

**Annual Report 2005—Society for Medical Anthropology
January 31, 2006**

Submitted by Craig Janes, SMA President

Members of the SMA Board from Jan 1, 2005 to Nov. 18, 2005	Ad Hoc Non-voting Board Members
Craig Janes, President	Janelle Taylor, News Column Co-Ed.
Marcia Inhorn, President-elect	Lauren Wynne, Webmaster
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Joao Biehl	
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Katherine Timura (student representative)	
Helen Lambert	
Robbie Davis-Floyd	
<i>New Board Members, starting Nov. 18, 2005:</i>	
Vinay Kamat	
Tom Leatherman	
<i>Retiring Board Members:</i>	
Linda Anne Rebhun	
Carolyn Sargent	

E-mail addresses of officers during the reporting period:

Craig Janes: cjanes@sfu.ca
 Marcia Inhorn: minhorn@umich.edu
 Arachu Castro: arachu_castro@hms.harvard.edu

President’s Report

It has been a productive year for the SMA. After the problems associated with the cancellation of our Fall 2004 meetings (as discussed in our last annual report), the SMA recovered by offering a full menu of sessions and papers in conjunction with the Society for Applied Anthropology during their spring 2005 meetings in Santa Fe. In addition to the prominent presence of SMA at the SfAA meetings, we brought an additional 9 invited/sponsored sessions to Santa Fe. The Executive Board had a full business meeting as well, making good progress on several critical issues (see “accomplishments” below).

The SMA remains in reasonably good financial health, though declines in membership (consistent across all AAA sections) and uncertainties over AnthroSource revenues cloud what would be an otherwise optimistic outlook. The SMA has taken on several initiatives designed to provide services to members, enhance membership, and reduce costs. These are discussed in more detail later in this report, but in brief include a renewed effort to attract students to the organization (student-run awards, and a new student organization, MASA, organized with support from incoming president Marcia Inhorn and the SMA board); continued growth of our website and other fora for electronic communication; several new policy initiatives; and an anticipated, though modest decrease, to editorial office-related costs of producing the *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*.

This said, and as is the case with all publishing sections, AnthroSource continues to pose a substantial threat to the ability of the SMA to continue sponsorship of other activities – especially meeting-related functions and our several prizes and awards.

Accomplishments

Upon taking office as President in 2003 I indicated to the membership that I had several items on my agenda. Briefly these were to: Continue to build the website and other means of electronic communications; enhance the public policy presence of the SMA; and develop a more active and visible SMA board. Although the events of 2004 slowed progress toward these goals somewhat, I believe we have made several positive strides. Briefly, our chief accomplishments include:

- Increased visibility of the SMA through our website and our membership in H-Net. The total number of visitors to the website since our launch in 2002 reached 500,000 this fall. The number of “hits” has increased dramatically in just the past year. From January 1, 2005 to November 30, 2005, the SMA site received 194,554 visitors, with an average of 582.5 per day. The vast majority of visits come without on-line referrals, suggesting that they are repeat visitors, or members. Other than the main page, visitors most often consult the academic programs, jobs, and academic resource (syllabi, etc.) pages. Significant credit for the success of our website goes to past-President Mark Nichter, who remains diligent in reviewing and adding content; and our webmaster, Lauren Wynne, a graduate student at the University of Chicago.

Plans for the site in 2006 include greatly expanding the recently developed sections mentioned above as well as the site’s *History* and *In Print* section. We are also looking into development of password accessible pages (i.e. “members only” resources), and development of a searchable directory of medical anthropologists. Given the large number of emails we receive from undergraduate students interested in medical anthropology careers, a job guide will be one of the first new initiatives on the site in 2006. This section will be part of our *Jobs* section and will link to graduate placement information from some of the graduate programs in our database. In general, we hope to increase member contributions to the site.

In 2005 we added several new list editors to our H-Net listserv (H-Net Medanthro), and created a new SMA Executive Board subcommittee to oversee the web and the listserv. We have established a clear relationship between the list editors and the board, with the board having authority over editorial policy. H-Net continues to be a successful avenue of communication. It is not a terribly active list, but serves an important communication function. It tends to be used most often for issuing calls for papers, announcing conferences, and distributing SMA news.

