

Annual Report For CSAS 2004

Submitted by: Richard Feinberg, President

1) Accomplishments

Membership numbers are down slightly to around 225, as compared with 241 in October 2003. Since 1996, our total membership has fluctuated from a low of 219 to a high of 302. The year-by-year breakdown is as follows:

1996: 219
1997: 246
1998: 263
1999: 302
2000: 280
2001: 259
2002: 273
2003: 242
Oct 2004: 225

Factors affecting membership numbers:

- * Most of the decline has been in regular faculty membership which stood at 175 as of September 2004.
- * Student numbers continue to fluctuate as students join and then drop out when they graduate or move out of the region. Overall, the numbers have remained quite stable, standing at 50 in September 2004 as compared with 57 in January of the same year.
- * Students and faculty tend to join in the weeks and months immediately prior to annual meetings so that they may take advantage of lower registration fees.
- * The Executive Board is concerned about several long-time section members who have not renewed their membership. While the numbers involved are not great, we are a small section and must be concerned about a possible trend. Therefore, the EB is exploring ways in which to attract new members to CSAS while maintaining the loyalty of our "old-timers."

Financial balance

Financial balances from 2003 and 2004

- * Net assets as of September 2004 were 7,523.03. In October 2003, they were \$2917.

Factors affecting 2003 financial health

* After successive meetings that were poorly attended in 2001 and 2002, the 2003 annual meeting had higher attendance and broke even. The 2004 annual meeting was equally successful and helped keep CSAS in the black.

* Careful fiscal management of by Secretary/Treasurer Joyce Lucke, and an excellent working relationship between the secretary/treasurer, the president, and members of the Executive Board have continued to serve the Society well.

* The 2003 increase in dues continues to help our bottom line.

* On the negative side, the high costs of AnthroSource give us reason for concern. If unchecked, they may require further dues increases, which could have a depressing effect on our membership rolls.

AAA meeting activities

* Two invited session, two CSAS-reviewed sessions, and two volunteered papers were accepted onto the AAA program. In addition, CSAS scheduled a Board meeting and members' reception. All those activities had to be canceled because of problems resulting from the last-minute change of date and location for the national meeting.

2003 spring meeting activities

* 40 sessions with 169 papers

* 230 registered participants

* Distinguished Lecture by Andrew Strathern

* Saturday-night Jam Session

* Sunday subscription breakfast

Communications:

* The current *CSAS Bulletin* is online at:

<http://www.iupui.edu/~csas/PDF%20files/Fall%2004%20Bulletin.pdf>.

* Website is available at <http://www.iupui.edu/~csas/> and linked to AAA:

<http://mypage.iu.edu/~jlucke/>.

* Many discussions on meetings, policies, and relations w/AAA have taken place on officer listserv and member listserv.

*After many years of discussion, the Executive Board voted at its April meeting to maintain CSAS's affiliation with AAA.

* Held virtual electronic Board meeting in lieu of Executive Board meeting that had originally been scheduled for San Francisco in November.

Changes in bylaws

* None in 2004

2) Future plans

* 2005 annual meeting at Miami University in Oxford, OH.

* Distinguished Lecturer: C. Owen Lovejoy (Kent State University).

* Student paper competition—undergraduate and graduate student divisions.

* Award Leslie A. White and Beth Dillingham scholarships.

* Review Bylaws.

* Update Officers Handbook.

* Monitor expenses of AnthroSource involvement.

3) Other items

Recommendations to Long Range Planning Committee

* Last year, CSAS President Paul Durrenberger suggested “Improv[ing] the AAA annual meeting process. There are too many mistakes. Look into working with a meeting planner....” In correspondence with AAA President Liz Brumfiel, I was able to convey some specific areas of concern and am assured that the national organization is working constructively to address many critical problems. Difficulties involving the timing and location of the 2004 national meeting, however, demonstrate that important matters of procedure and organization, as well as our guiding principles, require further consideration and resolution.

Questions for AAA Executive Board to consider

* Review AAA policy on boycotting states with sodomy laws. For many years, this has been a matter of concern. Most of our members sympathize with the national organization’s objectives but question the effectiveness of boycotts as a strategy for achieving them. This is particularly problematic for CSAS, as it severely limits the number of states in which we are able to meet. My own view is that boycotts can be very effective, but they must be carefully targeted. In addition, we must consider the effects on our own membership and operations. Many CSAS members have observed that boycotts of specific cities rather than entire states would provide an adequate range of meeting options. If that approach is unfeasible for AAA, my preference would

be to leave current strictures in place but give sections some flexibility to waive them in cases where they will make it difficult to conduct section business or are likely to create unusual hardships for our members.

