



# SECOND OPINION



## Encounters and engagements: creating new agendas for medical anthropology

EASA Medical Anthropology Network  
AAA Society for Medical Anthropology  
Universitat Rovira i Virgili

Joint international conference.  
June 12th-14th 2013. Tarragona, Spain.

### Thematic Focus

Encounters and engagements—it is hard to imagine anthropology of any sort without them, and they are central to the practices and concerns of medical anthropology in particular. While “encounters” suggests meetings and convergence, the question of when, where and on what terms an encounter takes place may raise issues of conflict, displacement and exclusion.

The consultation of clients and health professionals, patients and healers, has been of central concern to medical anthropologists, yet the domain of medical anthropology extends well beyond the encounters that occur through healing work in health settings. Encounters may involve the senses, feelings and emotions—desires, disappointments, pleasure and suffering—or they may be dispassionate, cold and clinical. Encounters can also involve quasi- or non-human agents: microbes, spirits, pharmaceuticals, medical technologies, experiments, governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations, weapons and words (amongst many others). They may be real, virtual or imagined, active or pas-

sive. And they may engender change of all sorts, leading to new identities, forms and trajectories.

By “engagements” we recall the rich history of medical anthropologists’ engagement in change processes, in many different roles, in some cases collaborating with biomedical institutions to adapt their programs to social realities, in other cases engaging with recipients by giving voice to their concerns. Through such engagements with diverse actors, medical anthropologists have developed a host of new ways of doing research. It is this positionality of the medical anthropologist, and this mode of interaction with other disciplines and actors, that makes our work unique and important.

### A Conference Like No Other

This Joint International Conference is designed to foster intellectual encounters between engaged/applied and academic medical anthropologists from around the world. The location and format of this pioneering conference will promote the exploration of convergences and divergences between theories, practices, schools and regions across the broader

community of medical anthropology scholars and practitioners globally. The conference is being organized by the American Anthropological Association’s Society for Medical Anthropology (SMA); the European Association of Social Anthropologists’ (EASA) Medical Anthropology Network; and the Department of Anthropology, Philosophy and Social Work, Universitat Rovira i Virgili (URV), Tarragona, Spain.

### Submitting Abstracts

The theme “encounters and engagements” has been chosen not only for the theoretical focus it offers, but to reflect the organizers’ aspirations about what this unique conference will be like. Hence, rather than soliciting pre-formed panels, or panel abstracts relating to particular topics or themes, the organizers are inviting all contributors to use the broad framework provided by the overarching “encounters and engagement” theme as a basis for developing their 250-word (maximum) conference abstracts for a paper or poster. These should be based on original research and/or analysis, be it theoretical or empirical. The abstracts



will form the basis for a more detailed program, which will be designed to generate cumulative and inclusive discussions in ten parallel thematic conference streams, each containing a number of panels.

### Streams

Abstracts will initially be considered by a Scientific Committee that will allocate them to one of ten emergent streams deriving from the content of the submissions. Each stream will be led by a group of two scholars who will use them to identify and organize a series of five panels in their stream. Stream leaders will write an initial thinkpiece that explains the debates they expect will take place in their stream (based on their review of abstracts), and will work with panelists on how to focus and refine their presentations (with the possibility of resubmitting abstracts, if appropriate). Stream leaders will also draw up plans for how to conduct their panels, aiming for a variety of formats, including (but not limited to) 15-minute presentations and posters.

### Uploading Papers in Advance

In order to encourage and enhance the level of discussion in the streams, participants are encouraged to prepare their work and upload it on the conference website for others to read in advance. We recognize that some people may not be able to do this, hence it is an optional element, but we strongly encourage participants to follow this approach if they possibly can (and for others contributing to a particular stream to read them!). Papers should be no more than 3,000 words in length; presentations at the conference should be summaries and reflections on these papers, not the papers themselves.

