

ARCHAEOLOGY DIVISION – AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOC.  
ANNUAL REPORT – 2009

Submitted by Janet E. Levy, Outgoing President

Officers during 2009

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Executive Committee

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Erika Roberts, Student member  
Teresita Majewski: Chair, Nominations Committee

Status, Activities, and Accomplishments

1. Membership numbers fluctuated just under 1000 during the second half of 2009. 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. Second, some archaeologists express dismay at ideological wrangling within the AAA. The theme of the 2008 meeting was effective and appropriate for archaeologists. The 2009 theme was more of a stretch. The theme for 2010 – Circulation – works well for archaeologists and we hope will attract members.

The AD could lower its dues from \$45 back to \$35, which was the dues level until 2007. Our current healthy financial situation would allow this, but we remain somewhat hesitant because we do not know how the Wiley-Blackwell contract might be renegotiated in the future. Also, the most significant factor in membership choices is the size of AAA dues, not the Section dues.

2. Financial balance as of October 31, 2009 is \$113,257. This will decline by the end of the year because of expenses associated with the annual meeting, but our balance remains excellent. Because of how our publication schedule has worked out for 2009, we have had very few expenditures for AP3A during this year. However, we have three manuscripts in various stages of readiness for publication, so there will be more expenditures during 2010; we have the income to manage this. The AD has benefitted from the new contract with Wiley-Blackwell; publications now contribute positively to our budget rather than being a drain. Declining membership, however, raises financial concerns.

The endowment for the Gordon R. Willey fund reached \$22,176, as of October 31, 2009. We are very close to the minimum amount of \$25,000 in the endowment, the point at which we could begin drawing on the endowment for the annual prize. However, we share the recommendation of Dr. Rosemary Joyce, president-elect of the AD, that if it is fiscally possible, we should continue to pay for the prize out of operating budget and continue to grow the endowment for the future.

3. The AD reviewed or sponsored or organized over 100 papers or posters at the 2009 annual meeting. This included one singly-sponsored session, three co-sponsored sessions (with ABA, SOLGA, and SCA), one very successful sponsored “workshop” – a tour of historic archaeological sites in Philadelphia; and a well-attended Distinguished Lecture given by Dr. Barbara J. Little of the National Park Service and the University of Maryland. The AD also sponsored a valuable Forum about archaeology in areas of political conflict, but the Forum was canceled at the last minute because the organizers lost their funding for international participants. Thus, the AD is pleased to see the new initiative by the AAA to provide support for international participants. This was our most productive year in using co-sponsorship.

The AD president participated as a representative of the Archaeology Division in an invited panel discussion by the Committee on Practicing, Applied, and Public Interest Anthropology.

4. In spring, 2009, the AD executive committee met for its semi-annual meeting at the Society for American Archaeology in Atlanta, Georgia. At the SAA meeting, the AD sponsored a session called “Actors’ and Artifacts’

Agencies: The Dynamics of Creating Living Objects” organized by Christine VanPool, Christopher Carr, and Elizabeth Newsome.

5. The AD awarded four Student Diversity Travel Awards in 2009, and provided opportunities for the recipients to meet with executive committee members. In addition, we inaugurated a new award of one year’s membership to any student who presents a paper at the AAA meetings. In 2009, we awarded 9 of these grants, and interacted with the recipients at the annual meeting.

6. The AD connects with the Society for American Archaeology through its annual sponsorship of a session at the SAA meetings. The AD president served during 2009 on the Task Force to Review the AAA Ethics Statements. There was less call on the AD during 2009 than in earlier years to advise on public policy issues relevant to archaeology (e.g., in response to the National Park Service, etc.). However, the AD was approached to make a statement related to the political situation in Honduras. This proved to be a very conflicted process and was not completed during 2009. This issue has been subsumed under the broader AAA discussion about public statements related to Honduras. 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 incoming president will attend a WAC-sponsored “inter-congress” on Archaeology and Conflict in Vienna in 2010. The AD also financially supports AAA’s commitment to the Register of Professional Archaeologists.

