



ASSOCIATION BUSINESS

2007 President's Report

Expanding and Engaging Anthropologies

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AAA PRESIDENT



In 2007, AAA continued efforts to be more inclusive, to expand the reach of anthropology and to engage with a variety of publics and powerful institutions. This annual report highlights some of these efforts.

• Launching of AAA's ambitious public education project *RACE: Are We So Different?*, including a 5,000-square-foot traveling museum exhibit and an award-winning website.

• Developing a new publishing partnership with Wiley-Blackwell that includes improved financial terms for journal-sponsoring sections and AAA.

• Responding proactively to the increasing calls for anthropological expertise in the military and intelligence communities, the "AAA Commission on the Engagement of Anthropology with the US Security and Intelligence Communities" completed its final report and the AAA Executive Board adopted a statement on the Human Terrain System (HTS) project.

• Lowering dues for student members and implementing income-based dues, thereby increasing the potential economic diversity of AAA.

• Furthering the decolonization and democratization of anthropology, we formed new ad hoc commissions on "Race and Racism in Anthropology and the AAA" and "World Anthropologies," and a permanent "Committee on Practicing, Applied and Public Interest Anthropology." By the end of the 2007 Annual Meeting, I anticipate a new "Indigenous Anthropologist" section.

RACE: Are We So Different?

The AAA *RACE: Are We So Different?* public education project debuted in Jan 2007. The project includes a 5,000-square-foot traveling museum exhibit, an interactive website, and educational forums. More than 700,000 people have visited the RACE exhibit and the website. Media coverage, including over 50 reviews and commentaries, has been overwhelmingly positive.

The RACE website (www.understandingRACE.org) was a nominee for the 2007 Webby Award in Science and received the 2007 Interactive

Media Award for an Outstanding Achievement in Education. K-12 teachers and other educators are recognizing the usefulness of the RACE exhibit and website for teaching. Education World, for example, gave the RACE website an A+ overall, with an A+ for content and site design.

The traveling RACE exhibit, completed in collaboration with the Science Museum of Minnesota in Saint Paul, is booked through the end of 2011. After the exhibit opened in St. Paul, it traveled to the Charles Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit in the summer, and is now at Exploration Place, Inc. in Wichita, Kansas. Over 20 museums are on a waiting list. Because of this demand, we recently submitted a grant proposal to produce a smaller-scale version and we are working to secure funding for a second full-size exhibit.

Finally, we are working to meet the demand for more educational materials for teachers, educators and AAA members. An educational DVD is in production that will include videos from the exhibit and the website and we are seeking funding to produce an exhibit catalogue/companion publication. I hope that the RACE project will help bring anthropology back into important public debates around race, science and racism.

Wiley-Blackwell Agreement: A New Publishing Partnership

When Bill Davis, executive director of AAA, former President Don Brenneis and others envisioned going digital with AAA publications, it was clear to them that there was little alternative. Most AAA publications were losing money and they were losing readers to publications that had already made the switch to digital forms.

AAA developed AnthroSource (AS), the online portal to anthropology, with Mellon Funds and signed up with University of California Press to help with the sales, distribution and production of our publications. More of a contractual relationship than a partnership, the arrangement worked well in that we successfully made the transition to a digital platform, developed an online identity, kept control of our publications, and protected authors' rights to their intellectual property. However, libraries were somewhat slow to adopt AS and the transition resulted in great financial costs—increasing rather than decreasing the financial burden to AAA and especially to the small publishing sections.

This spring, AAA requested new proposals from publishers to help develop further AS and to share both the costs and the profits that might accrue over the next five years. Seven publishers responded and this summer the AAA Executive Board selected Wiley-Blackwell (WB). WB offers increased visibility for our publications, a global network and outstanding financial terms. WB has an excellent reputation in the humanities and sciences for overall professionalism and particularly for excellent working relationships with editors. WB provides us with a guaranteed minimum profit of 2.7 million dollars over five years. We are now consulting with various stakeholders to develop a model for sharing expenses and profits among publications.

In 2006, we began to offer AS at no charge to Tribal Colleges and Universities in the US, Canadian First Nation and Arctic Colleges, US Historically Black Colleges, and universities and institutions in less developed countries. We also participate with the HINARI, AGORA and OARE consortia to make our publications free or heavily subsidized in developing countries. AAA maintains control of its publications and their pricing, and as part of this general agreement, WB will honor these commitments to increasing access.

Engaging with Intelligence and National Security Communities

The ad hoc Commission on the Engagement of Anthropology with US Intelligence and National Security Communities had a very productive and busy year, culminating in a final report to the association. I am in deepest gratitude to James Peacock, former AAA president, for so deftly chairing this commission, as well as to all the members of the commission: Robert Albro, Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, Kerry Fosher, Monica Heller, Laura McNamara, George Marcus and David Price. The commission has been a model of collaborative work and civil discourse. I look forward to an association-wide discussion of their findings and recommendations.

While the commission was hard at work on the future and long-range engagements of anthropologists with intelligence and national security communities, in late 2007 the military's Human Terrain System (HTS) project began to receive widespread media coverage. This new initiative embeds anthropologist and social scientists with military units in Afghanistan and Iraq. In consultation with the ad hoc commission, the AAA Executive Board intensely debated whether we should publicly respond and if so, how. The result was a statement that raises a number of ethical concerns about the project. I view this statement, as well as the work of the commission, as proactive steps. Both the statement and the commission report are clear about the importance to the association of abiding by our code of ethics.

Inclusiveness and Social Justice

In a number of ways, we have moved this year to make anthropology more inclusive and to continue to decolonize AAA and anthropology.