### Summing Up

At the end of the conference, the stream



Universitat Rovira i Virgili (photo Jake Bellucci, Flickr). Conference info: [medical-anthropology-urv.cat](http://medical-anthropology-urv.cat).

leaders will write brief endnotes summing up the key points from their stream and their implications for future trajectories and challenges in medical anthropology. This approach, we hope, will bring together people from many different modes of practice, schools and regions in what we hope will be mutually inspiring encounters generating long-lasting engagements. Through the reconnaissance of individuals, subjects and theories, we anticipate the start of new and exciting agendas in the discipline.

### Skills-Sharing Workshops

In addition, the conference will host a series of workshops allowing medical anthropologists to share skills and exchange experiences with mixed methods studies, participatory video methods, the use of spatial methods and social media, network analysis, and the analysis of large volumes of qualitative data.

### Participant Diversity

The conference will be preceded by the annual Medical Anthropology Young Scholars network meeting, enabling graduate/postgraduate students to attend both events if they wish. Bursaries for professional medical anthropologists

(and some advanced graduate/postgraduate students) living in low-income countries (sub-Saharan Africa, parts of Latin America and the Caribbean, parts of Oceania, South and South East Asia, and parts of Central Asia) will be available through a generous grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation.

Further information about these and all other aspects of the conference, abstract submission, registration, accommodation, transportation, special opportunities for visual anthropology and other matters is available through the conference website: [www.medical-anthropology-urv.cat](http://www.medical-anthropology-urv.cat).

The joint conference organizing committee of the SMA, EASA Medical Anthropology Network and the URV invite you to join with the spirit of the conference in order to create new agendas for medical anthropology in the historic and convivial city of Tarragona, Catalonia, Spain.

### Spain Conference Deadlines

Abstracts Due: February 15  
Abstract Notification: March 15  
Program Online: April 15  
Paper Uploads Due: May 3

# President's Message on SMA Meeting in Spain

DOUGLAS A. FELDMAN (THE COLLEGE AT BROCKPORT, SUNY)

The SMA meets twice a year: typically with the AAA in the fall, and usually with the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) in the spring. However, we have decided to meet once every four years at an independent location during the spring, instead of the SfAA. In 2009, the SMA met at Yale University for a very successful conference. And in June 2013, we will be meeting jointly with the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) and their Medical Anthropology Network (MAN) in Tarragona, Spain at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili. We expect it will be equally successful, and we hope you can join us!

Please go to [www.medical-anthropology-urv.cat](http://www.medical-anthropology-urv.cat) to submit paper or film

abstracts. To submit an abstract, press "Call for papers" or "Call for films," and complete the abstract submission form. The deadline for abstract submissions is February 15, 2013. Also on the website is valuable information about skills-sharing workshops, the participation of senior and junior scholars, challenges for the future, accommodations (including a map with the exact locations, and room prices in euros), conference venue information, and the organizing committee (under "Credits"). Registration (120 euros for regular registrants and 60 euros for student registrants) is now open. All registrants (whether giving a paper, showing a film or just attending) are required to pay the registration fee.

Tarragona is about 60 miles southwest of the Barcelona International Airport, connected by bus. A closer local airport, Reus Airport, is located just outside Tarragona. The conference will be held at the main university in Tarragona, named the Universitat Rovira i Virgili. Tarragona is a beautiful city with an excellent beach and numerous historical sights and museums.

This will be an excellent opportunity to meet and share information with medical anthropologists from all over the world. We have received a Wenner-Gren Foundation grant that will bring in about thirty medical anthropologists from developing/less developed countries. And, of course, we expect several hundred medical anthropologists from all over Europe. See you in Spain this June!

