Submitted By:

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- Brian Larkin (Board Member) - blarkin@barnard.edu
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- Kath Weston (Board Member) - kmw7j@eservices.virginia.edu

Membership:

Provide the most recent membership numbers.
Number of Members: 1656

List any factors you think may be increasing or decreasing your Section membership.

The membership and subscription reports provided by AAA show that SCA and its journal, Cultural Anthropology, are remarkably strong. 2013 was an interesting year. We saw a spike in membership in the middle of the year – over 1900 members in April – only to see membership dip to 1656 at the end of the year. Our membership has always increased in the years when we have the SCA spring conference, so perhaps that will increase our ranks in 2014. In general, our recruiting strategies have been successful. We now offer multiple categories of membership. We dropped the student rate $12.50 and launched an email outreach campaign to students in advance of the AAA. And we have carried forward a variety of promotional initiatives: membership drives, email blasts, student workshops, and a well-regarded book prize. The breadth of inter-activities available through our website (discussed below) have brought a range of new members to the SCA. In the past, we have discussed the possibility of requiring those who submit to our journal to become member; this is not a measure we have yet taken, though we do now charge a nominal fee ($20) for authors who are not members who want to submit essays for consideration.

Finances:

Provide the most recent financial balances for Section budgets (and publication sponsored budgets).
Financial Balance: 182117

Publication Sponsored budgets.
Incomplete

List any factors you think are affecting your Section's finances.
Our overall net balance has been healthy and grew for over a decade through 2010. Our royalty from the Wiley-Blackwell contract for 2013 (as of Oct 31, 2013) was almost $27,000, which exceeds our budgeted projection for three quarters of the year.

Over the last few years, the SCA Board has consciously determined to draw down our fund balance, on the principle that section assets—especially insofar as a section charges membership dues—should be used rather than banked. This decision accounts for the overall decline in our net fund balance from $227,849.22 on January 1, 2012 to $182,117 (as of November 1, 2013). Since 2011, we have devoted significant resources to expanding our on-line presence through a new website that is now home to both the journal and the society. The total cost to SCA of the website in 2012 was $37,916.53; in 2013 we spent much less on the website. While total expenditures for the 2013 won’t be clarified until March, we-budgeted 12,000 for 2014, on the assumption that this will be roughly our annual operating expense for the website, and it approximates our 2013 expenses. We anticipate that website management will be an ongoing expense that must be considered in our overall financial picture. We also continue to pay our managing editor a salary of $30,000 (working 20 hours/week). (We arranged for this appointment to be made through Duke University in order to employ the managing editor rather than operate on an independent contractor model.) The managing editor has been, and continues to be responsible for managing the website and overseeing the editorial intern program, but we anticipate that our new Web Director (discussed below) will assume a major part in these activities. Needless to say, these are significant fixed costs; we will be assessing the viability of our management model for this project on a yearly basis.

Sessions:

List the titles of your Section's AAA meeting invited sessions, co-sponsored sessions, and any special events your Section sponsored or in which it participated.

Session Type: Other

Session: See http://production.culanth.org/fieldsights/399-sca-events-at-aaa-2013

Awards

List awards presented this year on behalf of your Section.

Award: http://production.culanth.org/fieldsights/421-cath
Date: 11/22/2013
Recipient: http://production.culanth.org/fieldsights/421-cath
Affiliation: http://production.culanth.org/fieldsights/421-catherine-fennell-awarde

Award: http://production.culanth.org/fieldsights/420-eliz
Date: 11/22/2013
Recipient: http://production.culanth.org/fieldsights/420-eliz

Meetings

Did your section request a meeting registration waiver or community engagement grant?

Yes

If granted, who/what was it/they used for?

Christopher Pinney (University College London), Birgit Meyer (University of Utrecht), and W.J.T. Mitchell (University of Chicago).

List spring meeting activities
Mentorship:
Mentorship efforts (at or beyond the AAA meetings) to any of the following (e.g., special activities, funding, awards, guidance/advising on professional matters, etc.) Undergraduate and/or graduate students.