* Last year, President Durrenberger proposed that AAA “Remove Illinois from the list of banned states. We may not agree with the choice of mascot of the University of Illinois, but we should not therefore punish ourselves and our sections. Or be equitable and balanced and put the District of Columbia on the banned list because of the Washington mascot and review all mascots for all professional and university sports teams and subject them all to the same process. It is neither reasonable nor fair to single out one institution among many for such treatment.” This position remains the consensus view of CSAS members. Personally, I agree with those who find Native American “mascots” offensive, but it seems unreasonable to place an entire state off limits because of one policy at one institution within that state.

* In the 2003 annual report, President Durrenberger proposed that AAA “Adopt a policy of not meeting in municipalities that have not passed a living wage ordinance.” The proposal was also endorsed by the Section Assembly, and I understand that the national organization is moving forward. We commend the EB for its action and encourage it to move toward implementation as expeditiously as possible—perhaps with a hardship clause for sections, similar to the one being proposed with respect to states with sodomy laws.

* In the 2003 annual report, President Durrenberger proposed that AAA “Adopt a policy of not meeting in non-union hotels.” The proposal was also endorsed by the Section Assembly, and its importance was highlighted by the events surrounding AAA’s 2004 annual meeting. The proposal was endorsed by the Section Assembly, and I understand that AAA is moving forward. We commend the EB for its action and encourage it to move toward implementation as expeditiously as possible.

* President Durrenberger expressed a widely held sentiment in his 2003 report by calling for AAA to “Improve efficiency and quality of services to sections. We pay too much for the services we receive.” CSAS recognizes the value of services provided to sections by the national organization, and that is why the Executive Board voted in April to continue its affiliation with AAA. Still, many of us are concerned about the cost of those services, including some that we don’t need. I recommend that the AAA’s EB carefully re-evaluate the services it provides to sections, eliminate those that sections can provide equally well or better for themselves, and work to improve the efficiency and quality of those services that it elects to retain.

* President Durrenberger requested in 2003 that AAA “Make some response to [the sections’ annual] reports. We have no information to suggest that anything we have reported has reached the EB or LRPC or that they have acted on it.” Correspondence with President Brumfiel and other members of the AAA’s EB convince me that the national leadership does read section reports and takes them seriously. Nonetheless, I agree with Paul that some formal mechanism for routinely communicating the national organization’s responses to section leaders could help improve the relationship between the AAA and its sections.

* In 2003, President Durrenberger called for AAA “Either [to] re-vitalize the section assembly by giving it a role in policy making rather than simply being advisory, or disband it and create some meaningful way for sections to influence policy.” This is also the thrust of the “Canterbury Resolution,” which members of the CSAS Executive Board have received with a good deal of sympathy. In addition, this view is widely shared in the Section Assembly. I understand that the national EB is considering some form of reorganization that would reflect those concerns. The sooner such changes are made, the better all sections will feel about their relationship with the national organization.

What should AAA do?

* CSAS strongly supports development of the Policy Institute. We appreciate the efforts of the AAA’s EB to bring plans for the Institute to fruition and urge the EB to continue moving on this as quickly as possible.

* While mindful of anthropologists’ ethical responsibilities, we often find IRB requirements to be out of tune with the realities of ethnographic research. The AAA should take steps either to have ethnographic work exempted, as ethnohistorical work has been, from IRB requirements or to revamp the system so that it reflects more accurately the qualitative nature of most ethnographic studies.

* At several points in the 2003 Annual Report, President Durrenberger noted that information requested by AAA—particularly relating to financial records and membership statistics—is only available to CSAS to the extent that it is provided to us by AAA(!), and he questions the value of such requests. That is a reasonable question and deserves a response.

* In general, the 2003 CSAS Annual Report calls for greater responsiveness and transparency in the operations of the AAA’s EB—a concern echoed by the Canterbury Resolution. During my term of office, I have found EB members to be open about their deliberations and responsive to my queries. Perhaps my impressions only reflect changes in the personal communicative styles of those involved on both sides. I would like to think that they reflect recognition by all concerned of the importance of open communication and a commitment by to achieve it.

For a list of officers and contact information, please go to:

<http://www.iupui.edu/~csas/Current%20Officers.htm>