- An enhanced public policy presence of the SMA through the “takes a stand” and related initiatives. Past-President Mark Nichter developed the “Takes a Stand” initiative, where current

topics are debated in electronic and conference venues, ideally with the product of external publications, white papers, etc. Two “takes a stand” topics have been introduced: a debate over the ethics of international clinical trials, especially exploitation of people from poor countries by transnational pharmaceutical corporations; and the issue of incorporating greater anthropological insight into research and policy on “health disparities”. Kate MacQueen and Mark Nichter are heading the former initiative, Suzanne Heurtin-Roberts and Merrill Singer, the latter. The SMA has organized conference symposia around both topics, but in general the initiative has not yet developed much steam, and the Board has considered a variety of options to stimulate more activity on the policy front. At our 2005 board meeting we established a special policy subcommittee. That committee is charged with enhancing the public policy presence of the SMA. President Craig R. Janes has asked the Board to consider additional options – using the web, H-Net, and the Medical Anthropology Quarterly – to publish policy-relevant work by members. In this initiative the SMA special interest groups would be invited to contribute short essays to the MAQ. As with the “takes a stand” program, a variety of supporting materials would be posted to the website, and H-Net could serve as a forum for debate. This initiative, announced in November of 2005, has been met with significant enthusiasm by the interest groups. We are cautiously optimistic that this enthusiasm will be productive.

- A more active and visible SMA board. Until 2004 the SMA board met just once per year during the AAA meetings. Except for the month or two running up to the AAA meetings, there has been relatively little communication amongst the Board for the remainder of the year. During the AAA meetings, the Board is busy preparing for the annual business meeting, which involves developing reports of the past year’s activities. Relatively little time is spent on future initiatives. These practices have impaired the Board’s ability to take on policy initiatives, or do much beyond the normal conduct of business. In November 2004 the Board voted to move to a semi-annual meeting cycle, with a spring meeting to be scheduled either during our bi-annual meetings with the SfAA or at the President’s home institution. An initial budget of \$10,000 was approved by the Board to support such meetings. We met in Santa Fe in April 2005, and will meet again in Vancouver in April 2006. These meetings have allowed us to give SMA matters greater consideration than in the past, and are largely responsible for many of the accomplishments identified herein.
- Several new SMA awards and prizes. In 2005 we held competitions for three important new awards: a Career Achievement Award, created to acknowledge a scholar who has made substantial contribution to the development of medical anthropology as a field; a Graduate Student Mentorship Award, given to those who have played an important role in training newer generations of medical anthropologists; and a “Practicing Medical Anthropology” award, given to scholars who have been successful in moving medical anthropology from theory to practice, and from the academy to public health practice and policy. In 2005 we established a new award to recognize a book-length work in medical anthropology.
- New editors for the Medical Anthropology Quarterly. Under the leadership of past editor, Gay Becker, the SMA Board conducted a successful search for new editors of the Medical Anthropology Quarterly, a position currently held by Pam Erickson. Andrea Sankar and Mark Luborsky of Wayne State University will begin the editorial transition this coming summer. Wayne State has promised excellent institutional support of the journal, which should permit some reduction in editorial office expenses.

Joint Meetings with the Society for Applied Anthropology, 2006.

The Society for Medical Anthropology meets bi-annually with the Society for Applied Anthropology. The SfAA provides the meeting space, and makes all local arrangements. The SMA board appoints a program committee to review proposed SMA-sponsored sessions. In April, 2006 we will meet with the SfAA in Vancouver. Vinay Kamat (UBC) and Craig Janes (SFU) were appointed by the Board to head the program committee. The committee approved 22 volunteered SMA sessions, including a formal SMA plenary and reception; and a “meet the SMA presidents” event for the SMA student’s association. We also scheduled 22 sessions assembled from individually-submitted abstracts. With the strong support of SMA, it is likely that the Vancouver meetings will be the largest out-of-country meetings organized by SfAA. Over one-third of SfAA sessions, whether reviewed by the SMA or not, address health topics.