7. The AD presented the following awards in 2009, at its annual business meeting held on Friday, Dec 4, 2009:

- The Gordon R. Willey prize went to Dr. Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Dr. T.J. Ferguson for their article, “Memory Pieces and Footprints: Multivocality and the Meanings of Ancient Times and Ancestral Places among the Zuni and Hopi,” published in *American Anthropologist* 108, #1, in March 2006.
- The Student Diversity Travel Awards went to: Shankari Patel (UC Riverside), Rhianna Rogers (Florida Atlantic), Tsim Schneider (UC Berkeley), and Ana Tejada (Northwestern).
- Nine inaugural Student Membership Awards were granted to: Diana Anzures, Christine Reiser, Tobin Hartnell, Rhianna Rogers, Kathy Koziol, Emily Poeppel, Maria Raviele, Kathryn Samuels, and Ana Tejada.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> Patty Jo Watson Distinguished Lecture was presented by Dr. Barbara J. Little, National Park Service and University of Maryland, who spoke on: “Reintegrating Archaeology in the Service of Sustainable Culture.”

8. The AD’s website was updated in 2009, with the inestimable help of the AAA’s Lisa Myers. This is an unending process, of course. The web site is clean and easy to use, but it lacks interesting visuals. 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. No bylaws changes in 2009.

#### 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 that our new membership award for students will encourage ongoing student members, who will become regular members.

2. We continue to discuss developing “virtual readers” by creating thematic volumes containing articles drawn from the AD’s publication, *Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association* (AP3A). We envision these to be on-line readers that would be for classroom use.

The AD did not publish a volume of AP3A in 2009, but we have three manuscripts in various stages of readiness (one very close). We are pleased that the AP3A is now officially a serial. We worked with Wiley-Blackwell to increase the page numbers in each volume; we also worked with W-B to change the pricing structure for back issues. Our relationships with W-B have been positive.

3. We are discussing within the executive committee the possibility of providing refreshments at the Distinguished Lecture. The outgoing president is very fiscally conservative and resisted this, but things may change. We would like to begin an endowment for the Distinguished Lecture, but we need to first increase the endowment for the Willey prize.

4. Co-sponsorship with other sections for the annual meeting program proved to be very effective in 2009 and we will work to continue this.

#### 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 primary obligations of AAA governing bodies 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 appear to understand this. The management of the SA annual meeting could stand some improvement. The outgoing AD president recommends that the same policy about introducing motions should apply to the SA as to the overall business meeting of the AAA: i.e., any motions must be presented in writing to the SA membership some reasonable time prior to the meeting. Motions, especially motions with significant fiscal ramifications, *should not* be presented to the SA without warning or preparation at the annual meeting.

Furthermore, if a motion is presented to the SA, there should be at least some minimal discussion of its fiscal impact. It was noticeable at the 2009 SA meeting that every motion brought – without prior preparation – to the SA would cost money. Pretty much the only response to this was: well, yes we should be concerned about money, but this is so important that we need to skip over fiscal concerns. Well, lots of things are important and they all cost money: the role of AAA governance is to make hard decisions in order to protect the fiscal and legal health of the Association overall.

2. Executive Board : The AD would like the nomination process for Association-wide offices to be more transparent. Annually, our Nominations Committee works 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 also encourages the EB to think seriously about joint membership arrangements with other scholarly organizations. We recognize that this is a very complex issue. However, we note that members of the AAA get reduced membership rates within the Register for Professional Archaeologists. Some kind of joint memberships with other major organizations might be good for everyone's membership lists.

The AD supports steps at "greening" the AAA and the annual meeting. We are considering making a contribution toward carbon offsets for the travel of the AD Executive Committee.

3. AA Staff: The outgoing 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.

However, more importantly: the AD thanks the staff for its competent and helpful support throughout the year.