

Publications Committee

The Committee on Publications is “responsible for the official publications of the Association.” This responsibility has been defined as, but not limited to, “the recruitment and recommendation to the Executive Council of candidates for the position of editor of *Sociology of Religion*, and the recommendation of general publication policies to the Executive Council.” It may also include review of ASR’s contract with the publisher of *Sociology of Religion* and the solicitation of bids from other prospective publishers two years before the contract renewal date with the current publisher.

The selection of a competent editor for *Sociology of Religion* is crucial to the continued viability of the Association, hence the work of the Committee on Publications triennially is of the utmost importance. Although there is some discretion in the process by which candidates are ultimately recommended for this position, it is the practice of the Association to advertize the position to its members and receive both nominations and applications for the position. From there the committee has used various strategies to select the candidate(s) it will recommend to the Council. It is Council that chooses the editor. It is also the responsibility of Council “to determine and control” all publications of the Association. Once selected, the Editor reports to Council, not to the Publications Committee, and is a nonvoting member of Council. The Editor must be a member of the Association.

The Publications Committee may also be called upon to make recommendations about the publisher of *Sociology of Religion*. ASR’s current contract with Oxford University Press renews every three years, and the next renewal date is December, 2016. According to the conditions of the contract, ASR would have to notify OUP of any intent to switch to another publisher at least one year in advance of the contract renewal date (i.e., by December, 2015). That means that sometime toward the end of 2014 the committee should solicit bids from other publishers for the purpose of comparison. These other potential publishers could include SAGE, Taylor and Francis, etc. It is important to note that the committee’s role in this process is advisory. The committee does not negotiate contracts with or select a publisher. That is done by the Editor and the Executive Council, in consultation with the Executive Officer (for reasons of budget).

In years when the editorship is not up for (re)appointment or the contract is not up for renewal, the Committee on Publications may or may not undertake any work. Among the things it can do – or may be asked to do – at any time include:

- Review of the contents of the website for the purpose of making recommendations to the Executive Officer for improvement.
- Hear complaints or resolve disputes regarding editorial decisions when called upon by the Editor or the Executive Council to do so. This role of the committee is purely in the nature of conciliation and mediation, however, because only Council has the authority to make final decisions in this respect.
- Periodically review the status of the *Religion and the Social Order* series, including its contributions to ASR’s members and the Association as well as the terms of contract with the publisher.
- Consider suggestions about additional publishing ventures.