation Award, to honor the work of SMA student members and to encourage inclusion of students into the SMA. The award criteria were developed by the SMA board and the 3 dissertation committee judges, including Lenore Manderson (Chair), Alan Harwood, and Carolyn Smith-Morris. Eight dissertations were submitted from around the world (Israel, India, Canada, US), with two supporting letters for each nomination. The review process was "blind," with all identifying information known only by the SMA Secretary. Despite the large amount of reading, the judging committee reached firm consensus on the winner, Junko Kitanaka of McGill University, the student of Margaret Lock and Allen Young. This new award will be carried forward into 2008. It is deemed very important for attracting interest and participation from medical anthropology students, who constitute one-third of the SMA membership.

Global Medical Anthropology Directory: The SMA has never published a printed directory of medical anthropologists. Yet, such a directory could be invaluable for SMA and its membership. To that end, an online directory has been developed in 2007, with the assistance of web designer and SMA member Kevin Kelly (U Iowa). The SMA board developed the directory template, which Kelly then entered into a computer database program. Several emails were sent by Marcia Inhorn to the SMA membership and to foreign affiliates, requesting that medical anthropologists submit their information to the directory. To date, more than 500 entries have been completed. In 2008, the directory will be further integrated into the SMA website, so that it is searchable by keyword.

1g. Changes in Bylaws or Governance Structure: In the 2006 elections, SMA members voted to approve a change in the SMA by-laws. As a result, the conjoined SMA Secretary-Treasurer position has been divided into two positions, with Kitty Corbett elected Treasurer and Ellen Gruenbaum elected Secretary for 2007. This division of labor reflects increasing SMA activities in the realms of fundraising (treasurer) and the preservation of SMA’s organizational history (secretary). Both Corbett and Gruenbaum joined the SMA board in 2007 and began carrying out their respective activities.
2. Future Plans or Activities (2008-2012)

2a. Projects Underway: The major project underway is the planning of an SMA independent conference, to be held for the first time in 20 years, on "Medical Anthropology at the Intersections: Celebrating 50 Years of Interdisciplinarity." Dates have been set for Oct. 1-3, 2009 at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Marcia Inhorn will serve as Program Chair, working closely with the SMA board (under incoming President Carolyn Sargent), a local UM faculty organizing committee and event planner. Ten plenary speakers have been chosen, and calls for organized sessions, posters, and workshops will soon be made. In addition, two grant proposals have been submitted to the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation for significant conference support. The goal is to fund the conference without drawing upon SMA reserves. Reasonable registration fees will be charged, and sources of funding at UM will also be sought.

2b. Collaboration with Other Sections and Groups: SMA currently has 12 active special interest groups, three of which (Science, Technology, and Medicine; Pharmaceutical Studies; and Clinically Applied Medical Anthropology) officially merged in Washington, DC. The Science Technology and Medicine special interest group is new as of 2006; however, it has already generated tremendous response, including a well-attended business meeting and an invited double session on "Bodies and Economies," which attracted hundreds of audience members at the AAA meetings. In addition, incoming President Carolyn Sargent is working with incoming SPA President Tanya Luhrmann on a future joint SMA-SPA initiative.

2c. Plans for Membership or Publications: At the end of 2006, MAQ moved from U Connecticut under Pamela Erickson’s editorship to Wayne State U under the co-editorship of Mark Luborsky and Andrea Sankar. Cost-savings have been realized due to strong institutional support from Wayne State and the employment of a locally based managing editor. In fall 2006, Janelle Taylor, SMA Column Editor for Anthropology News, helped to recruit her replacement, Kathleen Ragsdale, who began as the new Column Editor in 2007. Ragsdale has also been an active ex-officio member of the SMA board during 2007.

2d. Plans for Making SMA More Inclusive: SMA hopes to better serve practicing medical anthropologists, medical anthropology students, and foreign medical anthropologists in the ways noted above. We have dynamic projects underway in all of these areas. In addition, the SMA Nominations Committee has put together a diverse slate of candidates for the 2008 ballot, prioritizing inclusion based on gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

3. Other Items

3a. Issues and Recommendations for the AAA Long-Range Planning Committee: The SMA hopes to write its history through an "Institutional Memory Project" headed by the SMA Secretary. Yet, we have had difficulty determining what is stored at the Smithsonian archives; how to deposit new material there; and how to obtain information about past SMA activities and board membership from the AAA, including through collection of annual reports. As a long-range project, section record-keeping needs to be professionalized. SMA's records are currently in a state of disarray, with no central storage site. We request AAA assistance in this regard, which is a priority for our section over the next 5 years.

3b. Issues and Recommendations for AAA Executive Board: The major issue facing the SMA and most other AAA sections has been the financial uncertainty associated with AnthroSource. We described our concerns at some length in the 2006 SMA Annual Report. SMA's financial situation has improved considerably since 2006, suggesting that 2007 revenues exceeded expectations. These findings lend credence to the long-term projections that show AnthroSource beginning to generate revenue within a few years. In the meantime, we continue to feel "cautiously optimistic" about the financial health of SMA. We urge the AAA Executive Board to provide us with frequent and careful assessments of both the costs and revenues associated with AnthroSource, so that we can plan our activities based on accurate financial projections.