

The CMIA finished out a relatively productive year, marked by greater coherence as a working committee actively engaged in supporting the breadth and diversity of Anthropology as a discipline and the AAA as the umbrella professional association for anthropologists.

This report summarizes CMIA activities and collaborative efforts in the past year and offers the Executive Board our recommendation regarding the future constitution of the Committee going forward.

Program Panels at Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, Dec 2009

CMIA sponsored two sessions at the annual meetings, coordinated by Program Chair, departing Committee member Ananth Aiyer (U Michigan- Flint).

Racing the Field: Culture, Racism, and Anthropologists of Color co-sponsored with the National Association of Student Anthropologists. The panel involved rising scholars from NYU, UC Berkeley/San Francisco, and Los Angeles, and U of North Texas and senior discussants from NYU and UCLA.

ReThinking the Cultural Politics of Categorization: Refocusing Gazes on Racialization co-sponsored with the Association of Black Anthropologists. The panel involved scholars from California State U- Los Angeles, Rutgers U and Syracuse U.

CMIA would like to recognize Ananth for his service as Program Chair for the last two annual meetings and thanks him for his commitment to supporting the co-sponsorship model. We are delighted that committee member Lourdes Gutiérrez Nájera (Dartmouth U) has agreed to serve as Program Chair for the 2010 meetings. Lourdes just served as Program Chair for ALA and is using that Section network experience to increase the visibility of CMIA's invited sessions.

This reflects CMIA articulated goal to serve as in a bridging capacity across AAA to sustain scholarly dialogue around issues related to minoritization. We are grateful for Lourdes' willingness to take on this role during her sabbatical fellowship at Yale.

2009 Minority Dissertation Fellowship Award

CMIA received 25 complete submissions for the 2009 dissertation award that were eligible for review this year. All seven members of the CMIA participated in the evaluations review. A complete application includes an extensive personal cover letter and research plan, three letters of recommendation, a cv or resume, and doctoral transcripts. Candidates also provide a statement regarding their employment, as well as current and pending sources of financial support.

In conference call, the committee re-affirmed evaluation criteria to include importance of the work, contribution to the minority presence in the discipline, clearly stated goals to be achieved during the fellowship, appropriate use of data, attention to relevant literature, contribution to the literature, adequacy of research design, style and organization of application, and the likelihood of completing the dissertation within the one-year timeframe. In general, applicants are asked to explicitly state the relevance of their work to a broader public constituency and to address the importance of a minority fellowship award to the applicant.

CMIA awarded the 2009 fellowship to Sherina Felciano-Santos (U Michigan- Ann Arbor) for her dissertation, *Tainos in Borikén? The Everyday Linguistic and Social Practices of Constructing a Contemporary Indigenous Identity in*

Puerto Rico. Drawn from an outstanding pool, this is the first Minority Dissertation Fellowship awarded to a linguistic anthropologist. Among the five finalists, CMIA called out for honorable mention two applicants, Rebecca L. Carter (U Michigan- Ann Arbor) for her work, *Healing the Body of the Wounded City: Religious Responses to Violence in Post-Katrina New Orleans*, and Su'ad Abdul Khabeer (Princeton U) for *The Fifth Element: Muslim Youth Identity and Hip Hop in Chicago*.

CMIA hosted the three doctoral students for an award luncheon in Philadelphia's Chinatown prior to the award ceremony. CMIA appreciates the generous support of the AAA Executive Board for making this annual event possible.

Outreach Activities with AAA Section Assembly (SA)

Over the summer, Section Assembly Convener Mary L. Gray (Indian U- Bloomington) contacted CMIA about the SA task force on membership plans to undertake long-term outreach to historically marginalized constituencies. SA Convener sought CMIA involvement particularly given the Section Assembly's express objective in increasing membership from Historically Black Colleges and Universities, tribal colleges, and other historically marginalized intellectual communities linked to urban and rural community colleges.

CMIA has enthusiastically embraced the possibility of a joint venture with the Section Assembly and we are exploring specific outreach and recruitment activities in conjunction with the 2010 meetings in New Orleans. With the assistance of committee staff, Kathleen Terry-Sharp, CMIA also disseminated to the Section Assembly the AAA plans for Student Saturday for the Philadelphia meetings with the goal of building on this effort in subsequent years.

In Philadelphia, Mary Gray and Vilma Santiago-Irizarry joined CMIA's scheduled meeting to discuss the outreach efforts going forward. Within CMIA, committee members have discussed extensively our mandate and on-going interest in serving as the "action arm" for a broad constituency of partners within and across AAA. We feel the need to expressly articulate a coalition-building strategy that involves not only the "identity-based" AAA Sections but also all the subsidiary units of AAA concerned with expanding representation for all minoritized individuals and communities. Recognizing the continuing effects of historical discrimination, CMIA nonetheless feels strongly that the strength of the discipline is tied not only to remediating the under-representation of racial and ethnic minorities but all minoritized groups.

AAA Commission on Race and Racism in Anthropology and the AAA (CRRRA)

Janis Hutchinson, Audrey Smedley, and Najwa Adra, a liaison to CMIA, joined the CMIA meeting in Philadelphia to briefly address the work of the Commission. Discussion pertained to the initial findings of a preliminary survey of minority anthropologists within the AAA, sampling strategy, possible future directions.


A related update on the AAA Project on Race was provided by Yolanda Moses (also CRRRA Honorary co-Chair) and project grant manager, Joseph Jones, regarding current and future venues as well as plans for the two-day program on Capitol Hill scheduled for January 2010.

Future Member Constitution of CMIA

CMIA recognizes departing member Ananth Aiyer for his excellent service on the Committee and welcomes incoming elected members, Whitney L. Battle-Baptiste (U Massachusetts-Amherst) and Karen Ho (U Minnesota) who began their terms with the Philadelphia meetings.

In the prior year, CMIA has identified several structural issues that the Committee faces in achieving its Executive Board mandate (see Annual Report, 07-08). Specifically, the current Committee affirms the need to recruit more senior AAA member candidates who can bring their experience and career visibility to bear on the activities of the Committee. We also recognize the need for sustained engagement with **both** the traditional identity-based Sections *as well as* other sub-units that specifically endeavor to broaden the participation of under-served populations generally in our professional association and in related disciplinary discourse.

With respect to future elections, CMIA encourages the Executive Board to explore new mechanisms to create candidate slates of both senior and earlier-career scholars. For example, the CMIA could be constituted in part by at-large-member elections, supplemented by complementary appointments by the Executive Board – with an explicit eye to expanded participation from both established scholars and participation from “minoritized anthropologists” extending beyond traditional race/ethnicity. Thus, for example, representation might reflect the stated commitments of groups such as AFA, SOLGA, the Society for Anthropology in Community Colleges. CMIA specifically notes the Section Assembly task force partnership (discussed earlier) in this regard.

Submitted: 

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