

ARCHAEOLOGY DIVISION – AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOC.  
ANNUAL REPORT – 2008  
Submitted by Janet E. Levy, President

Officers

Janet E. Levy, President: [jelevy@uncc.edu](mailto:jelevy@uncc.edu)  
Ben Nelson, President-elect: [bnelson@asu.edu](mailto:bnelson@asu.edu)  
Rani T. Alexander, Secretary: [raalexan@nmsu.edu](mailto:raalexan@nmsu.edu)  
Randolph J. Widmer, Treasurer: [rwidmer@uh.edu](mailto:rwidmer@uh.edu)

Executive Committee

Carol McDavid, Member-at-large  
Minette Church, Member-at-large  
Lisa Frink, Program Chair  
Stephen Silliman, Program chair-elect  
Cathy Costin, Publications Director  
Student member: Andrew Roddick  
Nominations Committee Chair: Bob Paynter

Status, Activities, and Accomplishments

1. Membership numbers as of October 31, 2008: 1018. Membership numbers have decreased steadily for several years. The AD executive committee is *very* concerned about this decline. There seem to be both external and internal factors at play here. First, in a time of fiscal crisis, individuals may make decisions to decrease expenditures; in this situation, archaeologists can give up the AAA and still remain professionally active through the SAA. The AD could lower its dues, but the most significant factor is the size of AAA dues, not the Section dues. Second, some parts of the AAA leadership at times appear to demonstrate a lack of interest in archaeology, and even a lack of respect for archaeological concerns (for example, the Commission on World Anthropologies was created without an archaeological member, and the AD president had to push to get one appointed).

The theme of the 2008 meeting was effective and appropriate for archaeologists. The 2009 theme is more of a stretch (maybe for others in addition to archaeologists??).

2. Financial balance as of October 31, 2008: \$92,633.82. This will decline by the end of the year because of expenses associated with the annual meeting. Total expenses for publication, AP3A, as of October 31, 2008: \$2802.38 (budgeted for 2008: \$4615.00). Additional expenses will probably appear by the end of the year. AD's finances are healthy, and the AD has benefitted from the new contract with Wiley-Blackwell; publications are no longer an absolute drain on our budget. Declining membership, however, raises financial concerns.

The endowment for the Gordon R. Willey fund reached \$18,399.55, as of September 30, 2008. There should be some increase by the end of the year. We believe the endowment should reach at least \$25,000 before we start to draw on it for the annual \$1000 prize.

3. The AD reviewed 16 sessions and sponsored two sessions at the 2008 annual meeting; however, only one sponsored session appeared in the listing of sponsored sessions in the program. In addition, the AD sponsored a business meeting and a very well-attended Distinguished Lecture, given by Prof. Alison Wylie. The AD president participated as a representative of the Archaeology Division in an invited session by the Committee on Practicing, Applied, and Public Interest Anthropology.

4. In spring, 2008, the AD executive committee met for its semi-annual meeting at the Society for American Archaeology in Vancouver, British Columbia. At the SAA meeting, the AD sponsored a session called "Inalienable Possessions in the Archaeology of Mesoamerica," organized by Brigitte Kovacevich (Avatar Company) and Michael Callaghan (Vanderbilt University).

5. The AD awarded three Student Diversity Travel Awards in 2008, and provided opportunities for the recipients to meet with executive committee members.

6. The AD connects with the Society for American Archaeology through its annual sponsorship of a session at the SAA meetings. In addition, the president worked during 2008 with SAA representatives on the development of a Heritage Values Interest Group within the SAA. The president and other members of the executive committee attended the World Archaeological Congress in Dublin, Ireland, and interacted there with the international archaeological community. The president assisted members of the EB and AAA staff in providing advice to the U.S. Department of Interior on various issues of archaeological interest. The president participated in the working group on Section Assembly governance. The AD President is a member of the Archaeology Presidents List-Serve, maintained by the World Archaeological Congress, in effect representing archaeology within the AAA to other archaeological associations worldwide. Through this list-serve, the AD is asked to respond to various threats to cultural resources, in which case the AD President either acts on behalf of the division or passes on requests for coordinated action to the AAA. The AD also financially supports AAA's commitment to the Register of Professional Archaeologists.