Financial Affairs

The SMA fund balance was, \$134,414.48 on November 30, 2004, and \$153,670.03 on November 30, 2005. The Basker Prize (maintained as a separate fund) balance was \$11,025.13 on January 1, 2005, and \$10,436.19 on November 30, 2005. Revenues for 2005 were projected at \$71,610.00 and expenditures were projected at \$98,034; thus, the projected deficit for 2005 is <\$26,424>. By the end of November our revenues had fallen about \$6,200 short of projections. Expenditures were on target, so we expect that once December expenses are calculated and dues revenues are transferred to the publication budget, the end of the year will show the SMA in considerable deficit. The deficit is due to three things: 1) a substantial and significant decline in membership (down about 7% by November of 2005); 2) UC Press Fees; and 3) lower than expected revenues from subscriptions (AnthroSource, chiefly).

The uncertainty of AnthroSource revenues continues to cloud our financial future. As the section with the highest dues in the AAA, and with AnthroSource fully online, we expect that memberships, especially among students, will continue to decline. Raising dues is not an option, nor can we reduce expenses to any degree (nearly all budgetary flexibility is eaten up by the MAQ). Although we will make a transition to a new editorial office of MAQ in 2006, and though this will save some money due to strong institutional support from Wayne State University, savings will not be sufficient to meet shortfalls.

We therefore face a declining fund balance over the short run until AnthroSource revenues begin to flow back to us. Because we are uncertain of the revenue allocation methodology (presently based on pages, which is a questionable method to allocate revenues), we cannot at this point be certain that the SMA will survive much past the five years that our present fund balance gives us to weather these problems.

We appeal to the AAA Executive Board to establish a revenue allocation methodology that is reasonably fair (based on impact or citation rather than page numbers or numbers of articles), or consider alternative methods of reallocating revenue.

One model, which is relatively radical, and is proposed here for consideration only, is to abolish section dues and offer a single class of dues for membership in the AAA, or to rationalize section dues so that the big publishing sections (Cultural Anthropology, AES, SMA, Psychological Anthropology) have similar fee structures. As it is now, AnthroSource sets up sections to compete with one another for members, and for revenue. Competition among interest groups in a scholarly society seems counterproductive to the overall goals of the organization. Another funding model is clearly in order.

The Medical Anthropology Quarterly

From November 12, 2004 to November 28, 2005, MAQ received 126 submissions. 100 of these were first round submissions, and 24 of these were second round and third round submissions (referred to here as resubmissions). The table below summarizes the disposition of the new submissions.

New Submissions 2005.

Disposition	N
Publish	0
Publish with Revisions (PWR)	7
Revise & Resubmit (R&R)	9
In Process	33
Other*	7
Reject	44
TOTAL	100
*Other includes manuscripts that were withdrawn, revised before review, were too long, or had other special circumstances.	

The estimated publication rate for these new submissions is about 15%. Note that this is not the overall acceptance rate for MAQ in 2005 since some manuscripts were accepted in 2004 for publication in 2005. The overall acceptance rate is probably closer to 20%. Fourty-four of these manuscripts were rejected by the editor without peer review. While this represents 64% of the total decisions made to date, there are still 41 manuscripts in process, many of which will ultimately be accepted for publication. Therefore the estimated rejection rate for rejection without review is closer to 45%. In this reporting period, 26 manuscripts were resubmitted after a PWR or R&R decision (see table below). Of these, 15 manuscripts were accepted for publication during this reporting period including 5 of the PWR new submissions this year and two of the PWR resubmissions in the table below.

Resubmissions in 2005.

Disposition	N
Publish	15
Publish with Revisions	3
Revise & Resubmit	1
In Process	6
Reject	1
TOTAL	26

For all of the manuscripts dealt with during this reporting period, the average turn around time from submission to decision was about 2.3 months. For manuscripts that went out for review, the average time from submission to decision was 4.5 months. The average age of manuscripts still in process is 2.7 months. The editorial staff has been able to reduce the turn around time by about half from last year by making greater use of the Board members and by instituting a revised tracking system.

The MAQ had 54 submissions from international authors in 2005, six of which are for a special issue on Nordic Anthropology. The international submissions come mostly from the United Kingdom, the Scandinavian countries, Canada, Australia, India, and South Africa.