## Call for Applications

### SMA in Spain: Student Travel Fellowship

The Society for Medical Anthropology (SMA) is pleased to be able to offer its student members a limited number of \$800 student travel fellowships for travel to the 2013 SMA/EASA meeting in Tarragona, Spain. Eligibility is restricted to student members of the SMA who are (1) presenting at SMA/EASA meeting, or (2) presenting at the Medical Anthropology Young Scholars (MAYS) meeting and attending the SMA/EASA meeting. Fellowships will be awarded based on the clarity, significance and innovation of their submitted abstract, and the strength of a letter of support from a faculty member who can discuss the significance of their presented work.

#### Eligibility Requirements

1. Submit proof of current SMA student membership.
2. Submit proof of registration for the conference.
3. Submit a copy of your SMA/EASA or MAYS paper abstract (due February 15, 2013 via conference website).
4. Submit a letter of recommendation from an advisor.

#### Application Procedure

Please compile all the supporting materials into ONE file and save in pdf format. Email materials and direct any inquiries to the SMA 2013 Student Travel Fellowship Committee at [smaawards@gmail.com](mailto:smaawards@gmail.com) by March 1, 2013. Fellowship award winners will be notified by April 1, 2013. Awards will be formally announced, and checks will be presented, at the SMA business meeting in Tarragona, Spain.

**For additional details, see the conference websites:**

[www.medical-anthropology-urv.cat](http://www.medical-anthropology-urv.cat)

[www.mays-easa.org/2012/12/mays-4th-annual-meeting-impediments-and.html](http://www.mays-easa.org/2012/12/mays-4th-annual-meeting-impediments-and.html)



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[www.medical-anthropology-urv.cat](http://www.medical-anthropology-urv.cat)



# SMA Names Award Winners in San Francisco

At the AAA Annual Meeting, the SMA recognized medical anthropologists who inform and inspire us with their insightful writing, dedicated teaching and tireless service to the field. Congratulations to all of these deserving scholars.

## CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Robert Hahn (CDC)

## STEVEN POLGAR PRIZE

Cecilia Van Hollen (Syracuse U), "Breast or Bottle? HIV-Positive Women's Responses to Global Health Policy on Infant Feeding in India"

Maryna Bazylevych (Luther C), "Vaccination Campaigns in Postsocialist Ukraine: Health Care Provider Navigating Uncertainty"



Cecilia van Hollen receives Steven Polgar Prize from Mark Padilla (photo by Dinah Winnick)

## EILEEN BASKER MEMORIAL PRIZE

Carole Browner (UCLA) and Carolyn Sargent (Washington U in St. Louis), eds., *Reproduction, Globalization, and the State: New Theoretical and Ethnographic Perspectives*

## CHARLES HUGHES GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER PRIZE

Daisy Deomampo (CUNY Graduate Center), "Substantiating Kinship in Indian Transnational Surrogacy: Intended Parents on Blood and Bio-Genetic Relations"

## ALCOHOL, DRUG AND TOBACCO STUDY GROUP ANNUAL GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER PRIZE

Saiba Varma (Cornell U), "Love in the Time of PTSD: Loss, Longing, and Addiction in Kashmir"

## AIDS AND ANTHROPOLOGY RESEARCH GROUP DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Merrill Singer (U Connecticut)

## COUNCIL FOR ANTHROPOLOGY AND REPRODUCTION (CAR) MOST NOTABLE RECENT COLLECTION

Carole Browner (UCLA) and Carolyn Sargent (Washington U in St. Louis), eds., *Reproduction, Globalization, and the State: New Theoretical and Ethnographic Perspectives*

Daphna Birenbaum-Carmeli (U Haifa) and Marcia Inhorn (Yale U), eds., *Assisting Reproduction, Testing Genes: Global Encounters with New Biotechnologies*

## CAR GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER PRIZE

Kathryn Goldfarb (Harvard U), "Replacement and Remediation: Loss and the Pleasures of the Genealogical"

## CRITICAL ANTHROPOLOGY OF GLOBAL HEALTH (CAGH) RUDOLF VIRCHOW UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT PAPER AWARD

