

Winter 2001 Newsletter

Note From the Editor

This issue includes a useful article from Stuart Plattner about funding opportunities for economic anthropologists from the National Science Foundation. I continue to be interested in short pieces such as this for future Newsletters. Please contact me (michael-chibnik@uiowa.edu) if you would like to contribute an article, commentary or book review.

Thanks to Judith Marti and Alice Kehoe for their help with this issue of the Newsletter. Everything in this issue about SEA's business activities and much of the information about the annual meeting was written by Judith. Alice provided the information about local arrangements for the meeting.

SEA Elections

Members of the SEA will soon receive ballots for elections for positions on the Board. The terms of Anne Pyblurn, Josephine Smart, and Lillian Trager end in spring 2001. Information about candidates for open Board positions was unavailable when this issue went to press.

Recent Books by SEA Members - By Michael Chibnik

This is the first of a series of SEA Newsletter columns about recent books written by members. Three members wrote to the newsletter informing us of the publication of their books. The books and authors are:

Hansen, Karen Tranberg 2000 *Salaula: The World of Secondhand Clothing and Zambia*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pospisil, Leopold 1995 *Oberbenberg, A Quantitative Analysis of a Tirolean Peasant Economy*. New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Smith, M. Estellie 2000 *Trade and Trade-Offs: Using Resources, Making Choice, and Taking Risks*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press.

I am sure that there are many other recent books about economic anthropology published by SEA members. If your book is written in 1998 or later and you would like it publicized in the SEA Newsletter, please send me the relevant information. Here are three more recent books written by members that I have recently come across:

Cohen, Jeffrey 1999 *Cooperation and Community: Economy and Society in Oaxaca*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Colloredo-Mansfeld, Rudi 1999 *The Native Leisure Class: Consumption and Cultural Creativity in the Andes*. Chicago:University of Chicago Press.

Grimes, Kimberley and B. Lynne Milgram, eds. 2000 *Artisans and Cooperatives: Developing Alternative Trade for the Global Economy*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Michael Chibnik

Opportunities for Economic Anthropologists at NSF - By Stuart Plattner

Stuart Plattner, Program Director for Cultural Anthropology at the National Science Foundation, writes the following about funding opportunities:

The National Science Foundation's Program in Cultural Anthropology is the primary supporter of research in the field of social and cultural anthropology and related areas. The Program's annual budget for 1999-2000 was \$2.6 million and will increase this year, for the NSF is slated to receive the largest annual budget increase in its history. I write to draw the attention of SEA members to the various opportunities at the program, which include both traditional grants that many know about and new possibilities.

The National Science Foundation has supported the research of anthropological disciplines for many years; in fact, Archaeology was the first social science program. For the past ten years the Cultural Anthropology, Archaeology and Physical Anthropology programs have been administratively independent. However the program officers coordinate our activities in recognition of the historic and current academic links between the sub-disciplines. The most common award from the Cultural Anthropology Program is the normal NSF "senior" * meaning that the Principal Investigator (PI) has a Ph.D.* research grant. Grants can be for up to five years, although the typical grant is for two years. There is no formal limit on the size of the grants, although the program's budget is limited in comparison to NIH or some private foundations. The largest grant made was for almost \$770,000 over five years to Marcelo Suarez-Orozco, for research on cultural factors explaining differential school performance of immigrant children from six ethnic/nationality groups in the Boston and San Francisco area. This project was exceptionally high in social salience. The typical anthropological grant is about \$85,000 for the first year and about \$66,000 for the second year, if one is funded. The program usually reviews about 80 proposals and awards about 20-25 grants per fiscal year.

The program has several funding opportunities of interest to economic anthropologists. The Scholars Award for Methodological Training provides up to \$50,000 for technical training to enhance an on-going research career. The typical request is for training in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), but the program has supported training in soil science and will consider any relevant request. The Grants for High Risk Exploratory Research will give up to \$25,000 to support pilot projects to demonstrate the feasibility of a research project. These proposals are not necessarily sent to the panel, so they allow for a more rapid decision than the normal six-month period. The program has several grants

focused on graduate student research. The Ethnographic Research Training grant provides \$50,000 to Ph.D. departments to support the fieldwork experience of graduate students before the dissertation project. The program also has one of the largest Doctoral Dissertation Research Grants competitions in the social sciences. Students can receive up to \$12,000, and the program normally reviews about 150 proposals and makes about 30 awards per fiscal year. The Research Experience for Graduates (REG) supplements provide small amounts of funding to existing PIs to involve graduate students in collaborative and/or comparative research projects. The program also supports efforts to expand the Research Experiences of Undergraduates (REU) through supplements to existing PIs to defray the costs of undergraduate research activities. The program also accepts proposals for Conferences and Workshops, although successful proposals promise a focused theoretical or conceptual advance. Detailed information on all of these activities, program guidelines, and application materials can be found at the Program's website (<http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/bcs/anthro>). Please contact the Program with any questions concerning eligibility or the application process.