New Cover Design

We have received several designs for a new cover for *MAQ* from UC Press designers this month. The Editorial Board will be selecting a new look for *MAQ*, which will debut in Vol. 20(1).

Journal Citation Indices 2004

Of the 50 anthropology journals tracked by ISI in 2004, MAQ ranked 18th and had an impact factor (IF) of 0.775 (range 2.786-0.261). The impact factor is a measure of the frequency with which the average article in a journal has been cited in a particular year or period. The IF for AAA journals ranged from 0.952 to 0.261 in 2004. MAQ also ranked 17 of 26 journals tracked in the Social Sciences, Biomedical Category. MAQ's IF has ranged from a high of 1.157 in 1992 to a low of 0.386 in 2003, with an average IF of 0.739 between 1992 and 2004.

Budget Issues

SMA provided *MAQ* with a budget of \$47,747 to run the editorial office for calendar year 2005. These funds are mostly used to pay the salary of the Managing Editor, Carole Bernard (appointment at half time) and for her postage and telephone costs (she is not housed at the university), which are minimal, and for 10 hours/week for the Editorial Assistant, Mark Macaуда (10 hours/week during the academic year and 13 summer weeks). The University of Connecticut provided office space, utilities, computer facilities, internet and email, telephone, photocopying, postage, FAX, and supplies in 2005 and will continue to do so in 2006. UConn also funded the Editorial Assistant 10 hours a week during the academic year and gives the editor a one course reduction each semester.

As noted above, MAQ broke even in the annual budget for calendar year 2004. As of August 31, 2005, the publication costs exceeded revenue by \$24,684. Until revenues from AnthroSource begin to flow into SMA, MAQ production/publication costs will account for nearly all annual budgetary shortfalls experienced by the SMA, and will deplete the fund balance, holding all other factors equal, at a rate of about \$25,000 per year.

Although planned for 2005 by UC Press, the implementation of an internet-based manuscript workflow/peer review system that will handle tracking, follow-up, and correspondence has not yet been implemented for MAQ. There will be no monetary cost to SMA or MAQ since this system is part of the Mellon Foundation grant to AAA. However, the editorial office staff will need to invest the time to learn the software and set up the system in 2006.

Website Development

The total number of visitors since the website's inception reached over 500,000 this fall. From January 1, 2005 to November 30, 2005, the SMA site received 194,554 visitors, with an average of 582.5 per day. The average visitor visits 2.82 pages and stays on the site for just under five minutes. This marks an improvement from 2004, when the average visitor stayed on the site for just under three minutes. As in past years, the summer months saw a slight decline in the number of visitors, yet the number of monthly visitors was well over 15,000 during even the slowest months. The months of April and October saw the highest numbers of visitors, with almost 20,000 each. Again, this marks an improvement from 2004 when the site received at most around 16,000 visitors each month. As in 2004, the pages visited most

frequently are the front page, the main page of the Jobs section, the main page of the Academic Resources section, the main page of the Interest Groups section, and the Graduate Programs index page in Academic Resources. A vast majority (136,739) of the site's visitors came without online referral. The most frequent referring pages were Google, and, for the first time, Google UK and Google Canada. Yahoo and the AAA's Sections and Interest Groups and Careers pages were also common sources of referrals.

Among the sections developed during 2005 were sections devoted to applied anthropology; a film database, non-English resources, a database of members' personal web pages; and a student/scholar matching database in the Collaboration section. With the exception of the film database, which is slowly expanding, member contributions to the other new sections have been minimal. The Jobs section, particularly the Academic Teaching page, has been particularly successful both in the contribution of postings and number of views. We currently have more than twenty listings on the Academic Teaching page and received most of those directly from the hiring institutions themselves. Similarly, our Conferences and Calls for Papers pages are frequently updated, with about half of their postings coming directly from conference organizers and about half coming indirectly through listservs and web browsing.

We have expanded our topical resources section to include twenty-three topics. Recent additions to that section include Bioethics and New Genetics; Food, Eating, and Diet; and Health Disparities and the Built Environment pages. Our collection of syllabi has continued to expand and includes links to hundreds of downloadable files and instructor or institution web pages, all organized under forty-three topics. A special Hurricane Katrina section (later expanded to include Hurricane Rita) was created just a few days after the hurricane and featured breaking news related to health issues, a collection of listservs and discussion boards, and links to information for victims and those who wanted to offer assistance. Both the Hurricane Katrina page and the site's home page also featured links to the SMA's Statement on Hurricane Katrina.