Victoria Koski-Karell (Cambridge Health Alliance), "Knowledges of the Unknown: Living with (Bad) Cholera in North Haiti"

## CAGH RUDOLF VIRCHOW GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER AWARD

Nora J. Kenworthy (Columbia U), "The Body Sac(RED): Public Treatment and Private Interests in Lesoto's Transnational Garment Sector"

## CAGH RUDOLF VIRCHOW PROFESSIONAL AWARD

Sarah Willen (U Connecticut), "Do 'Illegal' Migrants Have a 'Right to Health'? Engaging Ethical Theory as Social Practice at a Tel Aviv Open Clinic"

## MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY STUDENT ASSOCIATION GRADUATE STUDENT MENTOR AWARD

Peter J. Brown (Emory U)

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER PRIZE

Natalie Porter (U Oxford), "Bird Flu Biopower: Strategies for Multispecies Coexistence in Viet Nam"



Carolyn Sargent (center) and Carole Browner (r) receive an award from CAR President Claire Wendland (l) (photo by Dinah Winnick)



Merrill Singer (r) receives the AARG Distinguished Service Award from Douglas Goldsmith (l) (photo by Dinah Winnick)

# Peter J. Brown Honored for Teaching and Mentorship

SARAH WILLEN (U CONNECTICUT)

By all accounts, Peter J. Brown, professor of anthropology and global health at Emory University, is nothing if not a teacher and mentor extraordinaire.

In 2012, Brown's passion for medical anthropology and, in particular, for his role as a teacher and mentor, earned him two major career awards: the Society for Medical Anthropology Graduate Student Mentoring Award, and the American Anthropological Association (AAA)/Oxford University Press Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching in Anthropology. Both awards—the first signifying recognition by his students, the second by his peers—were presented at the 2012 AAA Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

Brown grew up in Los Angeles, where his early passions were ecology and the Boy Scouts. He knew fairly early that he wanted to be a teacher. After graduating from Notre Dame, he honed his interests in medical anthropology and disease ecology as a graduate student at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Brown was finishing up his PhD when Emory offered him a job in 1978.

Brown has successfully chaired 17 PhD committees, and he is currently chairing an additional five. He has served on the doctoral committees of another 13 PhD students. Of all his graduate mentees, twenty (64%) have published a book, twenty-three (76%) have earned an additional graduate degree in a health field (MPH, MD) and twenty-six (88%) have received external funding in support of their research.

"It kind of blows you away," Brown says of the many accomplishments of his students who have gone on to successful careers in academia, medicine and public health.

Of those students, a total of 16 submitted letters in glowing support of Brown's nomination for the MASA Mentoring Award. Remarkable for their consistency, the letters highlighted Brown's talents as "a careful listener, a perceptive reader, and a sharp critic"; "his ability to make his students feel at ease" by recognizing them "as people and not just as academic advisees"; and his "extraordinary dedication to graduate student training." One of his current students punctuated her



Peter J. Brown receives the 2012 MASA Mentoring Award at the SMA Business Meeting (photo by Dinah Winnick)

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**"What's important," he told her as she struggled to assemble a doctoral committee, "is not that these people will be on your committee. What matters is that they will stand in your corner and fight for you."**

As a founding member of the anthropology department, he helped Emory gain a reputation as one of the leading graduate programs for medical anthropologists in the country. In addition to the anthropology department, Brown's students at Emory have also benefitted from resources at the Rollins School of Public Health (where he also teaches); its Center for Health, Culture, and Society (which he led for many years); and the adjacent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

A malaria scholar and former editor of the journal *Medical Anthropology*,

letter of nomination with a memorable comment from Brown. "What's important," he told her as she struggled to assemble a doctoral committee, "is not that these people will be on your committee. What matters is that they will stand in your corner and fight for you." The letter-writer continues: "And that is exactly what Peter Brown does for us, his graduate students."

