



The Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth

Annual General Meeting

15th April 2009 12.30 – 2.30pm (lunch provided)

Queens University Belfast

MINUTES

Present: James Fairhead (Chair), Simone Abram (Hon Secretary), Rohan Jackson (Administrator), Nayanika Mookherjee (Ethics officer), James Staples (Publications officer), Catherine Degnen (Networks officer) Ian Fairweather (C-SAP), Adroam Davis, Allison James, Ben Campbell, Joy Hendry, Lisette Josephides, Marily Strathern (President), Hilary Callan, Elizabeth Tonkin, Vieda Skultans, Gareth Hamilton, Pat Caplan, Iain Edgar, Georgina Gore, Judith Ennew, Gustaaf Houtman, Marc Schiltz, Judith Okely,

1) Apologies

Raminder Kaur, Hastings Donnan

2) Minutes of the last AGM held at University of Bristol on 7th April 2009

Minutes were confirmed as a true record of the AGM 2009.

3) Matters Arising

- a) ACSS – is agenda item 9.
- b) Reality TV issue is covered in chair's report.
- c) Avebury reburial consultation report request: English Heritage have now ruled that the bones should remain in the museum. Ben Campbell reported that a film was broadcast on Newsnight about bones, that was well reported and we should perhaps request a copy. Ian Fairweather remarked that he is on the consultation mailing list of the Honoring the Ancient Dead as a relevant expert.

4) Election of officers:

i) Secretary

James thanked Simone on behalf of the committee and membership for the work she has put in over 5 years as secretary (she was acting secretary at the 2006 ABM in Keele, having taken over from Iris Jean-Klein), and for staying on while he took over as chair. The AGM applauded Simone for her work. Simone thanked them for their appreciation.

James announced that there was one candidate for the post of Secretary, Catherine Alexander of Goldsmiths University. Several present commented that she is an excellent candidate. She was elected unanimously.

ii) Conference liaison officer

James proposed on behalf of the committee the appointment of a conference liaison officer to help with more complex conference arrangements, especially in view of our hopes for a conference in India. AGM approved the proposal. A candidate was proposed: Atreyee Sen, post-doc fellow at Manchester University. She was elected unanimously.

5) Matters for Report

a) Report from Chair

Chair's report will be posted on the website. Issues relevant to the bureaucracy of British Anthropology relate to research councils and REF.

Research Councils: At the last AGM the chair was asked to speak to Ian Diamond (CEO, ESRC) about under-representation of anthropology on the board – Diamond's response argued that they did have an anthropologist (Sarah Randall who is a demographer), and that no other anthropologists had applied (although Randall was invited to apply) – we were not aware that formal applications were invited, but we are now. JF also wrote to the ESRC person who manages appointments to boards, who said that if Soc Anth wasn't properly represented, they would review the situation. However, their view is that there is a large number of disciplines, and only few members of the board, and not all disciplines will be represented all the time. The key message to AGM was that we must try to get more anthropologists to be members of the new ESRC 'peer review college' as reviewers will now be chosen only from the college.

The route to European funding such as HERA for anthropology is via the AHRC. AHRC are also involved with the European system of ranking academic journals. Geraldine Gore noted that a recent collaboration between French and British ORA (Open Research Area) funding, the British applied through ESRC, not AHRC.

REF: Consultation is ongoing.

World Council of Anthropological Associations: the chair remarked that membership of ASA now links into a global organization. WCAA is now also lobbying for the OECD to be recognized as a discipline. Rohan Jackson urged any members who are not given discounted rates on WCAA member organizations' conferences, to contact him. NomadIT (RJ's company) is rebuilding the WCAA register, and hope this will lead to greater clarity. Membership of ASA entitles members to attend partner-association conferences at the member rate, but both EASA and AAA require people to join if they wish to present a paper. Hillary Callan noted that a 'feasibility clause' was introduced into the WCAA agreement that watered down the original agreement to share membership rates. WCAA reps will meet in Maynooth, and RJ will lobby for the clause to be removed. RJ welcomed input through him to that meeting.

ASA strongly supports RAI's introduction of an A-level in Anthropology.

JF reported on the response from Ofcom to our letter about the ethics of 'reality tribal TV'. Hillary Callan offered the support of RAI, and suggested holding another forum on ethics at the next RAI film festival in UCL in 2011. JF suggested that we recommend this to Garry Marvin, ASA Media Officer. He also suggested bringing the issue to WCAA's attention. Joy Hendry urged the chair to write to MPs on the

issue.

b) Report from Hon. Treasurer

See attached report. (AGM congratulated Raminder Kaur on the birth of her daughter in April!) (AGM Also congratulated Nayanika Mookherjee on the birth of her son in January!).

Membership were asked to approve the Committee's proposal to put money aside each year towards funding scholars from countries with low income (of the 'global South') and towards subsidizing student travel. Iain Edgar noted that some years ago the committee put aside £500 per year for this purpose (ie there is a precedent for this move). Joy Hendry recommended a higher sum. Committee accepted this recommendation and asked that committee be authorized to set aside an appropriate amount of money with regard to travel costs and the state of ASA accounts. This was approved unanimously.

6) Membership issues

a) Confirmation of new members

RJ displayed a list of new members. JF read out the list of new members confirmed for 2010. 4 membership applications were pending in need of further information. RJ read out a list of 26 people taking out joint student membership with the RAI. Hilary Callan asked that RJ discuss the joint membership rates on another occasion, as the ASA's share is much higher than the RAI's share.

7) Publications

James Staples noted that last year's monograph will be distributed within the next month. The subsequent volume, 47, from the NZ conference is now in press and will be published and distributed in January 2011. The Bristol volume should be received in September and published 9 months later. JS will meet ASA10 convenors and Berg editor to discuss the monograph from this conference.

The handbook of anthropology (Sage) should be finished in 2011. Royalties and editors fees will come to the ASA, although the first editors' fees were sent in error to the editors, who returned them and asked for them to be redirected to the ASA. They have not yet appeared and JS is chasing them.

8) ASA Conferences

a) Update on ASA Conference 2011

Adrian Davis, research student at Lampeter, extended Lampeter's greetings and apologies for senior members of faculty (Penny Dransard was due to fly in but was unable to attend because of the disruption to flights caused by the ash cloud drifting in from the Icelandic volcano today). He assured the meeting that Lampeter is fully committed to hosting ASA 2011. Proposed dates are 12-16 September. JF read out the conference abstract.

b) Plans for ASA conference 2012

Nayanika Mookherjee reminded members that ASA conferences are now held in commonwealth countries roughly every 5 years. ASA committee have been in contact with JNU sociology department in Delhi which houses the anthropology discipline. The proposed theme for a conference in 2012 is 'arts and aesthetics in a globalised world' and possible dates are around end of March when the coldest

weather should be over. A conference committee of NM, JS and RK, who will be joined by the new conference liaison officer. JF noted that this was a major undertaking, and that this would be an Indian meeting with our support. For this to happen, we needed to give guarantees to support the conference, eg through applications to Wenner Gren (who have indicated that they are likely to respond positively to our application), travel funds, etc.

Given the dates, the 2011 and 2012 meetings will be relatively close together.

9) Should ASA rejoin ACSS (the Academy of Social Sciences)

This issue was outlined in the Chair's report. AGM agreed unanimously that ASA should rejoin ACSS.

10)Members' resolutions

None were received.

11)AOB.

Nayanika Mookherjee reported that the committee are currently preparing to update the ASA ethics code and will be in touch with members in due course.