Plans for the site in 2006 include greatly expanding the recently developed sections mentioned above as well as the site's History and In Print section. Given the large number of emails we receive from undergraduate students interested in medical anthropology careers, a job guide will be one of the first new initiatives on the site in 2006. This section will be part of our Jobs section and will link to graduate placement information from some of the graduate programs in our database. In general, we hope to increase member contributions to the site; recent pleas for contributions have resulted in slight increases, but perhaps these pleas need to be sent out via H-Medanthro several times a year.

2005 Annual Meeting

We received ten submissions for *invited sessions*, and were able to accept six, with three of them being co-sponsored (2 with SfAA and one with the Nutrition section (CONAA)). This proved to be a helpful strategy, because it enabled us to increase our offerings in the invited slot by 50%. The invited sessions were as follows:

- New Critical Ethnography in and of the Clinic (Kaufman/Del Vecchio Good)
- Islam, Health, and the Body: Science and Religion in the Muslim World (Tober and Budiani)
- Anthropologies of Cancer (Lee)
- Compliance, Resistance, and Social Realities: How Does Medical Anthropology Inform Ethically Responsible Research (Stewart/Marshall)
- Intergenerational Implications of Child Health and Illness: The Embodiment of Family Ties (Sobo/Tapias), Co-Sponsored by Nutritional Anthropology
- The Female Circumcision Discussion Continued: Embodying Tradition, Violence, and Social Resilience (Coffman). Consponsored by Society for Africanist Anthropology

All four of the panels we were unable to accept as invited ones were resubmitted in the general set of panels entered by the regular deadline, and we recommended all but one of these for inclusion in the 2005 program.

Moving on to the regular panels and individual paper submissions, we received an additional 21 panel sessions, 93 individual papers and 8 posters.

Two of the panels opted for non-conventional formats (open discussions instead of a string of paper presenters and discussants). We rejected one for lack of clarity but pushed hard for the second—the panel's primary purpose was to bring in representatives from indigenous communities from N America to speak of issues of health disparity.

Overall, the strongest panels were single session panels, although we accepted one double session. Of the submitted organized panels, we rejected two (D rating) and assigned a C to one other. The panels were, overall, very strong, so jockeying between A and B ratings (when AAA asks for no more than 40% As) proved difficult.

The 93 papers were grouped into 14 panels of 5-7 papers each (5 paper panels were the exception—nearly all had 6 papers plus a discussion slot). All were single sessions. We were able to find a home for all papers, and thus there were no 'orphans.' We rejected only one paper, assigning it a D. There were relatively few individual papers that merited a C ranking.

All posters were organized into a single poster session and given a high rank of A.

Other observations: We were able to honor the 'roll-over rule' implemented by the SMA board in 2004, reassigning invited status to those that were unable to be invited at the 2004 meeting, while still having room for new submissions

The program was overwhelmingly dominated by two themes: first, reproductive health and, second, HIV/AIDS. This meant we were faced with some rather difficult dilemmas, forcing us to rank the reproductive panels. The AIDS/HIV focus tended to surface most strongly in the individual papers, and thus we sought to distribute these throughout the panels we created instead of clumping them together under AIDS/HIV (there was in fact only one AIDS/HIV panel of our creation, which fortunately had a much broader focus, thanks to the papers themselves (title: Pleasure, Risk, Identity, and HIV/AIDS). In many ways these created panels ended up being more interesting to us than the organized ones.

Special Interest Groups

The chairs of the interest groups had a very productive meeting in DC. Chairs shared their groups' various modus operandi. Newly created groups found it helpful to learn how to recruit future members. They agreed that groups should write about their activities in the SMA column in the Anthropology Newsletter (column editor Janelle Taylor is coordinating this), and that MAQ should be more encouraging/open to publish some of the practical/conceptual work coming from the groups. The idea of a policy-statement in MAQ was greatly welcomed by chairs. They also discussed the possibility of a new interest group on science, technology and medicine.