One especially memorable ethnographic vignette came from Svea Closser, a former student of Brown's. Now an assistant professor at Middlebury College—and recipient of a large grant

(over \$800,000) from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to fund an eight-country comparative study of polio eradication initiatives—Closser recalled a favorite memory that illuminates just

how special, and how versatile, a mentor Brown is. After the recent SMA conference in Mérida, Mexico, she writes, "Peter rented a mini-van to drive me and several other current and former grad students across Mexico, all the while tirelessly play-

ing 'Guess What Animal I Am' with my four-year-old."

"And, of course," she continues, "he made time at the conference to give thoughtful, much-appreciated advice to an undergraduate student of mine."

Warmest congratulations to Professor Peter Brown, much beloved mentor and recipient of the 2012 MASA Mentoring Award!

*Editor's note: Willen adapted this piece, with permission, from a longer article on Emory University's eScienceCommons blog. Read the original feature at <http://goo.gl/WNbtN>.*



# Introducing New Anthropology and Mental Health Interest Group

MICHAEL DUKE (U MEMPHIS)

Anthropologists have long been attentive to the cultural, social and structural manifestations of mental health and mental illness. In response to the burgeoning interest in this topic area in recent years, the Anthropology and Mental Health Interest Group (AMHIG) was formed in May 2012. AMHIG provides a forum for anthropologists, scholars from other disciplines, and practitioners whose work focuses on the sociocultural dimensions of mental health. In particular, the group offers an organizational structure for scholars and practitioners engaged in this topic area to network, share resources and develop new ideas.

Although AMHIG established itself as a special interest group under the umbrella of the Society for Medical Anthro-

pology, our members represent at least nine different AAA sections and include a substantial international cohort of researchers, students, academics, clinical practitioners and activists both within and outside of anthropology.

AMHIG has established the following organizational goals: (1) to facilitate and promote anthropological teaching and scholarship pertaining to mental health; (2) to establish linkages with other professional associations concerned with the sociocultural dimensions of mental health in order to facilitate multi-disciplinary dialogue and collaboration; (3) to provide opportunities for discussion and collaboration between



Michael Duke at the first AMHIG meeting, San Francisco, California, Nov. 2012 (photo by Dinah Winnick)

researchers and mental health practitioners; and (4) to promote discussion of ethical considerations particular to working with populations experiencing mental health problems.

Membership in the Anthropology and Mental Health Interest Group is free and open to anyone working in this topic area. For more info, please contact Michael Duke: [m.duke@memphis.edu](mailto:m.duke@memphis.edu).

## SMA Student Member Named Emerging Leader

ALEXANDER J. ORONA (U CAMBRIDGE)

The National Association of Student Anthropologists (NASA) is pleased to announce that SMA student member Richard Powis has been selected as one of four initial participants in the Emerging Leaders in Anthropology Program (ELAP), a new AAA initiative. ELAP is aimed at training anthropology students to address contemporary and durable is-

ssues facing the discipline.

In light of recent events in a variety of jurisdictions where anthropology's contributions have been criticized by political figures, and where budget cuts continue to threaten the financial basis of the discipline as a whole, NASA believes that future professional anthropologists can and should receive adequate training

and support so as to best equip them with the tools, skills and knowledge needed to move forward their work in the discipline.

Selection of participants is a competitive process, with 45 students applying for ELAP this year. Sections provide matching funds to enable the selected candidates to go to the AAA

Annual Meeting. At the conference, students attend a special ELAP cohort meeting that covers some contemporary issues as presented by different AAA committees, as well as an introduction to AAA governance. They are also paired with mentors and asked to develop professional training papers on a relevant contemporary issue in the discipline. This year, two tracks were selected: engaged/activist anthropology and world anthropologies.