Other opportunities that many anthropological scholars do not know about are found in the NSF's International Program Offices (INT). The International Program encourages collaboration between American scholars and the rest of the world in all fields of science. Funding is often available for travel aimed at developing such connections at all levels, from graduate students to senior scholars. INT is especially interested in supporting postdoctoral exchanges, and support exists for organizing conferences to open exchanges. Research collaborations also are supported. INT is especially eager to expand connections to the lesser developed nations, particularly in Africa. Anthropologists can obtain INT funding to supplement a regular award, or can apply directly to INT. For more information, see the INT web page, especially the announcement International Opportunities for Scientists and Engineers, NSF 00-138: (<http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/int/>).

In recent years, NSF has focused funds on special research initiatives of timely importance, reaching across the entire Foundation. Several have been targeted at encouraging broader participation in science by under-represented groups. These include Faculty Early Career Development Awards (CAREER); Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowships; and Career Advancement Awards for Minority Scientists and Engineers. The program has made CAREER grants to two young economic anthropologists: Jeffrey Cohen (Pennsylvania State University) received a four year award of \$200,000 to study transnational migration between the US and Oaxaca, Mexico, and Kathleen Pickering (Colorado State University) is getting a five year award of around \$250,000 to study family economics on an Indian reservation in South Dakota. Other initiatives are focused on specific research topics of potentially great importance. These tend to have a three-year life, and provide special resources. Anthropologists are encouraged to propose multidisciplinary, collaborative projects for funding. Information about all of the cross-cutting program of the NSF can be accessed at <http://www.nsf.gov/home/crssprgm/>

It is not too late to seek funding from the largest current initiative, Information Technology Research (ITR). This initiative is perfectly suited for many economic anthropologists, for the program announcement for 2000-2001 includes special attention

to People and Social Groups Interacting with Computers and Infrastructure. Designated topics include : Social, Economic, Ethical and Legal Implications of Information Technology; Information Technology and Social Transformations: Information Technology for Distributed and Collective Action; Information Technology in the Social and Behavioral Sciences; Information Technology in Education; and Information Technology Workforce. I strongly encourage members of SEA working in this area to take advantage of this opportunity. The deadline for receipt of proposals seeking less than \$500,000 was January 22-24, 2001, but there will be another funding opportunity next year. With a total initiative budget of \$215 million for 2000-2001, I'd like to see a strong group of anthropological proposals in the competition. Details can be found at <http://www.itr.nsf.gov/>. Moreover, individuals willing to serve on the panels that evaluate the proposals should consult the web page and complete an application (see the top of that page).

CHANGES AT NSF: THE ELECTRONIC WORLD OF FASTLANE

The Foundation has been developing a paperless submission and review process for several years. The key feature is a web-based interface called FASTLANE. Many SEA members will encounter the changes most directly when submitting a proposal. The days of mailing 19 copies of a proposal to Washington are over. As of 1 October 2000, the Foundation required ALL proposals, reviews, and reports be submitted digitally through FASTLANE. Independent scholars may apply for a waiver, but everyone else must use the new system. The system requires, however, that proposals be translated into PDF files in order to maintain formatting. Fortunately, NSF soon will translate Word, WordPerfect, or other formats into PDF. The information is on the FASTLANE web site: <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>.

The FASTLANE process is changing all the time. At the moment, I am most concerned about FASTLANE review of proposals. From now on, reviewers will receive a request to review via email. The message contains instructions for accessing the proposal on the web, for printing a copy, and for submitting the review through FASTLANE. The Program and the review panel benefit enormously from this approach, for individual reviews can be seen much more quickly.

I ask for your continued cooperation and patience as this change of process continues. While it is interesting to watch this large organization cope with change in its large technical systems, reviewers encountering problems are more likely to be frustrated and angry than professionally interested. Those of you asked to review proposals for the Cultural Anthropology Program (more than 300 people this fall alone) need to know the following:

1. If you experienced difficulties in reviewing proposals, I extend sincere apologies. The process is supposed to be easier, but sometimes failed. I'm very grateful for the extended efforts some of you made to transmit your reviews.

2. Please realize that NSF and the Cultural Anthropology Program depend heavily upon the efforts of its volunteer reviewers. The importance of the reviews has not been diminished by the shift in communication media. The program cannot make good choices without the guidance of (its reviewers).

3. Let me ask for your patience as the change-over to a "paperless" electronic world continues. The Program has no latitude here; these processes are mandated for the entire Foundation. I would like to thank all who served as reviewers. And I encourage anyone who has a question about the Program's scope, activities, or processes to contact me. We are always eager to talk to you about your ideas, your proposals, your plans. We welcome queries by telephone or email (splattne@nsf.gov)