

## **AFA Annual Report for 2006**

**Submitted 1/22/07 by Florence E. Babb, AFA President**

The Association for Feminist Anthropology had a productive year in 2006 and is in sound financial shape as an organization. As we enter our twentieth year, our membership is increasing and there are signs of renewed visibility and vitality in the Section. A number of our officers, board members, and general members have carried out other responsibilities within the American Anthropological Association, extending our reach to other sections and within the AAA more generally.

### **Officers and Executive Board**

From the end of the 2005 AAA until the end of the 2006 AAA our elected officers were the following:

President	Florence Babb (fbabb@wst.ufl.edu)
Pres. Elect	Cheryl Rodriguez (crodrigu@chumal.cas.usf.edu)
Secretary	Cheryl Mwaria (Cheryl.B.Mwaria@Hofstra.edu)
Treasurer	Pam Stone (pks86@hampshire.edu)

Incoming Officers following the 2006 meeting are the following:

Secretary	Meena Khandelwal (meena-khandelwal@uiowa.edu)
Treasurer	Evelyn Blackwood (blackwood@purdue.edu)

Elected Members at Large who completed their two-year terms in 2006 are Dorothy Hodgson, Dana-Ain Davis, and Heidi Kelley. Continuing members are Deborah Crooks and Amy Harper. Incoming Members at Large are Jane Henrici, Martin Manalansan, Angele Smith, and Ara Wilson.

## **1. Status, Activities, and Accomplishments**

### **Membership**

The total number of members as of 09/05/06 was 843, up 30 since the same time a year before. The number of regular members is up by 4, to 477, while student members are up by 27, to 343. We are down by one among retired members, to 23 members. The most significant change is the increase in student membership and we are gratified that certain initiatives (session on young women and girls at AAA is forthcoming as special issue of *Voices*; T-shirt fundraiser generated interest among younger members of AAA) may have contributed to this positive development.

### **Financial balances**

For the year up to Sept. 30, 2006, our budget appears to be in very good shape. Our net assets at the beginning of the year totaled \$17,097. We took in a total revenue of \$6,860 and spent \$788 for a change in net assets of +\$6,071. Consequently, on Sept. 30 our net assets totaled \$23,169. Additional expenses incurred after Sept. 30 were \$2000 to the winners of our two awards, the

Hurston travel award and the Foreman Award; \$1103 for the cost of our 2006 AAA reception and board/business meetings; and \$990 in promotional costs to make our new T-shirts. (We expect to recover much of the promotional costs through sales of the t-shirts.) These expenses total \$4,093, which is still well under our budgeted expenditures for the year of \$10,659. We apparently have not been significantly impacted to date by the cost of AnthroSource that is being charged to sections through the Section Dues Allocation Expense since our only publication, *Voices*, is a small on-line publication published just once each year. However, the final cost to our section for AnthroSource has not yet been figured.

The AFA Board agreed to offer some travel support to all officers attending AAA in coming years. We will also have higher reception expenses at the 2007 AAA, when we will celebrate AFA's twentieth anniversary.

### **AAA meeting**

AFA Board members and non-elected members (program chair Mary Weismantel, student representative Mary Roaf, listserv coordinator Colleen Morgan) met on Wednesday, November 15 at the AAA meeting. Reports were presented by the Treasurer, Program Chair, *Voices* editor (Sue Hyatt was absent but sent a report), Forman Award Chair, and Hurston Award Chair. We discussed the present AFA governance structure (see below) and the proposals for strengthening relations with the SA and EB. We also discussed ways to increase membership and the number of submissions for student awards. To raise funds and visibility for AFA, this year we designed T-shirts (This is what a feminist anthropologist looks like—Association for Feminist Anthropology, since 1987) which were presented at the Board meeting and later made available in the AAA book exhibit and at the AFA reception. Because the Section Assembly meeting overlapped with our Board meeting, President-Elect Cheryl Rodriguez attended the SA in place of AFA President Florence Babb.

The AFA Business meeting was held Thursday evening, November 16, and was attended by over xxx people. Babb presided and reports were given to the membership by Evelyn Blackwood (Treasurer's report) and by Gayatri Reddy (Program Co-Chair). The high point of the AFA Business meeting, as always, was the presentation of Forman and Hurston Awards. Presented by Cheryl Rodriguez, the Forman Graduate Prize went to Christiana Croegaert (Northwestern U) for her paper on "Chaotic Kinship and Clever Women: Bosnian War Refugees and Gender in the United States," and Honorable Mention went to Victoria Luong (U of California Irvine) for her paper on "The Ultrasound: A Modern Instrument That Confirms the Fetus' Humanity." The Forman Undergraduate Prize went to Rebecca Tarlau (U of Michigan) for her paper on "Possibilities for Change: The Contemporary Use of Popular Education in a Brazilian Women's Organization," and Honorable Mention went to Julia Harris (Northwestern U) for her paper on "Gender Inequities and Their Contribution to the Prevalence of HIV/AIDS." Hurston Travel Awards were presented by Heidi Kelley to Julie Grigsby (U Texas), Lea McChesney (PhD NYU), and Judith Singleton (Northwestern U). We encouraged more applicants to submit papers and proposals in the next round.

