

**Society for Anthropological Sciences  
Annual Business Meeting  
American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting  
Washington, DC  
December 5, 2014  
6:30 – 8:15pm  
Marriott Wardman Park, Maryland Suite C**

**Present:**

Past-President Carol Ember

President Ben Blount

President-Elect Robert Trotter

Secretary Stephen Chrisomalis

Treasurer Douglas Hume

Senior Board Member Stephen Lyon

Webmaster Michael Fischer

Senior Board Member Margo-Lea Hurwicz

John Gatewood, Giovanni Bennardo, Murray Leaf, Michael Thomas, Eve Pinsker, Wesley Allen-Arave

Ben Blount calls the meeting to order. Rosalyn Negron and Caitlyn Placek send regrets.

**Program Chair's Report  
(Bob Trotter)**

We were allotted two full invited sessions, which can be divided in half and shared (so thus up to 4 sessions if shared). We had 7 papers submitted as SAS papers, 3 posters submitted, 3 workshops, 3 special events (board meeting, business meeting, roundtable). We ended up with 1.5 invited sessions because negotiations broke down with other groups. Trotter notes that a number of people signed up for papers in sessions with other sections; this should be treated as a positive since it indicates that scientifically-based research is being accepted in other sections. We are able to do some trading of individual papers in order to make sure that our panels made up of individuals submissions make sense. Plan for next year is to increase special sessions, increase workshops, increase posters (so that we can have our own session).

Murray Leaf notes that the proposed session on epistemology is unlikely to be shared and we will need to use one of our slots for that end.

Ben Blount notes that special events (whose nature is not quite specified) do not count towards the individual participation limits. Roundtables do count towards that limit. Not entirely clear whether organizing / chairing session counts.

Ben Blount notes that there were 70 workshops scheduled at these meetings; the AAA thinks that that is more than what they can accommodate reasonably for space in the program. Concern from Ed Liebow and others as to whether these are sometimes frivolous. For the Denver meetings, all of the workshops will be on Tuesday and Wednesday. Many at AAA are not happy with Tuesday materials being so prominent, and the recommendation is for the President to put something in the annual report expressing our thoughts about this. We may not be able to adjust for Denver 2015, but perhaps for Minneapolis 2016. There is a plan to, as much as possible, have future AAA meetings at convention centers where space is less of an issue.

Ben notes that poster sessions are very popular at SfAA and we might get more poster sessions involved in future SfAA meetings, as well as AAA.

### **Treasurer's Report (Doug Hume)**

Section Treasurer's meeting was yesterday. The current balance for AAA is \$14.6 million, up from \$6000 in 2007, when they sold their business building in order to rent space. The 2015 budget is close to \$6 million. In the past AAA has been drawing 4% for special projects, software, etc; they are going to raise that to 5% for three years to spend a little more. Our balance increase year-over-year will still be 4%. They are spending \$262,000 to revise the AAA website. AAA employs 21.5 individuals at present.

There has been a significant drop in membership in SAS as well as most other sections; this is explained to be the result of two different software systems operating poorly together (one financial, one membership) which led to a recount to produce more accurate numbers.

We have gained money on the AAA side. On the SaSci side we have moved over to Wells Fargo and now have \$1800 in that account, but because all of our line-item expenses have been moved over to the AAA side, all of this now comes out of that account and the SaSci account has no regular expenses. All the SaSci money results from payments through Paypal for non-AAA members as well as gifts. Murray Leaf moves to approve. Stephen Lyon seconds. Approved.

Ben Blount notes that the 287 (being a membership number) declining to 197 (dues-paying) should not affect our financial affairs.

### **Secretary's Report (Stephen Chrisomalis)**

2013 business meeting minutes approved by the executive board, to be distributed by email to the list and to be archived on the anthrosciences.org website.

Murray Leaf moves to approve. Carol Ember seconds. Unanimously approved.

### **Awards Committee (Giovanni Bennardo)**

SaSci awards gave out three awards to among the five applicants. Giovanni Bennardo and Victor de Munck evaluated the applications. The plan was to advertise the awards for this meeting, for which we have a larger prize pool. The call has now gone out but no students have submitted. We don't know if any students have submitted papers through SAS. The deadline is January 15, 2015 for submissions to be given retroactively for papers already given. Giovanni will send out the call again to the listserv but until applications come in, they can only wait.

Ben Blount raises the question of how many prizes there are. There is one prize of \$400 as the Student Paper Prize, and three prizes of \$200 to be awarded as Student Travel Award. We formerly had certificates that could be distributed. We discuss the possibility of naming the award after some prominent individual in scientific anthropology. Suggestion that Stephen Lyon (the next awards

committee head) take up this issue once he takes over.

John Gatewood raises the issue of whether all SAS members are automatically on the listserv. This is not necessarily the case.

Bob Trotter notes that it is not necessarily that the award would be named after a person, but it might be.

Murray Leaf moves to accept, John Gatewood seconds. Approved unanimously.

### **Website report (Michael Fischer)**

Michael has added a jobs feature to the site. This needs to be cleaned up to remove old jobs. There will be another section for grants, requests for cooperation, etc. We have started to add the materials that the editor sends to Anthropology News to the page. We will be setting up within a week or so a place where individual members can have pages, including dues status, etc.

Ben Blount notes that the website has been revised in order to make the Paypal link more prominent and to make it easier for SaSci members to pay their dues online.

