

**Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists (SOLGA)
2006 Annual Report**

Submitted by Co-Chairs Mary L. Gray and Martin F. Manalansan IV
Submitted January 2007

In 2006 SOLGA and its members continued to take an active part in, and made significant contributions to, the work of the AAA and the field of anthropology. Our membership fluctuated but remained at roughly the same level as in previous years; prior to the annual meeting in December, the membership stood at 221—up slightly from 218 in late 2006. Meanwhile, the balance of funds in our account increased from \$9,196.92 to \$10,389.26.

Elections and Officers

SOLGA is co-chaired by two persons of differing gender identities. Having been appointed as Co-Chair in December 2004, Rudolf Gaudio (Purchase College, SUNY) completed his term in December 2006, and Martin F. Manalansan IV (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign) was elected by the membership to succeed him. Mary L. Gray (Indiana U) completed the first year of her two-year term as the other Co-Chair.

2006 Board Members

Co-Chair: Rudolf Gaudio (rudolf.gaudio@purchase.edu)
Co-Chair: Mary L. Gray (mlg@indiana.edu)
Interim Treasurer: Karen Kelsky (kelsky@uiuc.edu)
Interim Secretary: Marcia Ochoa (marcia8a@ucsc.edu)
SOLGAN Editor: William Leap (wlm@american.edu)
Anthropology News Editor/Website Manager: David Houston (dlrh@uvm.edu)
Benedict Prize Chair: Megan Sinnott (megan.sinnott@yale.edu)
Payne Prize Chair: Tom Boellstorff (tboellst@uci.edu)
Previous Co-Chair: Christa Craven (ccraven@gmu.edu)
Program Co-Editor: Sarah Hill (sarah.hill@wmich.edu)
Program Co-Editor: Gabriella Modan (modan.1@osu.edu)
Student Board Member: Diana Pash (dpash@ucla.edu)

2007 Board Members

Co-Chair: Mary L. Gray (mlg@indiana.edu)
Co-Chair: Martin F. Manalansan IV (manalans@uiuc.edu)
Treasurer: Karen Kelsky (kelsky@uiuc.edu)
Secretary: Marcia Ochoa (marcia8a@ucsc.edu)
Transitional SOLGAN Editor: William Leap (wlm@american.edu)
Anthropology News Editor/Website Manager: David Houston (dlrh@uvm.edu)
Benedict Prize Co-Chairs: Deb Amory (deborah.amory@esc.edu) and Mark Padilla (padillam@umich.edu)
Payne Prize Co-Chair: Ann Kakaliouras (akakalio@whittier.edu)
Previous Co-Chair: Rudolf Gaudio (rudolf.gaudio@purchase.edu)
Program Co-Editor: Margot Weiss (margot.weiss@duke.edu)
Program Co-Editor: Naisargi Dave (naisargi.dave@utoronto.ca)

Student Board Member: Theodore K. "Ted" Gideonse (tgideons@ucsd.edu)

Annual Meeting Program

SOLGA participation in the annual meeting continues to thrive. The SOLGA Program Committee—Editor Gabriella Modan (Ohio State U) and committee members Naisargi N. Dave (U Michigan) and Margot Weiss (Duke U)—put together the program for the 2006 Annual Meetings in San Jose, CA. SOLGA sponsored eight events and co-sponsored a tribute to Bea Medicine with the Gay American Indians Association.

Session titles included: *Intimate Surveillances*, *Consenting Hegemonies: Nation-Sex Dangers Post-9/11*; *Critical Gay Asia: New Screens, New Scenes*; *Queer Positions: Space, Subjectivity, Politics*; *Sexing Anthropology*; and a SOLGA Board-sponsored roundtable, *Rethinking the SOLGAN*.

Prize Competitions

SOLGA sponsors two annual prize competitions. The **Ruth Benedict Prize** is awarded annually for an outstanding anthropological monograph on a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered topic. (The Benedict prize for an outstanding anthology is awarded every two or three years.) This year's prize committee consisted of Chair Megan Sinnott (Georgia State U) and members Rebecca Etz and Kira Hall (University of Colorado). The 2006 Benedict Prize was awarded to Tanya Erzen, Assistant Professor of Comparative Studies at the Ohio State University for her book *Straight to Jesus: Sexual and Christian Conversions in the Ex-Gay Movement* published by University of California Press (2006).

