

poverished now are those whose refusals and rejections mirror the long dead icons of the past, and we may soon hope that, like those faded-brethren, they too will hang in quiet museums.

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## Society for Linguistic Anthropology

JAMES STANLAW AND MARK PETERSON,  
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

### SLA in DC

Leanne Hinton presided over her last Society for Linguistic Anthropology business meeting December 2 before passing on the gavel to new president Joel Kuipers.



SLA President Joel Kuipers

Kuipers assumed the presidency of a healthy organization. Even after the economic dislocations caused by shifting of all AAA journals to the University of California Press, and putting the journal on AnthroSource, the SLA again showed a surplus at the end of the year.

Membership in the section fluctuates depending on how quickly people renew their membership. This fiscal year it ranged from a low of 629 members to a high of 680.

The *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* remains the SLA's largest ticket item. Published twice annually in June and December, the journal runs 152 pages. Of 28 manuscripts submitted during this fiscal year, five were accepted, seven rejected and six returned for revision and resubmission. The remainder were still under review. The journal has an average turn-around time from submission to acceptance of four months.

According to Asif Agha, the journal's editor, the shift to the new press had one unanticipated advantage—it increased the area of the journals' pages, providing space for several thousand more words. This allowed *JLA* to make up its backlog of book reviews and to expand its reviews section.

Starting in 2006, *JLA* will organize its reviews into three separate categories. In addition to book reviews of up to 1,200 words, the journal will publish review articles and book notices. Review articles will be reviews of two or more works around a single theme, and are expected to run about

4,000 words. Book notices will be short descriptions of books running no more than 500 words.

Agha said he hopes these new categories will encourage graduate students to “get their feet wet” in academic publishing.

Agha is also making plans to provide web-based “value-added” content for *JLA* subscribers. This might include sound recordings, photographs, videos, transcripts and other data supplementing published articles.

But his efforts so far demonstrate the limitations as well as the opportunities web publishing opens up. While *JLA* has offered some of these features in the past on the SLA's journal website ([www.aaanet.org/sla/jla/enhanced.htm](http://www.aaanet.org/sla/jla/enhanced.htm)), there are concerns about how much space AAA will extend the journal. Although the universities housing the journal website (currently University of Pennsylvania) are usually generous with server space, moving the data and changing the links every time the journal changes editors is not a satisfactory solution.

The meetings are the second major activity of the SLA. This year, the program committee, chaired by Stanton Wortham, received nearly 200 submissions. About 78% were accepted.

Twenty-five sessions were submitted, of which 80% were accepted. By contrast, only 12 of 33 individually submitted papers were accepted, an acceptance rate of only 36%.

Because AAA required individual papers to be grouped into panels before being submitted, these sessions “are at a disadvantage, due to the relative lack of coherence,” Wortham said. He said the committee rejected nine papers, and compiled the remaining submissions into four sessions. “But only two were accepted,” he said.

This year SLA put out a call for submissions for invited sessions and the members responded with an unprecedented 12 symposia. “This made for a difficult decision, since only three slots were available,” Wortham said. Fortunately, the nine sessions that were not accepted as invited sessions all made it onto the final program.

Next year's AAA theme is “Critical Intersections/Dangerous Visions.”

Please send your comments, contributions, news and announcements to SLA contributing editors Jim Stanlaw ([stanlaw@ilstu.edu](mailto:stanlaw@ilstu.edu)) or Mark Peterson ([petersm2@muohio.edu](mailto:petersm2@muohio.edu)).

## Society for Medical Anthropology

JANELLE S TAYLOR, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

### HIV Testing Us: Colleagues Become Key Informants

By Doug Goldsmith (Chair, AIDS and Anthropology Research Group)

HIV has tested us all, stretching the fabric of our theorizing, measuring our compassion and challenging our own prejudices, and again and again revealing the yawning gaps in our risk-reduction

strategies and in existing public health remedies. Many anthropologists have encountered AIDS concerns in the course of their ongoing research, or have become newly committed to study and ameliorate the impact of HIV. This work has led anthropologists to observe, at times to participate in and at times to evaluate, various interventions, such as needle exchange programs and condom distribution efforts in the cities of the US, as well as in Africa and Asia, and the many hot spots of the burgeoning AIDS pandemic.

As anthropologists in AIDS studies we often become spokespersons on AIDS issues and at times become advocates for AIDS causes. However we soon learn that without key collaborators we cannot accomplish the work that needs to be done in documenting the struggles with this pandemic, epic and mundane, and in evaluating the responses and remedies, from protest and outreach to medicine and prevention. For this we must rely on interactions with many people with whom we have developed crucial relationships.

As medical anthropologists we might find wisdom in the words of Oliver Sacks, who muses in a footnote (p 216) of his book *The Island of the Colorblind* that “An anthropologist sees cultures, one wants to say, as a physician sees patients. The penetration, the sharing, of different consciousnesses and cultures needs skills beyond those of the historian or the scientist; it needs artistic and poetic powers of a special kind.” Oliver Sacks is not satisfied with the routine way a physician may “see” a patient, and is equally not merely praising the holistic way an anthropologist might “see” culture. Indeed, seeing the “whole box” with its “working parts” necessitates a level of abstraction that makes for a gruff bedside manner in a healer, or a preoccupied ceremonial-side stance in an ethnographer.

The special kind of artistic, poetic powers—needed to truly see what is most important, and then perhaps to perceptively concoct and then realistically recommend potential solutions, while sensitively offering corroboration or solace—seem to be neither easily taught nor innate. They sometimes seem to develop, however, when we speak of our close collaboration with our colleagues—people living with AIDS, peer educators, outreach workers, the many hands-on caregivers who are buddies or doctors or nurses or facilitators. These necessary artistic, poetic powers must, perhaps, reflect empathy and humble observation, and be forged in our interactions with those who are embedded in the search for a cure, who are living the unfolding story we are trying to tell.

### In Print on the Website

By Lauren Wynne (SMA Webmaster)

Following ongoing SMA initiatives aimed at student members (see December 2005 column), the SMA website ([www.medanthro.net](http://www.medanthro.net)) would like to encourage students to submit their theses and dissertation titles to our *In Print* section. This section is an important resource not only for our members but also for other health scholars across the