Among participants selected in the program's first year, Powis was the sole undergraduate. We found impressive the depth of his serious engagement with the discipline at this early stage of his career. Powis is majoring in anthropology and minoring in French and biology at Cleveland State University. He began fieldwork in summer 2012 in Senegal with Washington University in St. Louis, focusing on the medicinal plant *Fagara xanthoxyloides*, in addition to treatment-seeking behaviors in Dakar. He applied to the Emerging Leaders in Anthropology Program through the world anthropologies track. We look forward to Powis' future achievements.



Richard Powis, selected for the Emerging Leaders in Anthropology Program (photo by El Hadji Samba Diallo)

## Call for Nominations

### Diana Forsythe Prize

The Diana Forsythe Prize was created in 1998 to celebrate the best book or series of published articles in the spirit of Diana Forsythe's feminist anthropological research on work, science or technology, including biomedicine. The prize is awarded annually at the AAA meeting by a committee consisting of one representative from the Society for the Anthropology of Work (SAW) and two from the Committee on the Anthropology of Science, Technology and Computing (CASTAC). It is supported by the General Anthropology Division (GAD) and Bern Shen.

The award committee is now welcoming nominations for the 2013 award, including self-nominations. To be eligible, books or article series must have been published in the last five years (copyright of 2008 or later). The current submission deadline is May 1, 2013 (early nominations appreciated). Nominations should be sent via email to Selection Committee Chair, Marcia Inhorn at [marcia.inhorn@yale.edu](mailto:marcia.inhorn@yale.edu). Publishers, please send a copy of nominated titles to each of the selection committee members:

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Department of Anthropology  
10 Sachem Street  
New Haven, CT 06520

João Biehl  
128 Aaron Burr Hall  
Department of Anthropology  
Princeton University  
Princeton, NJ 08544

Susanne Cohen  
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University of Chicago  
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Chicago, IL 60637

Recent prize recipients include Rene Almeling for *Sex Cells: The Medical Market for Eggs and Sperm* (2011), Alexander Edmonds for *Pretty Modern: Beauty, Sex and Plastic Surgery in Brazil* (2010) and Elly Teman for *Birthing a Mother, The Surrogate Body and the Pregnant Self* (2010).

### New Public Policy Award Invites Nominations

The AAA Committee on Public Policy (CoPP) has established the AAA Anthropology in Public Policy Award to honor anthropologists whose work has had a significant, positive influence on the course of government decision-making and action. Public policy is broadly defined to include measures created by any level of government and addressing the full range of contemporary human problems.

The award will be conferred every other year in rotation with the AAA Solon T. Kimball Award. Both share a common goal in acknowledging anthropology's important contributions to public policy. Yet, in contrast to the Kimball Award, which seeks to advance the development of anthropology as an applied science, the Anthropology in Public Policy Award focuses specifically on recognizing particular instances in which anthropological insights and analysis have resulted in the implementation of effective and beneficent policies.

The award will be made to an anthropologist nominated for a circumscribed, policy-relevant accomplishment made within the past three calendar years (although for the 2013 award, the five previous calendar years will be considered). Winners will be publicly announced at the AAA Annual Meeting and receive \$500 and a commemorative plaque. CoPP will invite the recipient to give a public lecture in one of the two Public Policy Forums it sponsors during the annual meeting. The association will waive the meeting registration fee for the awardee.

Nomination packages should be submitted by one individual (i.e., not an organization or publisher). Each package will include:

1. One signed letter of nomination verifying the impact of the nominee's work on public policy (self-nomination is acceptable).
2. Three to five letters of support, which may be sent under separate cover but by the stated deadline.
3. A copy of the nominee's current brief CV (four-page maximum). In the case of a joint nomination, the CVs of all nominees must be supplied.
4. One to three supporting documents that provide evidence of the nominee's policy impact.