SCA was among the first sections to introduce a voting Student Caucus representative to its full-time board. With help from Grant Otsuki (Toronto), we, once again, offered Student Faculty Mentoring Workshops at the AAA in Chicago. Faculty members associated with SCA met with groups of students working on topics of shared interest over lunch in the conference hotel.


Our journal’s editorial intern program remains an important avenue for mentoring our student members. Drawn from graduate programs around the country, our editorial interns have produced “Curated Collections” of virtual issues that provide additional content and teaching suggestions related to a series of thematically related articles.

The 2013 Curated Collection is: Affect, Embodiment and Sense Perception

http://production.culanth.org/curated_collections/16-affect-embodiment-and-sense-perception

The interns are also responsible for our “Supplementary Pages,” “Episcope,” and a new podcast initiative, “AnthroPod”

http://www.culanth.org/conversations/24-anthropod-the-sca-podcast

We also prepare to welcome in a new Grad Student Rep, Jonah Rubin (Chicago) for a two-year term.

Early career scholars.
NA
Independent scholars.
NA
Outreach:
Additional outreach efforts (at or beyond the AAA meetings) to other sections, interest groups, and scholarly societies, government agencies, public education/community engagement, and underrepresented minorities.
The Board solicited input from our task force on the issues that need to be addressed in order to become, in effect, the publisher of our own on-line journal; and to develop models, possibly collaborative ones, for working out the long-term financial security of the SCA given the likely costs, and potential decline in revenues that will be associated with this transition. We solicited sponsors of the journal through a direct appeal to departments of anthropology around the world; and our new managing editor, Tim Elfenbein, has been tireless and meticulous in guiding us through the complex processes of transition.

Communications:

Status and use of Section internal communications such as a website, list serve, or newsletter (if applicable): Please list internal communication tools you use and what they are used for.

8. Internal Communications

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

9. Changes at the Journal, Cultural Anthropology

The Board appointed a search committee who conducted a lengthy search for the next editor of CA, who will succeed Anne Allison and Charlie Piot (Duke) in 2015. We were delighted to select Dominic Boyer (Rice) who will work with a collective from his home department on the editorial job. While we have every confidence in Dominic and his team we think it is important to note that it was extremely difficult to find willing candidates for the editorship. The reading load on editors is now so demanding, and the resources that host universities are willing to offer are so limited, that it is a real challenge to find scholars who are capable and willing to assume this crucial service. We anticipate that this will be a very pressing problem going forward. Indeed, it will be a problem for scholarly publishing more generally, and we would urge the AAA to consider initiatives and publishing models that will address this concern.

Finally, we were delighted to report that our long-time managing editor, Ali Kenner, received a tenure-eligible position in the Fall, and – sadly for us - resigned her position. The Board and Editors were fortunate to find such an able replacement in Timothy Elfenbein, who assumed Ali’s duties in July.

10. New Forms of Scholarly Communication
As noted above, a major project for 2013 was the management of our a state-of-the-art joint SCA/Cultural Anthropology website, which explores new venues and forms of scholarly conversation, from video of conference proceedings to short thought pieces on breaking events to online discussions of emerging topics and themes in the discipline. The new website [http://production.culanth.org/] integrates the current SCA and CA websites, and has four main sections:

The Journal section houses most of what is available through the current journal website -- supplemental pages, theme and area lists, curated collections, information about the journal and the intern program.

The Society section includes all of the content available through the current SCA site.

A Site Guide that provides visitors with information regarding the site and how to use it. Here, visitors can learn about journal article submission, available teaching tools, etc.

Fieldsights, our new blog, emerged out of the committee’s desire to expand our modes of communication and scholarly exchange. In addition to being used for SCA and CA announcements, Fieldsights houses the following new features:

Episcope – a current events blog, with anthropologists weighing in on contemporary issues of pressing concern.

Fieldnotes – an ongoing conversation around fieldwork and the research process.

Anthro Happenings – snapshots of people, places, and events from the SCA/CA community.

From the Editors – announcements about new journal content – from the print issue, the archives, and Wiley Blackwell’s promotion office.

