



# The Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth

**Office:** Administrator, IT support, and conference organiser  
**Name:** Rohan Jackson

**Address:** c/o RAI, 50 Fitzroy St, London W1T 5BT  
**Email:** [admin@theasa.org](mailto:admin@theasa.org)  
**Web:** [www.theasa.org](http://www.theasa.org)

## Minutes of online meeting 31.3.08

Present: Rohan, Simone, James, Georgie, Raminder.

The group present tried out Flashmeeting. After some initial technical difficulties, and a few minutes getting used to the software, the group began a discussion of media activities. Georgie made two concrete suggestions to consider for a strategic approach to media.

1. the search service, for which we should charge properly (we need to value ourselves if we expect others to value us); so charge companies between, for example, £100 to £250 (to be discussed and decided) for a range of help from simple access to a directory or database search, perhaps to a fuller advisory service to give them key contacts. Obviously the latter would require work and needs to be discussed fully, but it could be a source of income.
2. potentially organise an event to which we could invite key television companies, broadcasters and film makers to discuss the issues at stake in the current trend for quasi-anthropological films which can have deleterious effects on the peoples being filmed. The aim would be to initiate an ongoing dialogue and offer advice from the ASA's professional standpoint. The idea would be to hold such an event in conjunction with, eg, the Sheffield Documentary film festival, the Granada Centre annual event, or the RAI film festival.
3. a general, longer-term campaign to influence broadcasting and commissioning policies by highlighting the decline in documentary and calling for improvements in the quality of documentary programming. In particular, in relation to films on and portrayals of non-western and marginalised groups, to lobby for the adoption of a voluntary industry code of practice, and try to get broadcasters to sign up to it. This kind of campaign is likely to be strengthened by being developed in alliance with as many sympathetic bodies as possible, so we discussed whether it is realistic to try creating an alliance with, eg, the RAI, but also possibly other public interest groups lobbying for quality in documentary and television.

Pursuing the latter two ideas would mean having a layered strategy over the longer term; this needs to be discussed and it may be more sensible to take on only one. This year is particularly busy for Georgie in particular, so we will need to recruit help if we wish to develop this further.

The group had a short discussion of the relationship between the ASA and the RAI which was very helpful. Georgie pointed out that if we were to embark on a campaign, we would really need the help of a secretariat, so some working towards would be very helpful.

Next committee meeting is the 13<sup>th</sup> of June.

The meeting was recorded and can be found here:

<http://flashmeeting.open.ac.uk/fm/fmm.php?pwd=ba3374-12629>