Prizes and Awards

The following table lists SMA and special interest group prizes awarded in 2005.

SMA Prizes Awarded – 2005

Rivers Prize (Undergraduate)	"Postpartum Cases: Tadoka and Mental Health." Amy Saltzman
Charles Hughes Prize (Graduate)	"Governing Adherence: Medications, HIV, and Power," Jennifer Liu
Polgar Prize (Best paper in 2004 volume of the MAQ)	"'Change Yourself and the Whole World Will Become Kinder': Russian Activists for Reproductive Health and the Limits of Claims Making for Women." Michelle Rivkin-Fish
Eileen Basker Prize	<i>Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment</i> , João Biehl
Lifetime Achievement Prize	George Foster
Practicing Anthropology Prize	(Presented at the 2005 SMA/SfAA meetings in Santa Fe, NM) Merrill Singer
Mentor Award	Mark Nichter
CAR Most Enduring Edited Collection	<i>Fetal Subjects, Feminist Positions</i> , Edited by Lynn Morgan and Meredith Michaels (1999)
CAR Best Current Edited Collection	<i>Consuming Motherhood</i> , Edited by Janelle Taylor, Linda Layne, and Danielle Wozniak (2004)
CAR Graduate Student Prize (Council on Anthropology of Reproduction)	"Women Do What They Want": Family Planning and Islam in Northern Tanzania," Susi Krehbeil

Rudolf Virchow Award, Professional Category (given by the Critical Anthropology of Health Caucus)	Two awards were given this year: “Pearls of the Antilles? Public Health in Haiti and Cuba, by Paul Farmer and Arachu Castro; and, “The Activist State: Global Pharmaceuticals, AIDS, and Citizenship in Brazil,” by João Biehl.
Rudolf Virchow Award, Graduate Student Category (given by the Critical Anthropology of Health Caucus)	“Everyday Violence in Northern Uganda: War, AIDS, and Interventions,” by Michael Westerhaus

Summary

To summarize, our annual **accomplishments** include the following:

- Increased visibility of the SMA through website and listserv
- Significant progress on SMA policy initiatives
- Established a more active and visible SMA Executive Board through addition of spring meetings
- Concluded a successful Spring meeting in conjunction with the SfAA, and planned a spring meeting for 2006
- Successfully completed competition for three new awards acknowledging career contributions, practicing medical anthropology, and graduate student mentorship; and added a new award honoring a book published on a topic relevant to medical anthropology
- Moved to initiate a new Medical Anthropology Students Association (MASA)
- Concluded a search for new editors for the Medical Anthropology Quarterly

The SMA **faces significant budgetary challenges:**

- Declining membership, coupled with markedly increased costs of producing the MAQ (these are management and publication costs over which the SMA Board has no control) appear poised to produce significant deficits by the end of next year. In the absence of a flowback of revenues from AnthroSource, far from certain at this stage, projections are that we will overspend revenue by over \$25,000 next year. If deficits are not corrected, we will expend our fund balance in four-to-five years.

Future plans include the following:

- We have organized a joint meeting with the SfAA in Spring, 2006 in Vancouver, British Columbia.
- At these meetings we intend to launch our student association through a “meet the SMA presidents” event.
- We will increase policy-relevant activities, both through our “Takes a Stand” initiative and through soliciting policy white papers and essays from SMA special interest groups.
- Open competition for a new book award.

- Build a web-based global directory of medical anthropologists.

Needs for consideration by the AAA Executive Board:

We would like the Board to help us address the future impact of AnthroSource on the SMA budget. Our long-range planning is seriously impaired by budgetary uncertainty and the projection of large and increasing budget deficits. With a projected deficit of nearly \$25,000 in 2005, driven by declining membership and increasing UCP management fees charged to the MAQ, the Board is concerned about the future financial health of the Society.

We appeal to the Executive Board to:

- Establish a fair and equitable strategy for the distribution of AnthroSource revenues to protect the major publishing sections; and
- Consider rationalizing the AAA and Section dues structure in order to make section dues roughly comparable according to the publishing activities of each section. Members (especially students) should be encouraged to select section membership on the basis of scholarly interest rather than cost.