The **Kenneth Payne Student Paper Prize** is a cash grant awarded for a student paper of exceptional merit. This year Tom Boellstorff (UCI) chaired the Payne Prize Committee with Lisa Rofel (UC Santa Cruz) and Lawrence Cohen (UCB) serving as committee members. The 2006 Payne Prize was awarded to Lucinda Ramberg for her essay entitled "Medicalizing the Sacred Body: Subaltern Religiosity and Postcolonial Reform in South India" and an Honorable Mention was awarded to Natasha Sandraya Wilson for "A Queer Situation: Poverty, Prisons, and Performances of Infidelity and Instability in the New Orleans Lesbian Anthem."

The SOLGAN

At the 2005 annual business meeting, William Leap (American U) was elected to head a work group charged with transitioning the *SOLGAN* from its current format to a more dynamic forum for scholarly and intellectual exchange among and beyond the member base. Leap led a roundtable discussion at this year's meetings taking up the issue of SOLGA's future directions for publication, including its possible transformation into a joint publishing effort with other allied sections of the AAA. During this reformulation stage, the *SOLGAN* will no longer be issued as a paper-based newsletter. Leap will report back with updates and action items for discussion at the 2006 SOLGA business meeting.

SOLG@online

David Houston (U Vermont) continues to maintain SOLGA's website. Currently, SOLG@online hosts the SOLGA Mentoring File (see below) and provides information on SOLGA's history, its bylaws, current officers, the minutes of past business meetings, prize announcements and winners, links to websites of interest, and other information and resources useful to SOLGA's current and prospective members.

Mentor File

SOLGA maintains a Mentoring File that aims to provide a LGBTQ scholarly mentoring network for undergraduate and graduate students. In 2006 Diana Pash (UCLA) managed the Mentoring File, which is available on our website at <http://homepage.mac.com/ctgrant/solga/Mentors/mentormain.html>. The Mentor File will be used at the 2007 meetings to facilitate a special workshop organized by Ellen Lewin and Bill Leap. They will bring together noted senior scholars and graduate students to discuss LGBT/queer scholarship in the field and as career path.

Listserv

Our section listserv (SOLGA-L@american.edu) is maintained by Michelle Carnes (American U). Members and other allies may subscribe by going to <http://homepage.mac.com/ctgrant/solga/listserv.html>.

AN column

Thanks to the unflagging energies of David Houston (U Vermont) as Contributing Editor, in 2006 SOLGA's monthly *AN* column not only conveyed important information relevant to SOLGA's activities within the AAA; it also drew insightful and provocative connections between a number of national controversies and the work we do as anthropologists of sexuality. Some of these issues, such as the antigay legislation in at the federal and state level, were clearly LGBT-related, while others, such as the horrifying revelations around domestic spying programs, spoke more broadly to questions of cultural marginalization and the connection between epistemological and political authority.

Leadership within the AAA

SOLGA and its members continued to address issues of professional concern to LGBTQ anthropologists as members of the AAA, with several SOLGA members serving the Association in AAA-wide offices: William Beeman (Brown U), on the Operations Committee; Christa Craven (George Mason U), on the Commission on Governance; and Ellen Lewin (U Iowa), Executive Board member at-large.

In addition, SOLGA officers and members were active on the executive boards of numerous other AAA Sections: Florence Babb (U Iowa), President of the Association for Feminist Anthropology; William Beeman (Brown U), board member of the Middle East Section; Evelyn Blackwood (Purdue U), board member of the Association for Feminist Anthropology; Matti Bunzl (U Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), board member of the American Ethnological Society; Lawrence Cohen (UC Berkeley), board member of the Society for Humanistic Anthropology; Dana Ain Davis (SUNY-Purchase), President of

The Association of Black Anthropologists; Doug Feldman (SUNY-Brockport), board member of the Society for Medical Anthropology; Gracia Clark (Indiana U), President of the Association for Africanist Anthropology; Jeff Maskovsky (Queens College/CUNY), President of the Society for the Anthropology of North America; Bill Maurer (UC Irvine), President of the Association of Political and Legal Anthropology and board member of the Society for Cultural Anthropology; and Anne Zeller (U Waterloo), President of the Society for Visual Anthropology.

Future Plans and Activities

In 2007 SOLGA will continue to organize sessions for the AAA Annual Meetings, conduct its annual student paper and book prize competitions, maintain its website and listserv, encourage use of the SOLGA Mentor File, and publish columns in the *Anthropology News*. SOLGA will also be working with AnthroSource to be certain that it has a complete run of back issues of the *SOLGAN* and its predecessor, the *Newsletter of the Anthropology Research Group on Homosexuality*, for digital conversion and on-line access. (AnthroSource currently provides access to four issues, from 1998 and 2003.) As SOLGA enters its ninth year as an official AAA section, a work group headed by William Leap will continue to explore the various contributions that the *SOLGAN* might be able to make to the work its members do as teachers and scholars, and to the ongoing development of the anthropology of sexuality in relation to the broader field.