

Society for the Anthropology of Work Annual Report for 2006

1. Status, activities and accomplishments

- Members: 271 (as of 11/30/06, latest available figures)
- Net assets: \$11,517 (as of 11/30/06); during the first eleven months of 2006 both revenues and expenditures (many of which are prorated fees) for the *Anthropology of Work Review* were given as \$7,978.49; other revenues: \$7,077.91; other expenditures: \$5,423.25.
- Highlights of the annual AAA meeting: The Conrad Arensberg Award for lifetime achievement in the anthropology of work was awarded to UC Berkeley sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild, who was also the featured guest speaker at the award ceremony. The Eric Wolf Prize for best student paper was awarded to the 2005 and (in absentia) to the 2006 recipients. These papers are published in the AWR. As for the rest of the program, of the proposals submitted to and reviewed by SAW, nine sessions were on the program. There was one invited session sponsored exclusively by SAW and another co-sponsored with AES. The Board Meeting was held offsite because the times requested were not accommodated. As a dinner at a restaurant, it was bad for acoustics but good for rapport. At the Business Meeting reports of the various officers and functions were efficient, and according to tradition all in attendance offered self-introductions and brief comments on current interests and activities.
- SAW held no regular (or special) meetings beyond the annual AAA meeting.
- During the year the website was updated, and the webmaster is expecting to participate in the AAA website redesign; announcements routinely went out over the listserv.
- SAW had interactions with several other sections on the levels of executive boards and regular members, for instance, institutionalizing the Forsythe Prize procedures with CASTAC and jointly hosting a reception with AEC, SCA and SFA at the annual meeting.
- One of the major initiatives of the year was to promote better communication, enhance institutional memory and regularize functions; a substantial reworking of the by-laws in the area of board members' selection procedures and their functions is being submitted concurrently for the spring AAA ballot.
- Although not listed as a suggested item, SAW has continued to build skills and rapport among board members, both elected and appointed; a sense of understood expectations, mutual trust and shared accomplishments has resulted in a year of high morale that has included more of the SAW membership.

2. Future plans or activities

- Beginning in 2006 and continuing in 2007 is an updating of the Mentor File and planning by the Student Representatives for events particularly attuned to the interests and needs of graduate students.
- SAW continues to collaborate with CASTAC in areas of overlap and will respond to an initiative just introduced by the AAA Practicing Advisory Work Group (PAWG) on the contributions and needs of anthropologists working outside academia.
- Following two-years of focusing on substantial functions of SAW, especially (A) sessions and other annual meeting activities and (B) the quality and regular publication of the journal, the focus for the coming year will be on membership growth to capitalize on these developments.

3. Other items

- Issues and recommendations for the long-range planning committee and the AAA Executive Board can be lumped this year. The present juncture can be taken as a lull in the storm. The implications of the shock treatment of contracting with AnthroSource are not yet clearly apparent, but a turning point may have been reached. Only at the recent annual AAA meeting were figures provided that suggested that revenues returned to SAW were beginning to approach a better balance against the assessed costs. For the first time in its history SAW had to be concerned that revenue (therefore membership numbers) would not be sufficient to sustain economic viability. Strategies for a membership drive were formulated and discussed but not implemented. A SAW proposal in last year's annual report apparently was noted by the AAA Executive Board: take a percentage off all section memberships for each additional section a person belongs to. As an alternative strategy for counteracting rising membership fees, a sliding scale for the basic AAA membership was implemented. This does not address the problem faced by sections. The rationale bears repeating: given that AAA members participate in the overall organization largely at the level of sections (journal articles, annual meeting sessions), the vitality of the AAA depends on nurturing the sections. Correspondingly, given that the brunt of the labor of cultural production that provides content for the journals comes from the members, the members are not to be expected to pay for the product only as consumers. Finally, the very thematic nature of the Society for the Anthropology of Work puts this section in a position to point out and stand for fair labor practices in all AAA activities.

Respectfully submitted:
Jim Weil, President
January 31, 2007