Association for Political and Legal Anthropology (APLA)
2008 Annual Report

Names and email addresses of Section officers during the period covered
President: Bill Maurer (07-09) wmmaurer@uci.edu; President-elect: Susan Hirsch (07-09) President 09-11, shirsch4@gmu.edu; Treasurer Kate Sullivan (07-09) ksulliv4@calstatela.edu; Secretary Madelaine Adelman (07-09) mad@asu.edu; Board Members-at-Large: Kimberly Coles (07-09) kimberley_coles@redlands.edu (untended); Robert Hayden, (07-09), rahyden@pitt.edu (tenured); Shonna Trinch (06-08) strinch@jjay.cuny.edu (tenured, term ended at close of 2008 AAA meetings); Justin Richland (06-08) jbrich@uci.edu (untended, term ended at close of 2008 AAA meetings); Appointed Board Members: PoLAR Editor: Elizabeth Mertz, eemertz@wisc.edu; Program Coordinator: Chris Timura, ctimura@akingump.com; AN Contributing Editors: Mona Bhan, monabhan@depauw.edu, Elizabeth Krause, ekrause@anthro.umass.edu; Student Representative: Andrea Ballestero, aballes@uci.edu; Communications/Webmaster: Carie Little Hersh, chersh@email.unc.edu; Student paper prize coordinator: Mark Goodale, mgoodale@gmu.edu

Status, Activities and Accomplishments this year
1. Membership numbers: Our overall membership has remained relatively constant since October 2007, hovering around a mean of 551 members. The most recent membership numbers from November 2008 show 579 members, with regular memberships back up to the year’s previous figure and student memberships increasing.
   • Factors possibly increasing/decreasing membership: We had been experiencing a steady decrease in regular (i.e., non-student) members from a high of 383 in October 2007 to an average of 360 over July, August and September of 2008. This returned to even with the November meetings. We have experienced an overall increase in student memberships during the last year, beginning with 171 in September of 2007, to a relatively constant number of around 190 since May, 2008. At our 2007 meeting, the Section voted to decrease student membership to $15 in order to encourage student member growth. We have also steadily increased our mentoring workshops and sponsored our annual student paper prize, which also contribute to increased recruitment of students. The impact on membership is the primary consideration in our decisions involving mentoring activities, and in seeking abstracting, indexing and content aggregator opportunities for our journal, PoLAR: The Political and Legal Anthropology Review, discussed further below.

2. Financial balances:
   • Total Section budget net assets: $37,711.44
   • Journal net revenue: $11,957.00
   • Factors affecting Section finances: We put cash in the bank at the close of 2007, mainly because of the new Wiley-Blackwell contract. The new contract pooled our publication costs and revenues with the other AAA publications, guaranteed a minimum income to AAA for 5 years, took pressure off of APLA income streams and reserves, and provided APLA with a $4843 publishing royalty distributed at the close of 2007. We began 2008 with $14,718.82 in our Treasury.
   • Under the Wiley-Blackwell contract and 2008 AnthroSource allocation model, PoLAR will flow $11,957 into our treasury for 2008. Our other main source of income is our membership revenue, which was projected to be $13,357 for 2008. Our actual dues income for 2008 will be slightly less than projected, because we are experiencing attrition in regular memberships and we voted to lower the student member fee at the 2007 annual meeting.

3. 2008 AAA invited sessions and other events:
• **Invited Sessions:** POLITICAL PARTIES AND SUBJECTIVITY IN AFRICA (Sponsored by AfAA and APLA); CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES ON THE WAR IN IRAQ (Sponsored by APLA and MES); LIBERAL RELIGIOSITIES (Sponsored by APLA and SAR)

• **Graduate student mentoring workshops (all held off-site):** Time: anticipation and memory in Law and Politics; Religion and Politics: intersections, co-minglings, and oppositions; Social Movements: NGOs, non-NGO’s and other political strategies; Public Policy: Law and Politics in action; Science, Technology, and Law: circulations and placements

• **Other workshops (all held off-site):** APLA Podcasting Workshop; Professional Mentoring Workshop; Workshop on Searching for (In)Security: Citizenship and Immigration in the 21st Century

• **Other activities:** APLA-sponsored NGO and Nonprofit Interest Group meeting; APLA/PoLAR Section Table in Exhibition Hall

4. **Spring meeting activities:** NA

5. **Mentorship efforts:** APLA does an extraordinary amount of mentoring for graduate students during the AAA meetings. It hosts several workshops on thematic issues during which students receive feedback on their dissertation research by a panel of faculty volunteers. Five such workshops were sponsored in 2008, all off-site during the AAA meetings, and organized by APLA’s graduate student representative (Andrea Ballestero) and the graduate student volunteers she assembled. For the first time in 2008, APLA also sponsored a professionalization workshop for dissertation writers and new PhDs.