All nomination materials must be submitted in English and fonts no smaller than 12 points. The deadline for nomination is February 1 for each year in question (2013, 2015, 2017, and so on). Please send materials to the selection committee at [publicpolicyaward@aaanet.org](mailto:publicpolicyaward@aaanet.org). Documents that cannot be emailed only may be submitted to the committee care of Damon Dozier, 2200 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22201-3357. For inquiries, contact the award committee chair, Merrill Singer ([Merrill.singer@uconn.edu](mailto:Merrill.singer@uconn.edu)) or see [www.aaanet.org/cmtes/ppc/AIPP-award.cfm](http://www.aaanet.org/cmtes/ppc/AIPP-award.cfm).

#thisanthro





## From the SMA President

DOUGLAS A. FELDMAN (THE COLLEGE AT BROCKPORT, SUNY)



As Society for Medical Anthropology president, I am proud to help introduce this inaugural issue of SMA's online newsletter. In the coming years, we look forward

to bringing you, four times a year, the latest news and information about the SMA. I think you will find it both interesting and indispensable.

On the top of our list for this issue is our SMA meeting June 12-14, 2013 in Tarragona, Spain, which will be held jointly with the Medical Anthropology Network (MAN) of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA). Now is the time to register! Go to [medical-anthropology-urv.cat/](http://medical-anthropology-urv.cat/). Submit an abstract until February 15, or just register to attend. The regular registration fee is 120 euros (about \$158); the student registration fee is 60 euros (about \$79).

On the conference registration website, you will also find interesting information about Tarragona, including

sights and hotels with their prices (hotel prices are fairly reasonable). This will be a unique opportunity to meet with medical anthropology scholars literally from all over the world. This is one conference that you will not want to miss!

Also, if you know a graduate or undergraduate student who is not a member of the SMA, please let them know that we have dramatically lowered our price for membership this year from \$20 to only \$10. Students get all the benefits of membership, including a subscription to *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, so this is the perfect year to get aboard.

I would also like to welcome our new newsletter editor, Dinah Winnick, who will bring these issues to you once every three months. We have also hired a new SMA webmaster, Sean Bruna-Lewis, who is actively updating our website. In addition, we have relaunched the SMA blog ([medanthro.net/blog/](http://medanthro.net/blog/)), which first began three years ago. Finally, SMA is now on Facebook ([facebook.com/medanthro.net](http://facebook.com/medanthro.net)) and Twitter (@socmedanthro). So we are using a variety of methods to keep our membership—to keep you—fully informed of all of SMA's activities. Enjoy!

## From the Editor

DINAH WINNICK (U MARYLAND, BALTIMORE COUNTY)



It's an exciting time to be part of the Society for Medical Anthropology. This fall we launched a new Facebook page and revived the SMA blog and Twitter feed just in time for the AAA Annual Meeting in November. With this first issue of *Second Opinion*, we celebrate the launch of a quarterly email newsletter. But these outlets are not really the exciting part—it's the conversations they make possible.

This first issue of *Second Opinion* recaps the AAAs and highlights the intriguing format of our upcoming meeting in Spain. "That great," you say, "but, Dinah, where does the opinion come in? Or is *Second Opinion* just a catchy name?"

*Second Opinion* will offer a unique, informal outlet for conversations about our discipline and editorials on topics of public interest. Upcoming article series will explore medical anthropology at the intersections of public health, law and other fields, and areas represented by SMA's interest groups.

In combination with social media, this newsletter offers us a chance to candidly discuss what we can create and achieve through research, practice and teaching in medical anthropology, and how we can push our field in new directions.

From 2007 through 2010 I edited *Anthropology News*, and today I manage social science communications at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), so I understand the importance of enabling productive conversation among scholars and also accessibly communicating scholarly work to public audiences. I hope the SMA's newsletter and social media can help our members succeed in both of these pursuits.

All SMA members are invited to propose newsletter articles or blog posts by emailing me at [newsletter@medanthro.net](mailto:newsletter@medanthro.net). You can also share your comments, links to favorite resources, news articles, job listings and more through our Facebook page ([facebook.com/medanthro.net](http://facebook.com/medanthro.net)) and Twitter (@socmedanthro). We hope to hear from you soon!

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