To maintain or increase access to AAA by those with the least financial means, in 2007 AAA

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implemented a new income-based dues structure. The new structure reduces dues for students, individuals at the beginning of their careers, un/underemployed individuals, and anyone else who earns less than \$75,000 per year, and it raises dues for everyone else. The data from this first year show that AAA members are taking advantage of lower dues and that others are paying higher dues if they are in higher income brackets. The dues structure seems to be working to maintain economic inclusiveness, while contributing to the association's healthy financial outlook.

Responding to needs to open up conversations between US-centric anthropologies and other anthropologies worldwide and especially in the global South, incoming President Setha Low initiated an ad hoc Commission on World Anthropologies. This group will take up issues such as translation of key papers and making our

meetings more open and accessible to anthropologists from other countries and associations.

Race and racism still pervade the structures of AAA and the daily lives of anthropologists. The AAA Executive Board, therefore, approved the ad hoc Commission on "Race and Racism in Anthropology and the AAA." Co-chaired by Janis Hutchinson and Tom Patterson, this group will work to provide means to bring issues of race and racism to the center of decision-making at AAA and will moderate an association discussion on "progress toward racial justice."

Following the recommendation of the "practicing anthropology working group," this summer, the AAA Executive Board formed a new permanent Committee on Practicing, Applied and Public Interest Anthropology.

During the 2005 Annual Meeting, I had a cherished opportunity to talk with Bea Medicine, just days before she died. Bea asked me why AAA still did not have a section for American Indians and what could be done about this continued injustice. This year, the AAA Executive Board took action to encourage the formation of an American

Indian/Indigenous Anthropology section, with JoAllyn Archambault expertly coordinating a membership list, drafting bylaws and deciding on a name. All the pieces are now in place, and by the end of the 2007 Annual Meeting, I anticipate that AAA will include, for the very first time, an "Indigenous Anthropologists" section.

Looking Back and Ahead

Looking back at my four years as president-elect and president, these have been active, engaged and somewhat tumultuous years for AAA. Change is a constant. We have moved beyond labor disputes and have taken a brave stand for fair labor. We have moved our publications from print to digital and from near financial ruin to solid financial footing. We have worked to make our association more open and inclusive and at the same time to regain a public voice.

I have the deepest gratitude toward many individuals and groups that have come together to improve on various aspects of AAA. Serving as president of AAA has been a pleasure that I will never forget. Thank you. ☐

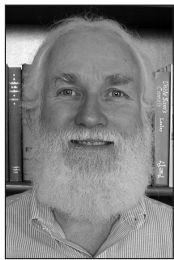
MEET THE BOARD

Before T J Ferguson started his term as the Practicing/Professional member of the AAA Executive Board, outgoing AN Managing Editor Stacy Lathrop exchanged emails with him for this column.

The Need to Serve All Anthropologists

A Conversation with T J Ferguson

AN: *You have pursued a career track largely outside of academia. What do you think your experience can contribute to the association?*



T J Ferguson

T J Ferguson: I began my career with six years of employment in governmental service, working as the tribal archaeologist for the Pueblo of Zuni. Following that, I worked for a nonprofit educational corporation, and then I opened my own research company in Tucson, Arizona. I now have a quarter-time appointment as a professor of practice in the department of anthropology at the University of Arizona, and this provides me with the time I need to continue my practice of anthropology, which is providing research services to tribes, federal and state agencies, and museums.

Over the last 30 years, I've watched the process of anthropological knowledge creation gradually expand from work conducted by scholars based in universities to work conducted by anthropologists in government and the private sector. A substantial amount of anthropological knowledge is now created in the context of application outside of academia, where research is multidisciplinary and responsive to wide range of users. I think my career experience is important to AAA because it

provides insight into the type of work conducted by anthropologists employed in government, businesses and non-governmental organizations, as well as the services that anthropologists like me want from AAA. AAA exists to serve its members, and as the employment opportunities of its members continue to expand beyond academia, it needs to make adjustments to remain relevant.

AN: *As more anthropologists enter the private sector, do you think AAA will need to revisit its mission, objectives and ethics code? If so, how?*

TJF: As the primary professional society of anthropologists in the US, the mission of AAA is to advance anthropology by encouraging research and its use in solving human problems. An important part of this mission is the dissemination of anthropological knowledge through annual meetings and publications. This fundamental mission is relevant to all anthropologists regardless of whether they are employed in academia, government or the private sector. Given the goal of our association to promote the entire field of anthropology in all its diversity, however, I think that AAA needs to reassess the services it provides to members to make sure the organization equitably and meaningfully serves the needs of all anthropologists.

Now that more than half the people earning advanced degrees in anthropology find employment outside of academia, we need to continually reevaluate and adjust the programs of AAA to make sure entire membership is well served. The only way that we can attract and retain

the number of members we need for a strong and effective professional association is to make sure AAA provides useful services that give value commensurate with the cost of membership. I look forward to receiving advice from the newly established Committee on Practicing, Applied and Public Interest Anthropology (CPAPI) on what we can do to make AAA a more inclusive organization that welcomes all anthropologists and provides all members with useful services.

With regard to ethics, I think our current code of ethics covers all anthropological endeavors in a variety of institutional settings. However, as the world we study and work in changes, this code of ethics needs to be periodically revisited to make sure that it remains relevant. And when special situations arise, as with the recent concerns about anthropological involvement in the US military's Human Terrain System Project, AAA needs to be ready to provide timely ethical guidance, as it has done.

AN: *You've stated that you think the four-field approach is fundamental in anthropological practice and collaborative research. Can you elaborate on why you think this is the case?*

TJF: Today more than ever, I think all anthropologists need to be trained in all four fields of anthropology. As an archaeologist who works with Native Americans, in my own research I need to have a basic understanding of cultural anthropology, linguistics and biological anthropology. Similarly, I think that biological anthropologists