Michael raised the issue of having a SAS Twitter feed. We do not have one although we do have a facebook page. Steve Chrisomalis raises the issue of having a SAS Twitter feed being a better idea than a blog.

Murray Leaf moved to accept the report. Margo-Lea Hurwicz seconds.  
Approved unanimously.

Bob Trotter raised the question of how do we know if SAS members know that they are also SaSci members. Carol suggests that we have not had a general policy of putting out a call for dues paying for SaSci.

### **Newsletter (David Henig)**

No report.

### **New Business**

Ben Blount raises the importance of having an archive of material relevant to SAS / SaSci over the years. Ben proposes to send out a year plan indicate what is supposed to be done (possibly more often, a presidential monthly report). Blount and Chrisomalis will coordinate the archiving of the minutes and the President and Secretary will keep a copy of the archives. The election results from past elections will need to be held, as well as treasurer's reports. We would wish to have a list of all previous officers especially from the early years. We have never had a SaSci membership list because that has always been collected ad hoc, as opposed to SAS membership lists which are maintained by the AAA. Treasurer is the one who knows who pays the dues, until the new system is up and active.

The issue of declining membership is problematic. Pres. Ben Blount raises the concern partly being bureaucratic / cleaning up which highlights the problem, which is nonetheless real. Nothing is going

to happen administratively for a minimum of 3 years. However, the drop in numbers was not merely a matter of people being arrears; there has been a real decline. Of our 197 members, only 17 of them are students. 74% are full professors or retired, so this issue of greying is severe.

Ideas were raised at the Executive Board for increasing membership:

- \$5 fee rather than free for SaSci members who are students, because it is considered less valued.
- Make the fee for students in SAS \$5 rather than \$10.
- Michael Fischer raises the issue of whether we could have them apply for an exemption from paying fees
- John Gatewood raises issue that \$10 is not a burden for anyone, including students.
- Margo-Lea Hurwicz raises the question of an exemption being a good idea.
- S. Chrisomalis disagrees; this is not a significant issue.
- D. Hume notes that sections that have journals, one used to join to get a copy of that journal. Joining a section no longer grants you that exclusive access, so sections that have high fees are worried about losing people because online access continues through AnthroSource.
- C. Ember raises the question of whether we should execute an annual amount for SaSci dues.
- M. Leaf moves that if there is nothing in the SaSci bylaws prohibiting it, that student members be charged \$10 years for SaSci membership if they are not members of SAS. John Gatewood seconds. No further discussion.

Ben Blount notes that at the Albuquerque meetings, SfAA provided a reception for SaSci. Will this be true again? If not, we need some other sort of event for students, possibly a meeting with funders. We may need a reception site if there is no reception.

John Gatewood noted that one year, we were in the exhibitor area to promote the society. We could do that again.

Ben Blount raises the issue of mentoring as a role of sections, discussion undertaken at Section Assembly. The model used could vary from section to section. We might rent a space in the exhibit hall to be available to students. Workshops are a way of mentoring. Doug Hume notes that SfAA has a time for special tables to be out for field schools (\$50).

Steve Chrisomalis raises the issue of building membership through workshops, because these are our events. We could distribute flyers or collect their emails and encourage participation in that way.

Murray Leaf raises the issue of identifying the sorts of panels and workshops we can do being the very best way to encourage membership.

Carol Ember suggests that we need to work hard to get suggestions from membership about what topics they are working on to get interest in AAA and SaSci panels. This is a core concern based on today's roundtable.

Eve Pinsker raises the issue that NAPA is an obvious tie, given that practicing anthropologists derive a lot of value from showing anthropological methods as part of their work.

Michael Fischer suggests getting a hotel that we could parlay into having our own reception.

Bob Trotter suggests having a networking reception sponsored by NAPA and SAS (possibly others) so that members can talk to one another.

John Gatewood notes that we don't know what the impediments are. He suggests that one is that one problem is that many of us are not in graduate degree-granting programs. We need to reach out to SAS-oriented faculty at graduate-granting institutions. We need to also account for people who are fed up with AAA and are no longer members.

### **Other Business**

Margo-Lea Hurwicz: SfAA / SaSci at Pittsburgh: We have three organized sessions, one of which is a double session. There are five sessions comprised of volunteered papers, most of which look as if they were planned out. There are two workshops and one poster. This is down from last year.

Ben Blount discusses meeting location, whether we would meet with SfAA or SCCR. We discussed at the Executive Board and agreed that we would, when we meet in Pittsburgh. SfAA 2016 is in Vancouver, SCCR is in Portland. The executive board recommends that the Society meet with SfAA in March 2016 in Vancouver, but also that Carol Ember would coordinate in order to have SaSci representation and try to put together some panels in February 2016 in Portland.

Nominations: Carol Ember sent out a request for nominations on the mailing list and has been endeavoring to put together a slate for President-Elect, Secretary, Senior Board member, and Student Representative. There is still time for self-nominations or to nominate others. The election will be in January for SaSci and then send those by custom as a single slate of winners to the AAA elections. This year there was an exception in that Eric Jones (SaSci) was tied with Rosalyn Negrón (SAS), so they each will serve as board member for their individual societies.

Murray Leaf moves to adjourn. John Gatewood seconds.

Approved unanimously, no abstentions.

Meeting adjourned.