7. The AD presented the following awards in 2008, at its annual business meeting held on Friday, Nov. 21, 2008:

- The Gordon R. Willey prize went to Dr. Barbara Voss, Stanford University, for her article, "From Casta to California: Social Identity and the Archaeology of Culture Contact," published in *American Anthropologist* 107, #3, in September, 2005.
- The Student Diversity Travel Awards went to: Ed Jolie, University of New Mexico, who is presenting a paper at the meetings, titled: "Some Thoughts on Balancing Professionalism and Advocacy in an Indigenous Anthropology"; Karen Pereira, University of Florida, who is presenting a paper at the meetings, titled: "The Central Highlands of Guatemala during the Middle Formative"; and Dana Shew, University of Denver, who is working on the archaeology and oral history of one of the WWII Japanese internment camps.
- The Distinguished Lecture was presented by Prof. Alison Wylie, University of Washington, who spoke on "Legacies of Collaboration: Transformative Criticism in Archaeology."

In addition to these on-going awards, the AD was pleased to mark two other honors this year.

- We recognized Prof. emeritus David C. Grove, University of Illinois and University of Florida, who received the AAA's Alfred V. Kidder medal for contributions to American Archaeology.
- We also recognized Prof. emerita Patty Jo Watson, Washington University – St. Louis and University of Montana, by naming the Distinguished Lecture in her honor.

8. The AD's website needs updating, something that we hope will be accomplished first thing in 2009. We do not use a list serve for the entire section, although the executive committee stays closely in touch with each other via email. We have effectively used the AD column in the *Anthropology Newsletter*; we also communicate with the archaeological community through the SAA newsletter, the *SAA Archaeological Record*. Andrew Duff, the current editor of the *SAA-AR*, has been very cooperative in publishing AD notices.

9. In 2008, the AD instituted a change in its bylaws to add a position of Nominations Committee chair-elect, in order to allow the incoming Nominations Committee chair appropriate time for learning the complexities of the position.

#### Future plans and activities

1. The executive committee continues to discuss plans for increasing membership. The external financial conditions make this a very hard row to hoe. We hope to initiate a new award for students in 2009: payment of meeting registration for up to 20 students presenting papers or posters on archaeological topics. The goal, of course, is to encourage student membership, individual who, we hope, will later become regular members.

2. We are seriously discussing developing “virtual readers” by creating thematic volumes containing articles drawn from the AD’s publication, *Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association* (AP3A). A conference call between the AD president, AD editor, representatives of Wiley-Blackwell, and AAA staff was a good start toward planning this project. We envision these to be on-line readers that would be for classroom use.

The AD published one volume of AP3A (now a serial) in 2008, and plans two volumes in 2009 (the second volume supported entirely by our own budget). We plan for longer volumes now that we have an agreement with Wiley-Blackwell to increase the page number of each volume. The AD editor, president, and treasurer spent a great deal of time in 2008 working on the specifications of the new Wiley-Blackwell contract. So far, it has paid off for us.

We would like to figure out how to market and sell back issues of AP3A, a process that so far has proved to be impossible to implement.

3. We are increasing the stipend for the Student Diversity Travel awards to \$600. We are discussing within the executive committee the possibility of providing refreshments at the Distinguished Lecture, but the president is very fiscally conservative and is resisting this. We would like to begin an endowment for the Distinguished Lecture, but we need to first increase the endowment for the Willey prize.

4. We are planning to collaborate more specifically with other sections in co-sponsoring sessions at the 2009 and future meetings.

#### Concerns and issues

1. Section Assembly: The proliferation of sections should be watched with concern. More smaller sections makes governance more difficult. The SA must remember that the EB’s first obligations (and, therefore, major responsibilities of the SA as well) are the fiscal and legal health and stability of the AAA. The AAA cannot accomplish everything that every individual member might wish, and both the EB and SA have to make difficult decisions and priorities. The SA members do not always understand this.

2. Executive Board : The AD would like the nomination process for Association-wide offices to be more transparent. Annually, our Nominations Committee works very hard to find good-quality nominees not only for AD positions, but for AAA positions as well. Then, we find that email memos go out to the AAA membership calling, rather desperately, for more nominees. Yet, frequently, our nominees are not accepted. The issue for us is: if one or more sections work harder than others on nominations, then the Nominations Committee should accept those nominations.

The AD commends the EB for its careful handling of the clamor around the Code of Ethics during 2008; we encourage the EB to stand firmly for a Code of Ethics that will serve interests of anthropologists in diverse work situations; and not allow the demonizing of anthropologists who work in complex, non-academic institutional settings.

The AD would like meeting themes to be more transparent and more appropriate for all anthropological parties. In fact: is a theme necessary?

3. AA Staff: The AD encourages the staff to improve the online submission process for the meeting program, making it more transparent and more reliable. And, we encourage better oversight over the printed program so that all relevant information appears, such as all invited sessions. Further, the AD president encourages the staff (and the EB and SA, for that matter) to resist efforts to stop AAA from meeting in non-union hotels. This would completely rule out the southern U.S. while making not one whit of difference in unionization rates in the U.S.