6. **Additional outreach efforts:**
   - **Committee on Practicing, Applied, and Public Interest Anthropology (CoPAPIA):** APLA was represented at the 2008 CoPAPIA discussion by Secretary Adelman, who made a formal presentation at the APLA Business Meeting on CoPAPIA’s efforts to encourage the practice of anthropology. Our Program Coordinator for 2008 and for 2009 is a practicing anthropologist.
   - **Outreach to other scholarly organizations:** The journal, PoLAR, is exploring outreach to other practicing communities, mainly in the legal professions, as well as in other scholarly societies, particularly the Law and Society Association.
   - **Podcasting Project:** APLA embarked on a major new project in the summer before the 2008 meetings and formally launched it at the 2008 meetings. Members of APLA are collecting digital audio and video recordings of lectures, presentations at scholarly conferences, and colloquia at universities for posting to the new APLA website, which will be downloadable as podcasts. This is an effort at outreach and member development, as well as at providing content for educators, researchers, and the practicing and applied anthropology community.

7. **Awards:** The APLA Student Paper Prize was awarded to Karine Vanthuyne for her paper entitled "Becoming Maya? The politics and pragmatics of 'being indigenous' in post-genocide Guatemala." Karine is a Ph.D. candidate in anthropology at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS). Honorable Mention was awarded to Fabiana Li from UC Davis.

8. **Section internal communications:** APLA uses an internet listserv maintained at UC Irvine by Kate Henne, a graduate student in the Department of Criminology, Law and Society at UC Irvine. APLA successfully transitioned its listserv from Cornell University to UC Irvine in 2008. It is used for announcements of grants, calls for papers, and conferences, as well as messages to the membership from the President and other Board members. The Board maintains a separate email list for Board communications. The website is in the process of being updated and overhauled by a website committee appointed by the Board and working in close collaboration with the podcast committee, also appointed by the Board.
9. Changes in bylaws or governance: None.

Future Plans or Activities, next 3-5 years

1. Plans aimed at increasing membership: The success of our graduate student workshops in enhancing student membership has led us to develop professionalization workshops for new PhDs. This year’s professionalization workshop focused on turning a dissertation into a book. For 2009, APLA is planning an additional professionalization workshop focused on managing one’s career after getting a first job, whether in academia or elsewhere. APLA’s Board is also considering creating a mentoring workshop for Associate Professors about making the transition to Full Professor. APLA’s podcasting project and its journal are also seen as means of increasing membership.

2. Plans for new forms of scholarly communication and changes to existing publications: In addition to the podcasting project, APLA is exploring additional abstracting, indexing and content aggregator services for PoLAR. With the help of Oona Schmid at the AAA, and the UC Irvine social science librarian, APLA is researching possible revenue implications of getting its journal on Westlaw, HeinOnline, Lexis, and other aggregator services. The UC Irvine librarian has solicited input from her counterparts around the country and is still in the data-gathering stage. Lisa Myers at the AAA assisted APLA in developing a nonexclusive licensing agreement suitable for use for our podcasting project.

3. Other projects: APLA continues to discuss the possibility of launching a book prize. Concerns about eligibility requirements, the costs associated with a prize, and adding the administering of an additional prize have been raised by Board members and the matter has been tabled pending further discussion during 2009.

4. Collaboration with other sections/interest groups: APLA is sponsoring the NGO and Non-profit Interest Group and has involved this interest group in its mentoring activities. APLA continue to collaborate with other Sections in co-sponsoring AAA panels.

Chief concerns and issues

1. For the Section Assembly leadership: Like other Sections, APLA advocates for greater flexibility in the kinds of programming possible during the AAA annual meetings.

2. For the Executive Board: APLA continues to monitor the effects of the Wiley-Blackwell agreement on PoLAR and continues to advocate proceeding with caution on the question of open access for AAA journal content.

3. For the AAA Staff: APLA is very pleased to have established fine working relationships with members of the AAA staff, and is pleased this year to have worked with Lisa Myers (regarding our website and podcasting project) and Oona Schmid (regarding PoLAR). APLA would also like to thank Suzanne Mattingly for all of her assistance in managing the treasury and budget.