Society for Cultural Anthropology  
Section Annual Report for 2009

Names and Email Addresses of Section Officers through the Annual Meeting:

Ex-Officio:

Bruce Grant, President  [bruce.grant@nyu.edu]
Brad Weiss, Treasurer [blweis@wm.edu]
Jean Langford, Secretary [langf001@umn.edu]
Kim and Mike Fortun, Journal Editors [culanth@rpi.edu]
Mary Murrell, Student Caucus Representative [mary_murrell@yahoo.com]

Board Members:

Marisol de la Cadena [mdelac@ucdavis.edu]
Saba Mahmood [smahmood@berkeley.edu]
Bill Maurer (through 7/1) [wmimaurer@uci.edu]
Peter Redfield [redfield@unc.edu]
Danilyn Rutherford [druther1@ucsc.edu]

Status, Activities, and Accomplishments

1. Membership

The membership and subscription reports provided by AAA show that SCA and its journal, *Cultural Anthropology*, remain healthy. The Board continues to monitor membership trends, both in light of the current economic climate and the increased burden on membership fees given the move to Anthrosource. In 2002, we had a total of 1,665 members, our highest to date. At the close of 2009, we were down to 1,388, our lowest number over the past ten years. While we have undertaken a variety of initiatives to expand our membership—through membership drives, email blasts, new workshops and a new prize—we are also cognizant that we do not require those who submit to our journal to be members, something we may revisit in the future.

2. Financials

Our financial situation, on balance, is robust. Our revenues from the journal increased, and our overall net asset balance is strong (up to $237,000 as of November 2009, up from $198,000 over the previous year). While we are pleased with this rate of return, we remain essentially conservative while the new publications revenue formula (which favored us with attention to impact factor, as *CA* has the highest of any AAA publication) comes into effect.

a) Invited Sessions

Given SCA’s mission to advance interdisciplinary work across our field, our hallmark panel, “Culture at Large,” annually features a scholar from outside the discipline in an author-meets-critics format. [http://sca.culanth.org/meetings/aaa/cultureatlarge/cultureatlargearchive.htm](http://sca.culanth.org/meetings/aaa/cultureatlarge/cultureatlargearchive.htm). This year’s event with Michael Warner (Yale U English), on “Sex and Secularity,” proved a noted success. Additional invited sessions included: “Cartographies of Belonging” (with the Archeology Division), “Post-Fordist Affect,” “Ethnography at the Ends of the Human” (with AES), and “Extreme: Histories and Economies of Humanness inside Outerspaces” (with AES).

b) Special Events

Through the offices of our journal, we sponsored two “CA Public Advisory Board: Thematizing Security” sessions; a workshop on “How to Write a CA Journal Article,” and an Editorial Intern Meeting. We organized five Graduate Student Mentoring Workshops, described below. Following our Business Meeting, we continued our annual tradition of co-sponsoring a cash-bar reception with the AES.

4. Spring Meeting Activities

SCA looks to continue its successful run of small, biannual meetings with a conference on the theme of “Natureculture,” to be held May 7-8, 2010, at the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Following SCA’s interdisciplinary profile, Donna Haraway (UC Santa Cruz) will present the David Schneider Memorial Lecture. [http://sca.culanth.org/meetings/sca/2010/intro.html](http://sca.culanth.org/meetings/sca/2010/intro.html).

5. Mentorship Efforts

SCA was among the first sections to introduce a voting Student Caucus representative to its full-time board. Through the excellent work of Mary Murrell (UC Berkeley), we have run two years of Graduate Student Mentoring Workshops at the AAA, featuring five successful workshops this year. [http://sca.culanth.org/meetings/aaa/roundtables/roundtables2009.html](http://sca.culanth.org/meetings/aaa/roundtables/roundtables2009.html).

6. Awards Presented

SCA was pleased to present our eighth annual “Cultural Horizons Prize,” awarded each year by a jury of doctoral students for the best article in a given volume of CA, to Omri Elisha (Queen’s C, CUNY). We presented our first annual Gregory Bateson Book Prize, for a distinguished monograph of interdisciplinary character, to Barry F. Saunders (UNC, Chapel Hill). We particularly sought to expand the field of book prizes in anthropology with the latter award, as publishers emphasized how anthropology is underserved in comparison with other disciplines in this regard. [http://sca.culanth.org/prizes.htm](http://sca.culanth.org/prizes.htm).

8. Internal Communications
SCA runs an active Listserver with approximately 2000 subscribers. We limit email flow to approximately 20 messages per year, focusing on public section events. The website is in active use.

9. Changes to Bylaws

In the spring 2010 ballot, SCA will be proposing a number of bylaw upgrades to reflect best practices over past years. We look to correct the term for CA editors (from four years to five); to routinize the tradition of having standing editors not vote for their successors, in order to keep the section as open as possible to new networks and new ideas; and to recognize the voting right of our new Student Caucus board representative. Having had an untimely resignation from the board a few years back, and waiting eighteen months before the board slot could be filled again, SCA looks to institute the practice of turning to the candidate whom a resigning board member initially ran against, to start a new, full term, or a modified term that ensures the best rotation of board responsibilities.

Future Plans or Activities

1. Increasing Membership

A small but very important campaign for us is to see our journal, which currently has the leading impact factor of all journals published by the AAA, properly indexed. We have been working with the Publications Office and W-B, but have thus far been unsuccessful in having our indexing match that of other AAA journals.

2. New Forms of Scholarly Communication

SCA anticipates a number of new initiatives through our incoming Editors, Anne Allison and Charles Piot (Duke U). Currently, we have just launched our new Book Review section in the journal, as of November 2009, creating another portal into the journal’s content.

3. Collaboration

SCA was pleased to work with Mary Catherine Bateson at the Institute for Intercultural Studies in the formulation of and advertising for the new Gregory Bateson Prize.

Concerns and Recommendations

• SCA hopes for the Publications Office to be more of an advocate for our publishing concerns. Currently, proper indexing is our main campaign.

• SCA urges a more active role on the part of the Section Assembly and AAA Staff to make use of the newly created Student Caucus, which has essentially lay fallow since its creation.