

## Minutes from the SMA business meeting

November 7, 2020

12-1:30pm EST

Held on Zoom

1. Presentation of meeting minutes from 2019.
2. Charles' address focuses on the inequalities and inequities baked into the system from undergraduate to graduate training
3. **Treasurers' report**, why are we accumulating assets at this pace? Spending has been cut down and we're running lean, and we see that MAQ is now contributing to SMA assets, when we were previously financing it. What this has allowed us to do is to be creative to support members and make changes toward changes. How to be more equitable, how can we welcome new members and support existing members:
  - a. Has highest dues, so wanted to address that, so moving forward, there won't be any student dues (shout out to Dick), this will improve student involvement and active membership.
  - b. Emergency grants, prize donation increased, spring meeting in Havana cost less than expected, travel grants allocated to support these changes.
4. **MAQ editor's report**
  - a. Health of the journal = good, low time to rejection and or review, no backlog, website is robust, submission volume is stable, 20% acceptance rate, impact factor is lower this year, compared to last, but about the same, successful search for new editor, Alex Nading, who is the current editor of the journal, Anthropology of Work.
  - b. Currently rebuilding the website. There were a lot of problems with the patchwork being done to previous site. VA wanted to enhance user experience, but also to be augmented to address the new formats the journal wants to employ.
  - c. Special issues were highlighted.
  - d. Blog posts, lots of online chatter required to deal with covid-19, rich group of submissions.
  - e. Collaboration between somatosphere and MAQ ongoing, as a result of this increased writing and traffic for Covid-19 related material.
  - f. Book forum will be generated for award winners for new millennium prize from now on.
5. **Communications Committee** annual report
  - a. Building community across discipline and subdiscipline was the aim of the communications committee over the course of the year.
  - b. This entailed the revival of the SMA listserv, because communities platform dismantled it; this affected people who were no longer members of AAA.
  - c. Medical anthropology weekly allowed for better, more free-flowing information about what's going on in medical anthropology, more broadly.
  - d. Members of committee - thanks, includes all the people departing and incoming people.

- e. Anika's report on Second Opinion. They are preparing volume 8(3): members should send general announcement for CFPs, conferences, milestones, links and blurbs to feature, recently published or forthcoming books. Anika highlighted social media gains: twitter and facebook gaining more followers, nature of covid, more time online, which makes it a great space to communicate and share news re: medical anthropology, everyone encouraged to participate or follow Second Opinion/MAQ social media. Also contact her to have things shared there.

## **6. Membership**

- a. Down 27%, would in-person conferences change this? As Jessica mentioned, student membership is going down, so what will it look like and what will long-term effects be? Usually have mentoring events, and they have moved online -- hoping to host online mentoring events during the winter. Harris Solomon will be doing writing workshops. Dick Powis will be looking into the possibility of other kinds of topics of interest to students: non-academic jobs, grant writing, etc.
- b. People want to volunteer non-academic job mentorship should be in contact.
- c. Charles adds: rethinking mentorship, the two-way street it entails.

## **7. MASA**

- a. Abuse at meetings, how do we address this, particularly when we are online?
- b. Discussion of creating a database of grant proposals, networking database, refocusing workshops and resources of navigating nonacademic jobs.

## **8. Policy committee**

- a. Inward discussions and outward facing components related to policy, more generally.
- b. Community movements are inspiring this, but we are also looking at:
  - i. How to prioritize equity and inclusion
  - ii. SMA takes a stand, allows for groups to make policy statements
    - 1. Anti-harassment policy
    - 2. Mental health in anthropology and at the university (take a stand with recommendations, reviewed and revised)
    - 3. Actively looking for new ideas for take a stand
      - a. Currently working on data sovereignty and indigenous health
      - b. Contact Erica Prussing to propose 'take a stand' issues.

## **9. Program Committee**

- a. Erin Koch + Mary Anglin will be stepping in. Biggest challenge, whether the meeting would happen and what form it would take. Shifting deadlines mattered for the Truth and Responsibility meeting.
- b. Only 7 submissions came for Raising Our Voices from SMA members.
- c. Very early on, Charles has engaged the program committee about increasing participation beyond the US, how to attract people, but also how to accommodate people who don't want to travel (or who cannot attend due to visa or financial means). So this was in line with circumstances of an outbreak.
- d. SfAA cancelled as a result of Covid-19.

## **10. SMA Meeting in Havana**

- a. Report on the SMA conference, which was held March 10-12, 2020. Arachu reports that it went well, and Cuban colleagues referred to it as “The last conference in the world.” Meeting participants were careful with covid measures during their attendance in the meetings, and the health system was prepared. March 10-12, 2020.
- b. The conference focused on three themes.
- c. There were ultimately 175 participants from 25 countries, with real-time translation, travel scholarships, and thrived despite pandemic related university travel bans.

## **11. SIGs**

- a. SIGs are independently organized groups, with some money from SMA. They communicate through liaison who is Matthew Wolf-Meyer, and through the coordinator (Betsy Wirtz). Summary statement, all of the SIGs reported downturn in activities because it’s usually so closely linked to the annual meetings, all of which were canceled for in-person meetings. Moved toward virtual events, many expanded their awards.
- b. There will be more expected from the coordinator role, particularly when it comes to hosting and organizing events beyond annual meetings.
- c. Members should consider organizing new groups as they are needed. A good example of a SIG that came together recently was the health emergencies group, which won the presidential award this year for its efforts to apply anthropological insights to health crises like Ebola, Zika and Covid-19.

## **12. Awards and Prizes**

- a. The awards ceremony will be held next Saturday, November 14, and announced at that time. We were informed of the chairs for each of the awards committees.
  - i. Baskin, Erica
  - ii. Polgar, Eugene
  - iii. Hughes, Danya
  - iv. Career achievement, Adia
  - v. SIGs - range of awards
    - 1. Virchow included among them.

## **13. Nominations committee** (Eugene, Charles, Carole Browner, Sherine Hamdy)

- a. Introduce and welcome new board welcome
  - i. Carolyn Smith-Morris, president-elect
  - ii. Five new Incoming members at-large, Can Aciksoz, Erin Koch, Liz Cartwright, Thurka Sangaramoorthy, Ayo Wahlberg
- b. Most pressing and ongoing problem, recruiting diverse candidates, ensure that it represents and is responsive to concerns of the membership.