We collaborated with several other sections (AES, SCA, and SAW) in organizing our reception, which was held Friday evening, November 17. The reception offered food and drink and was

well attended by many who held memberships in more than one of the host sections. A number of people made donations for AFA T-shirts at the reception.

The diverse sessions at the AAA included such important topics as “Gendering ‘Genocide,’” “Feminist Public Anthropology,” “Sexual Violence and Bodily Health,” “Informal Economies of Sex,” “Gendered Agency,” “Politics of Pleasure,” and “The Traffic in Feminist Anthropology.”

### **Internal communications (Web site, listserv, blog)**

The AFA Web site has been very ably managed for the last few years by Suzanne Baker, who has made a number of improvements to the site. Now it is possible to find book reviews, curriculum ideas, conference information, and up-to-date job listings on the site.

Colleen Morgan has taken over from Kathleen Sterling as the AFA listserv coordinator and she has introduced for the first time an AFA blog to complement our communications via the listserv and Web site.

### **Outreach efforts**

As noted, AFA cooperated with other sections in hosting a reception at the AAA meeting. This followed past practice, as AFA worked with SOLGA the year before, and hopes to work with ABA, ALLA, and other sections in the coming year. Our AFA invited and sponsored sessions drew considerable interest beyond our own members.

The AFA column in the Anthropology Newsletter continues to be an excellent resource for outreach. Editor Rebecca Upton worked with Megan Sinnott in preparing a series of engaging columns that contributed to our visibility and distinction as a section. As President, Florence Babb contributed occasional columns to keep readers informed about AFA activities.

### **Changes in bylaws and governance**

Before the AAA meeting, the AFA Board agreed that we would consider changes to the AFA bylaws, which were last updated a decade ago. Deb Crooks and Florence Babb brought proposed changes in the bylaws for Board consideration. In addition to a number of fairly minor changes that reflect changes in AAA structure and language, we agreed on several substantive changes. We accepted the proposal to extend the terms of office of Secretary, Treasurer, and at-large Board members to three years rather than two (President-Elect and President would continue to hold two-year terms). We also agreed that while the bylaws currently state that we have three members at-large, we propose to change this to four members.

We renewed our commitment to being accountable to our membership by keeping and circulating minutes for our Board and Business meetings.

## **2. Future Plans or Activities**

In 2007, the Association for Feminist Anthropology will celebrate twenty years of productive and transformative scholarly activity in our discipline. We have begun thinking about how we may honor this history during the coming months leading up to the next AAA meeting in Washington DC. We have invited our membership to participate in planning stimulating and timely sessions, especially those that will articulate with the conference theme of “Difference, (In)equality, and Justice”—a close fit with the long-time commitments of AFA. As AFA President, Florence Babb has organized a high-profile session entitled “Engendering the Discipline: This is what a feminist anthropologist looks like,” which is now under consideration for Presidential session status. We plan to bring back more T-shirts bearing the same inclusive message as the session (This is what a feminist anthropologist looks like) to the next AAA as a continuing fundraiser and to build visibility for AFA.

We have had some discussion of a possible AFA scholarship that we would offer in addition to our Forman paper prizes and Hurston travel awards. Offering a scholarship would require much larger fundraising efforts, something we have only begun to consider.

### ***Voices***

The most recent issue of *Voices* came out in Fall 2005. Another issue is close to completion, based on a 2005 session at AAA, “Girls Rule! Social Production and Agency Among Low-Income Adolescents.” We made a transition from bringing *Voices* out in paper for mail distribution to a Web-based publication, which has saved AFA considerably in resources and mailing costs. Sue Hyatt has done a fine job as editor but has decided that the current issue will be her last one. We announced at our AFA Business meeting in San Jose that we are seeking a new editor. Two individuals who organized a highly successful session at the 2006 AAA meeting thought they might take on the task with a view to publishing some papers from their session in the next issue. With *Voices* coming out just once each year, having guest editors preparing material for a single issue based on a conference session is one way to go. The AFA will need to assess whether *Voices* will continue as an annual and modest publication or whether we will seek an editor with institutional support who wishes to bring out several issues each year.

### **Nominations**

In the upcoming AAA elections, we will vote for a President Elect. We have two strong candidates who have agreed to run for election; both have past experience on the AFA Board and on other AAA sections.

AFA continues to be an inclusive section, with minority participation at every level including President. We plan to renew efforts and build on this past strength so that AFA maintains its commitment to diversity.

### **3. Other Items**

AnthroSource remains a matter of concern for AFA, as the membership worries that the high cost to our section poses too heavy a burden on us and prevents us from making better use of our

budget. We are in discussion with other small and medium-size sections to consider the implications for our future development as a section.

We are placing on the ballot this spring some changes in AFA Bylaws. Most importantly, the terms of Secretary, Treasurer, and Board members would change from two to three years. In addition, the official number of Board members would change from three to four. We believe that these changes will offer more stability and continuity of leadership to the AFA Board.

AFA will continue its efforts to collaborate with other sections, particularly in the spirit of building a commitment to social inclusion and diversity.