Hot Spots – a forum that reports on current “hot spots” around the world from the perspective of anthropologists and others on the scene.

Visual and New Media Review – a blog that reviews emerging work at the intersection of cultural anthropology and visual/new media.

SCA News – our section’s monthly column in Anthropology News.
In order to optimize our web presence, the Executive Board also proposed a change in our bylaws that will allow the Board to appoint a Web Director to a three-year term. The Web Director will advise the Board and the Editors, but (for the sake of democratic accountability, and given the number of appointed offices we already have on our Board) will not be a voting member of the Board. This proposal was approved by our membership on the Spring ballot. We are currently finalizing a list of candidates who will be considered for this position, which will begin some time in 2014.

**Governance:**

*Changes in bylaws or governance structure.*

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**Initiatives:**

*What Initiatives does your Section have underway or planned for the coming year: membership, publication annual meeting, mentorship, other?*

**Collaboration**

SCA has worked to increase collaboration between our student representative and the student representatives from other AAA sections, who have exchanged information and announcements regarding upcoming events. We also hope to use these collaborations as a means to facilitate a productive discussion about alternative publishing models. We have already had discussions with a few other section and editors about these possibilities.

**Ask AAA:**

*Please tell us what your chief concerns and issues are, especially if they are not previously noted.*

*What issues would you like raised or recommendations would you like to make to the Section Assembly Executive Committee (SAEC)? Please be specific.*

FIRST: GET RID OF THIS PORTAL DELIVERY SYSTEM- IT IS A TERRIBLE WAY TO PRODUCE A REPORT!!!

**Concerns and Recommendations**

• SCA urges an evaluation of the registration fees charged for attending the annual meeting. The cost of registration is prohibitive to non-AAA members. This makes it very difficult for SCA to
sponsor the kind of interdisciplinary conversations SCA has long sought to foster. We would welcome any information the EB can provide on the costs and benefits of the current system. A survey of the way other professional societies structure registration fees could provide useful comparative insight and a sense of best practices. We have raised this issue in the past, and feel it continues to merit discussion.

- We have raised questions with the Publications Office about the fee structure entailed in the current AAA Author’s Agreement. Our investigations with a number of publishers suggest that these fees are both onerous, and outside of the standard charges for scholarly associations. We hope these fees can be reconsidered, and would like to have more communication with the Board and the Publications Office on the matter.

- In general, we remain concerned about the governance structure of the AAA as a whole, and the transparency of its decision making processes, in particular. It was difficult to get information about such major decisions as the Open Access proposal, or the author agreement fees, from either the staff or the Executive Board. In particular, we are concerned that the democratically elected members of the Board have not been informed of proposals that have come to the sections when we have sought their counsel on these matters. If the sections are to work together on the pressing issues we all face, then transparency of communication is not only an ethical obligation, it is a minimal requirement of good governance which the AAA needs to address.

- SCA urges the Executive Board to play a stronger role in considering alternatives to the current AAA publishing arrangement. As in past years, we are eager to see the AAA leadership think creatively about alternative models. As we have continued to note, libraries at our home institutions bear the cost of the current contract. So do our students and staff at public universities, who end up shouldering the burden of budget shortfalls through tuition hikes, furloughs, and lay-offs. Advances in technology are leading to changes in scholarly publishing that bear on the very nature and raison d’être of professional organizations like ours. We are pleased that Open Access has been made a real possibility, and offered as a “pilot” project; we feel that more discussion of additional alternatives remains needed.

Indeed, our experience in preparing for the transition to open access suggests that the AAA and its section are now in a position where they will, in effect, become the publishers of their scholarship. We urge the AAA leadership to develop models of editorial collectives that will allow sections to have the flexibility to pursue this objective, and to have the ability, for example, to hire staff directly, apply for grants, and team up with libraries and universities with the interest an ability to support these projects.

**What issues would you like raised or recommendations would you like to make to the AAA Executive Board? Please be specific.**

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What issues would you like raised or recommendations would you like to make to the AAA Staff? Please be specific.
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