

President's Report
Society for Cultural Anthropology

SCA activities and accomplishments during 2005

Officers. For the year 2006 (from the end of the 2005 AAA meeting through the end of the 2006 AAA meeting), the officers of the SCA were as follows:

President:	Judith Farquhar <farquhar@uchicago.edu>
Secretary:	Stacy Leigh Pigg <pigg@sfu.ca>
Treasurer:	Robert Foster <rfr@uhura.cc.rochester.edu>
Journal Editors:	KimFortun<fortuk@rpi.edu> Mike Fortun <fortum@rpi.edu>
Board Members:	Ana Alonso <alonso@U.Arizona.EDU> Marisol de la Cadena <mdelac@ucdavis.edu> Veena Das <veenadas@jhu.edu> Michael Fischer <mfischer@MIT.EDU> Bruce Grant <bruce.grant@nyu.edu> Bill Maurer <wmmaurer@uci.edu>
Section Assembly Rep:	Former SCA <dan_segal@pitzer.edu>

Membership and Budget. The membership & subscription reports provided by AAA show that SCA and its journal, *Cultural Anthropology*, remain healthy. The Board is, however, concerned over evidence that membership is declining due to the new availability of *Cultural Anthropology* to all AAA members regardless of section membership. There were 1,677 members in September 2004, the largest membership base in 10 years; by September 2005 that number had dropped to 1,559, and by October 2006 the total was 1,484. This is a loss of over 10% in a two year period. Moreover, this loss occurred despite our gain of 22 members through a special offer in conjunction with the 2006 Spring conference in Milwaukee. In the face of this decline the Board has discussed more restrictive policies with regard to manuscript submissions, spring meeting attendance, and access to services through the new *Cultural Anthropology* website; none, however, have been put into place.

After dramatically increasing between 2000 and 2004 (rising from \$19,151 to \$46,403.94), print subscription income from CA leveled off in 2005 and significantly declined in 2006, to \$33,978 (November 30 actuals). This decline is worrying, since income from digital subscriptions via AnthroSource remains very difficult to predict. Income from digital subscriptions by November 2006, for example, was only \$3,690, a shortfall of \$11,258 from the 2006 budget.

Royalties have also decreased dramatically from the 2004 high of \$23,678.57 to only \$5,065; the budget shortfall by the end of November for royalties was over \$2500. This development confirms the prediction made in last year's report that royalties from Proquest, Wilson and J-Stor, which were beginning to provide a significant revenue stream for the journal, would diminish as a result of AnthroSource.

Other factors producing financial strain on the publishing side of SCA's budget are the very large M&A fee charged by University of California Press (and we are concerned about how this fee is calculated, see below) and the 25% discount that has been offered on print subscriptions to AnthroSource journals.

In the recent past, SCA has been able to balance its budget and, in many years, slowly grow its fund balance. This fortunate financial situation has been rather dramatically altered by the start-up of AnthroSource. Net assets on 12/31/05 were \$154,628; expected net assets at the end of 2006 are about \$116,000. Some of this decline may be attributed to the fact that 2006 was a year in which SCA mounted a Spring conference (see below), and it may be partly made up next year from membership fees. But much of it stems from the need to subsidize *Cultural Anthropology* in the face of the high costs of publishing with AnthroSource and UCP.

Cultural Anthropology. During 2006 we effected the editorial transition between Ann Anagnost, who had edited *CA* for four years, and new editors Kim and Mike Fortun at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. For the first half of 2006 we maintained two editorial offices, as Ann completed editorial work on the 2006 issues and the Fortuns began to manage incoming manuscripts for 2007 and after. They began working with the Electronic Workflow System (EWS) in August, and have found it useful. A part-time managing editor, funded from the SCA budget, was hired.

A number of innovations have already been implemented by the new editors. A new editorial board has been established and has already had two meetings. The journal cover and layout have been re-designed. A website has gone on-line providing easy access to journal contents (in AnthroSource and JStor) and to the editorial process; at the same time the management of the SCA website has been taken over by *CA* staff. The journal's page count will be expanded beginning in 2007, from 640 to 768.

As a result of SCA's investment in the journal, especially the allocation of \$20,000 per year for a part-time managing editor, the marketing and administration fee assessed by the University of California Press almost doubled in 2006. We strongly urge that the basis for calculating this fee (currently a percentage of expenditures) be reviewed and revised. The increase in the fee is so great that it comes close to cancelling out the journal's gain in assets due to the SCA's commitment of funds. We feel strongly that SCA's commitment of its own assets to the journal should be rewarded rather than penalized, and we hope that as the UCP contract is renewed and the Committee on the Future of Print and Electronic Publishing undertakes its work this matter will be given high priority.

While we appreciate the difficulty of arriving at the Solomonic compromise decided on this year, we note that the new AS revenue-sharing formula may have some financial benefits for *CA* and the SCA. We look forward to seeing whether the impact is truly significant in 2007.

By the end of this year, it appears that SCA has in one way or another subsidized *CA* with more than \$30,000. This subsidy is projected to rise to over \$40,000 in 2007, despite (possibly over-optimistic) projections of higher digital revenues. This is a rather dramatic change for a journal that was operating with a balanced budget only a couple of years ago, even contributing income back to the Section in some years. Some of the subsidy has been a reasoned commitment to enable expansion of the journal's functions and impact. But too much of it has been a product of the serious deficits incurred in the AnthroSource start-up.

2006 Spring Conference, "Translations of Value." The Spring conference of the SCA was held at the historic Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from May 5-6. The David

Schneider Memorial lecture was delivered by Timothy Mitchell; plenary lectures were given by Sylvia Yanagisako, Robert Foster, Brad Weiss, Kay Warren, Lisa Cartwright, and Charis Thompson; there were two workshops; and around 80 papers were presented in 20 panels. Over 160 participants registered for the conference. The cost of the conference was budgeted at \$24,250, but the actual cost of the conference was less, saving the Association \$6,604.

