

Evolutionary Anthropology Society

Mary K Shenk, Contributing Editor

EAS at AAA 2005: President's Report

By Eric Alden Smith (EAS President)

The 2005 AAA meeting was the first one at which our Society was in full operation. We sponsored two symposia and two poster sessions (see www.anth.uconn.edu/eas/AAA_2005_SESSIONS.pdf for details), which were well attended. The session on "Human Behavioral Ecology: Applications to International Development and Public Policy" (organized by Lisa Rende-Taylor & Bram Tucker) will be submitted to *Human Nature* for likely publication as a special issue of that journal.

The first annual awards for best presentation were decided by a panel of judges (chaired by our president-elect, Pat Draper). Award for the Best Student Presentation went to Wesley Allen-Arave (U of New Mexico) for his paper "Is blood thicker than water for back-scratchers? Balanced nepotism in a small-scale society," while Elizabeth Blum received the Best New Investigator Award for her poster on "Delayed Dispersal in Humans: Effects of Family Circumstances on Dispersal Timing." Each will receive an award of \$250, and priority consideration for publication in *Human Nature*. (We remind our graduate student members, as well as those who will be eligible for New Investigator award (PhD received within 5 years of the 2006 meetings) to think about giving a paper at the next AAA, and notifying the EAS program chair of your eligibility if your paper is accepted for the meetings.)

We held our first-ever board meeting and our second-ever business meeting (Bill Irons valiantly chaired the first one at the Atlanta meetings in 2004). Highlights of this year's meetings include:

(1) Treasurer's report: Jim Boster reported that we have a healthy balance, more than enough to fund our anticipated annual expenses (which are primarily for the just-mentioned awards, and refreshments for the party hosted by Bill Irons).

(2) Publications: Board member Jane Lancaster summarized the very favorable arrangement we have with the journal *Human Nature*, which includes a 20% discount on subscriptions for EAS members plus priority considerations for award papers and one symposia per year. Details on this will be available soon on the EAS website, and in an email to be sent to the membership. The Board was in agreement that attempting our own publication (print or electronic) at this time would not be financially viable.

(3) Membership: with ca. 380 members, our growth has been more rapid than expected. However, only about 200 of those are counted by the AAA, since until recently student members were not charged EAS dues. Given that decision by the AAA, we have instituted \$5 dues for students (\$10 for others), and will need to ensure that we reach the 250 paid members needed for full section status before the May meeting of the AAA Executive Board. So if you are a student member but came in under the old no-dues policy, please renew your membership. Student board member Brian Wood reported on his survey of current and prospective student members, which

led to some discussion (at the business meeting) of ways to increase membership as well as the public and disciplinary image of evolutionary anthropology.

(4) Web page: Jim Boster encouraged all to carefully examine the society's web site (www.anth.uconn.edu/eas/ or evolutionaryanthropology.org) and provide him with feedback for improving both form and content. Possible ways to expand the offerings on the web site, including job announcements and current news, were discussed at both meetings. If you have information you think would be suitable, send it as completed text (with URL addresses where appropriate) directly to Jim(jboster@uconn.edu).

Another highlight of the meeting was the well-attended party hosted by Bill Irons in his hotel room. Graduate students mingled with luminaries, and a great time was had by all.

Looking forward to next year's AAA meeting (to be held in San Jose), we plan to get an earlier start in organizing sessions and other events. Pat Draper has agreed to be the program chair for that meeting, and will be asking a couple of other members to join her in the task of soliciting and reviewing symposia and paper/poster submissions (believe it or not, those will be due for EAS review in mid-March, just a few weeks from now!). The hope is to expand our presence on the program, in part through special opportunities for invited sessions and joint sponsorship with other AAA sections, and to do an even better job of representing the full diversity of research done in evolutionary anthropology.

Contributing Editor's Note of Clarification: In my November 2005 column I reported that Robin Fox founded the Rutgers anthropology department in the late 1960's. While this is true I have since learned that an earlier incarnation of the department was founded and chaired by Ashley Montagu in 1949, lasting through the early 1950's.

Contributions to this column are welcomed and may be sent to Mary Shenk, Carolina Population Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, CB# 8120 University Square, 123 West Franklin Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27516-2524 or to mshenk@u.washington.edu. Suggestions of or details on graduate programs related to the interests of the Evolutionary Anthropology Society are especially requested.