Association for Political and Legal Anthropology (APLA)
2009 Annual Report

Names and email addresses of Section officers during the period covered
Outgoing President: Bill Maurer (07-09) wmmaurer@uci.edu; Incoming President: Susan Hirsch (President Elect, 07-09, President 09-11), shirsch4@gmu.edu; President-elect (09-11): Susan Coutin (scoutin@uci.edu); Treasurer Kate Sullivan (07-09) ksulliv4@calstatela.edu; Secretary Madelaine Adelman (07-09) mad@asu.edu; Outgoing Board Members-at-Large: Kimberly Coles (07-09) kimberley_coles@redlands.edu (untenured); Robert Hayden, (07-09), rahyden@pitt.edu (tenured); Continuing Board Members-at-Large: Sally Merry (smerry@nyu.edu) (08-10); Ilana Gershon (untenured) (08-10); Incoming Board Members-at-Large: Erica Bornstein (untenured) (09-11), elbornst@uwm.edu, Michelle Bigenho (tenured) (09-11) mbigenho@hampshire.edu
Appointed Board Members: PoLAR Editor: Elizabeth Mertz, eemertz@wisc.edu; Program Coordinators: Susan Coutin (scoutin@uci.edu), Chris Timura (ctimura@akingump.com); AN Contributing Editors: Mona Bhan, monabhan@depauw.edu, Elizabeth Krause, ekrause@anthro.umass.edu; Noelle Mole, nmole@princeton.edu Student Representative: Andrea Ballester (07-09), aballes@uci.edu; Incoming Student Representative: Jatin Dua (Jatin.dua@duke.edu) Communications/Webmaster: Kate Henne (k hennebe@uci.edu), Kimberley Coles (Kimberley_coles@redlands.edu), Carie Little Hersh, chersh@email.unc.edu; Student paper prize committee: Justin Richland (ibrich@uci.edu), Kimberley Coles (Kimberley_coles@redlands.edu), and Jessica Greenberg.

Status, Activities and Accomplishments this year
1. Membership numbers: Our overall membership has increased slightly since 2007. The mean was 551 last year and was 581 for 2009. Total membership briefly passed the 600 mark during the year. Student memberships are up 10% over 2008, at 209. Clearly, the Association is quite healthy.
   - Factors possibly increasing/decreasing membership: 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 continuing to seek 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: $63,199.56 as of 11-30-09
   - Journal publishing royalty: $13,283.98
   - Membership dues revenue: $13,246.89 as of 11-30-09
   - Factors affecting Section finances: The fund balance reflects the fact that APLA will pay for the Supplemental Issue of PoLAR in 2010, rather than in 2009 as originally planned. The journal royalty was higher than expected in 2009 because some 2009 Anthrosource (pooled) bills were carried forward to 2010.
   - Our other main source of income is our membership revenue.
3. 2009 AAA invited sessions and other events:
   - Invited Sessions: TOWARDS A MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AGAINST MILITARISM (SMA and APLA); THEORIZING INFRASTRUCTURE: TECHNOPOLITICALS OF DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICA (Assn for African Anthro and APLA); BUREAUCRACY AND
BEFUDDLEMENT: POLICY AND IMPERFECT TRANSLATION (IGAPP and APLA); THE END OF CITIZENSHIP IN LATIN AMERICA? THE BODY AS A NEW SITE OF POLITICAL STRUGGLE (APLA and SLAC); STATES OF DESIRE: CITIZENSHIP, POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITY, AND SOCIAL CHANGE (APLA and AES).

- **Graduate student mentoring workshops** (all held off-site): Cultures of Illegality; Affect and Law; The Law and its indigenous others/objects/intersections; Technologies of the Law

- **Other workshops (all held off-site):** The Job Search; What To Do After You File; and Book Proposal Workshop

4. **Spring meeting activities:** NA

5. **Mentorship efforts:** APLA does an extraordinary amount of mentoring for graduate students during the AAA meetings. Its President served on the Section Assembly Task Force on Mentoring and its practices have been disseminated as “best practices” to other Sections, some of which have started mentoring workshops based on APLA’s models. It hosted four graduate student research workshops at the 2009 AAA meetings, during which students received feedback on their dissertation research by a panel of faculty volunteers. These are held off-site during the AAA meetings, and organized by APLA’s graduate student representative (Andrea Ballestero) and the graduate student volunteers she has assembled. In response to member requests, APLA also created three professionalization workshops: one on the job search; one on steps toward publishing and professionalization after filing the dissertation; and one on how to write a book prospectus. APLA continues its tradition of holding a substantive discussion on topical issues of concern during its Business Meeting. In 2009, our discussion focused on the financial crisis and drew over 80 people to the business meeting, with guest speakers Karen Ho and Hirokazu Miyazaki leading the discussion. Having discussions during the Business Meeting draws new members into APLA and fosters a sense of APLA as a place for dialogue, networking and professional development. Repeating our 2008 experience, our annual Business Meeting in 2009 was extremely well attended.

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 was 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. The group of APLA members interested in this initiative is exploring ways to continue developing it.

7. **Awards:** The APLA Student Paper Prize was awarded to Jessica Johnson for her paper entitled "Masculinity, War, and Sacrifice at Home: The Transformative Cultural Politics of an Emerging Church in Seattle, Washington." Jessica is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Washington.
8. Section internal communications: APLA uses an internet listserver maintained at UC Irvine by Kate Henne, a graduate student in the Department of Criminology, Law and Society at UC Irvine. 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 now continuously updated and has PoLAR and podcast content.

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. APLA’s Board continues to consider 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. APLA is also considering the possibility of sponsoring a for-purchase-lunch roundtable at the AAA meetings.

2. Plans for new forms of scholarly communication and changes to existing publications: APLA continues to explore additional abstracting, indexing and content aggregator services for PoLAR. In 2010, APLA will begin the search for a new Editor of PoLAR. The Search Committee will be constituted shortly. APLA is also considering creating a position of “Editor-Elect” to help in this transition. There is also discussion about transitioning PoLAR to a quarterly format. PoLAR has instituted a “Spillover Discussion” webpage that provides open-access content to supplement material appearing in the journal.

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. In addition, APLA’s outgoing President and its Treasurer have been looking into plans for fundraising, and will continue to explore endowment possibilities.

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. APLA would also like to thank Suzanne Mattingly for all of her assistance in managing the treasury and budget.