Spring Board Meeting. The SCA held its annual spring Board Meeting on May 4 in Milwaukee, in conjunction with the Spring conference. Topics of discussion included changes in *Cultural Anthropology*, AnthroSource finance proposals from the AAA, the 2006 SCA Spring Meeting, and the Coca-Cola resolution proposed by AES. On the last issue, Kim and Mike Fortun proposed devoting some journal space to articles relevant to the “Coke Complex,” and have already begun recruiting excellent contributions for a special issue.

AAA Annual Meeting. SCA sponsored one Culture-at-Large Sessions at the 2006 AAA annual meeting, featuring historian of anthropology Henrika Kuklick. Unfortunately Prof. Kuklick’s plane was grounded by weather and her paper had to be read by Rena Lederman, one of the discussants. We note that in a break with precedent, Culture at Large this year got a rather undesirable time slot, 8:30 on Friday morning. We are hopeful this unusual program decision will not be repeated.

At the 2006 SCA Business Meeting Board member Bill Maurer and a graduate student jury awarded the fifth annual Cultural Horizons Prize to Peter Redfield for his article, “Doctors, Borders, and Life in Crisis.” The article appeared in the August 2005 issue of *Cultural Anthropology* (vol. 20, no. 3).

For the second time, SCA and the American Ethnological Society held a joint reception at the AAA annual meeting, also joining with AFA and SAW for the first time. The reception was not very well attended, perhaps because of rather crowd-dispersing conditions at the San Jose site. In general SCA Board members were not very satisfied with the conditions for intellectual and social exchange in San Jose.

Topics of conversation at the November Board meeting included the report of the AAA Governance commission, including its implications for an altered relationship between the Sections and the AAA Executive Board; the proposed increased page count for *CA*; the budget implications for the Section of AnthroSource and the UCP fee structure; and the possibility of raising Section dues by \$10.00.

Other Activities. The SCA Board participates actively in the nomination of scholars for AAA positions. Of the scholars we nominated in 2005, several were elected. Nominees were also put forward for several AAA positions in 2006. The Board encourages the AAA Nominating Committee to acknowledge the efforts of sections in making nominations by informing them of the outcome of the nomination.

Future plans

One new Board member, Saba Mahmood, joined us at the 2006 Board meeting and assumed her duties at the end of the San Jose AAA meeting. Our new Treasurer, Brad Weiss, was also present as a guest at the November meeting, and began his term at the end of the San Jose meeting.

Proposed changes to the by-laws will appear on the 2006 ballot. These are primarily to recognize changes in the organization of AAA, but also involve a more flexible provision for

extending the terms of the Secretary and Treasurer.

Planning is underway for the 2008 SCA Conference, organized by Bill Maurer and Saba Mahmood. It has already been decided that the conference will be held in Long Beach, California, at the oceanliner-hotel Queen Mary which is docked permanently on the Long Beach waterfront. (The hotel is unionized.) This plan continues our tradition of holding conferences in affordable, accessible cities and in charming historic venues.

We intend to continue to aggressively develop *CA* and its associated website under the leadership of Kim and Mike Fortun. We see the many new initiatives (new themes, new services, new forms of publicity) now underway, and in the planning stages, as crucial to increasing the scholarly impact and financial viability of the journal and the Section. We are committed to making the most of on-line accessibility in publishing, including the exploration of Open Source options, and we predict that *CA* can be a leader among anthropology and critical studies journals in showing how a healthy viability can be achieved under these relatively new conditions.

The SCA Board and the journal editors will continue to work with Jasper Simons, Suzanne Mattingly, and other AAA staff members to clarify the constraints under which we operate and to provide input for planning longer-term procedures. We especially appreciate the many improvements Jasper has made this year in reporting to the sections as well as his and other AAA staff members' accessibility and straightforwardness in more wide-ranging conversations concerning the structure and planning of AnthroSource. The *CA* editors and treasurer of the SCA will continue to seek a level of detail in financial information that can inform our own planning for the future of *CA*.

Viewing the preliminary report of the AAA Governance Commission as a step in the right direction, the SCA will continue to play a part in seeking a more powerful role for Sections in AAA governance combined with equity for both individual members and for the larger and smaller sections. This process is inseparable from the challenges presented by AnthroSource, as membership levels in (high-budget) publishing sections are increasingly affected.

The SCA Board will continue to support the AAA Executive Board and the Labor Relations Commission in implementing the Executive Board's resolution to hold AAA and Section conferences in unionized facilities.

The SCA Board is considering setting up a quasi-endowment to support the David Schneider Memorial Lecture and the Cultural Horizons Prize. This has been deferred, however, until the financial consequences of AnthroSource are better understood.

Items for consideration by the AAA Executive Board and Long-Range Planning Committee:

The SCA and its journal see one of the key challenges for this year as the renegotiation of the UCP contract. As noted, we are particularly concerned with the high M&A fee we are being charged, and we also note that advertising, both digital and print (which could be a gratifying source of revenue) is not being pursued this year (2007).

The Electronic Workflow System (EWS) is an important tool and working well. It does, however, promise to be very expensive for the journals and the sections when we are (according to the current plan) presented with the bill for it at the end of 2008. We doubt whether many sections will have fully recovered from the negative impact of AS start-up costs by then, and we are reluctant to take on a larger burden of paying for this tool than

other sections. We urge the AAA to seek funding to absorb the cost of EWS in its own budget.

Respectfully submitted,
Judith Farquhar
SCA President, 2005-07