



Association of Social Anthropologists

of the UK & Commonwealth

Minutes from 2020 AGM

26th August 2020, Zoom.

Present:

Simone Abram, Hannah Knox, Tim Ingold, Soumhya Venkatesan, Jude Robinson, Andrew Irving, Emma Gilberthorpe, Julie Scott, Joy Hendry, Bob Simpson, Angela Torresan, Pete Wade, Cathy Cantwell, Deborah James, Yulia Egorova, Marta Songin-Mokrzan, Anna Waldstein, Michelangelo Paganopoulos

Apologies: Jon Mair.

Chaired by: Simone Abram

1. Minutes – approved. One amendment to point 7.2 clarifying that this refers to the ethics review panel.
2. No matters arising
3. The treasurer presented the 2018 accounts. SV proposed that revenue (and potential losses) from future conferences is held by the ASA rather than by departments. The proposal was passed by the AGM.
4. The Chair (SA) presented an update of activities for the months since taking up the chairs position. SA made suggestion of reinstating the Annals of Anthropology in an online format. SA will contact HoDs for annual report on departments. JR suggested that non-anthropology departments which house anthropologists and anthropology courses should also be contacted. The suggestion was welcomed.
5. Reports
 - a. AI presented publications report. Move from Bloomsbury to Routledge has slowed down publication process. SV asked whether ASA volumes could be made available open access online via JSTOR. This will be discussed at next committee meeting. JH pointed out that Routledge are willing to negotiate but are a big organisation so have to keep on top of changes in personnel.
 - b. JS presented networks report. Little activity this year due to COVID. Have not received any applications for use of £900 funds allocated for network activities. New editors of Anthropology in Action have taken up their role. Anthropology Matters has had trouble soliciting contributions and are thinking of reducing number of issues. PG representative of AM will be joining the ASA board and this will be discussed further there.
 - c. JR presented ethics report and reported back on ongoing review of ASA ethical guidelines that is nearly ready to put online. Some additions around GDPR and digital methods. JR proposes that each year at the AGM the ethics officer brings the current version of the

ethics document to the membership for approval. This is to ensure that the date remains current. HK suggested discussion of decolonising anthropology could partly take place through engagement with the ethics document. To be taken up at future committee meeting. DJ asked for an update about questions of authorship. JR suggested that an email could be circulated to the membership with update on this issue. BS pointed out that the ethnav tool is available but underutilised and that people could use it to have debates and discussions about ethical issues as they arise.

- d. HK presented media report. Vacancy for media officer currently needs filling. JH suggests looking at what the RAI Public Anthropology fellows are doing.
 - e. EG presented conference report. Still unclear whether ASA2021 will be online or face to face. St Andrews will confirm in September. Discussion about ideal date for future ASA conferences. RJ – April or Easter as possibilities, PW – May/June possibly a better time. RJ – August difficult from organisational perspective because people away. JH raised potential clash with Anthropology of Japan conference in August next summer – RJ clarified that there is a short overlap.
6. AGM ratifies appointment of HK as secretary with no objections raised. The committee would like thank Jonathan Mair for his tenure as Secretary.
 7. Membership Numbers. New Members list displayed and approved. Slight increase in numbers (about 10% up on last year). Discussion about student members. Most new student recruits come through ASA/RAI joint membership. SV raised question about whether we want to be trying to attract more students continuing the work that Jon Mair and Nigel Rapport began last year with ASA roadshows to departments. SA plans to send presentation materials to for ASA members in departments to use for recruitment and to raise awareness of ASA. PW raised a query about the website not being clear regarding eligibility criteria for students. This will be discussed at future ASA committee meeting.
 8. Motion 1: discussion of removal of ‘commonwealth’ from title of ASA. SA had consulted the ASA President (Marily Strathern) who thought the proposal was appropriate if well handled. JH asked if we have consulted commonwealth members. SA – has contacted some of the associations from other commonwealth regions – Pan African Association, Canadian Association of Anthropologists etc. Those who responded had no objections to the proposed change. SV said that commonwealth is still a significant political category. JH suggests we should consult the membership. RJ – very few commonwealth-based members. TI concerned about leaving UK in the title. Suggests British Association of Social Anthropologists. The motion as received was put to the vote: on removing the word commonwealth – motion passed unanimously.
 9. Motion 2: statement on racism to be removed. JR agreed with the point that decolonisation an ethical not moral issue. PW responded in defence of the statement as a more general statement rather than a response to BLM. SA pointed out that overall response positive and this was the only critical comment. TI suggested that rather than having a definitive statement we should have a living document on this issue. No seconder came forward so motion was withdrawn and issues of creating a living document will be discussed at the ASA committee.
 10. AOB:
SA noted that the ASA does not have a grievance or appeals policy and suggested that the committee should consider this.

No further points raised