AGENDA
ASR COUNCIL MEETING

4:00 – 8:15 p.m., Thursday, August 20, 2015
Renaissance Blackstone Chicago Hotel, Marhall & Fox, Mezzanine Level
Dinner served at 6:00 p.m.

Melissa Wilde presiding

1) Review of minutes from last year's ASR Council Meetings, which were approved by email vote of Council in March of 2015 (pp. 2-9) – Melissa Wilde.

2) Nominations Committee Report on the results of the 2015 ASR Elections (p. 10) – Jim Cavendish, substituting for Chris Ellison.

3) President's and President Elect's report on 3-year appointments to ASR's Standing Committees and their incoming chairs (p. 11) – Melissa Wilde & Lori Beaman.

4) Program Committee's announcement of the Call for Papers for next year's Annual Meeting in Seattle and the Furfey Lecturer (p. 12) – Lori Beaman & Ryan Cragun.

5) Executive Officer's Report (pp. 13-17) – Jim Cavendish.

6) Program Chair's Report (pp. 18-22) – Grace Yukich.

7) Editor's Report (pp. 23-27) – Gerardo Marti.

8) Publication Committee's Report (pp. 28-30) – Rebecca Kim.

9) Publisher's Report (see attached pdf file) – Trish Thomas.

10) Membership Committee Report (pp. 31-33) – Jim or Gerardo, substituting for Brian Starks.

11) International Liaison Committee Report (the Gallagher Travel Grants) (pp. 34-35) – Jim, substituting for Damon Mayrl.

12) Fichter Award Committee Report (pp. 36-37) – Jim, substituting for Orit Avishai.

13) McNamara Student Paper Award Committee Report (pp. 38-39), Jim, substituting for Kevin McElmurry.

14) Distinguished Article Award Committee Report (pp. 40-41) – Alex Bierman.

15) Lifetime Achievement Award Committee Report (pp. 42-44) – Rhys Williams.

ASR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
FIRST COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday, August 13, 2014
4:00-8:15 p.m.
JW Marriott Hotel, San Francisco, California

Present: Christopher Ellison (as President), Melissa Wilde (as President-Elect), Fred Kniss (as Past President), James Cavendish (as Executive Officer), Jeremy Uecker (as Program Chair), Gerardo Marti (as editor), and Voting Council members Amy Adamczyk (2014), Jerome Baggett (2014), Kevin Dougherty (2015), Rebecca Kim (2015), Prema Kurien (2015), Christopher Bader (2016), Evelyn Bush (2016), and Michael Emerson (2016). Also in attendance were representatives of the following Standing Committees: Kathleen Jenkins (McNamara Award Committee), Gabriel Acevedo (Membership Committee), and Paula Nesbitt (Membership Committee). Patricia Thomas, Executive Editor of the Humanities Journals of Oxford University Press, was also in attendance.

Absent: Council member Kelly Chung (2014)

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by President Christopher Ellison, who asked those present to review the minutes of the ASR Council Meetings that took place in 2013. All voted in favor of approving the minutes.

Fred Kniss, the Past President of ASR, then presented his report as chair of the Nominations Committee, in which he announced the winners of the ASR elections in 2014. The winners of the election were Lori Beaman as President Elect, and Richard Flory, Giuseppe Giordan, and Milagros Peña, as new members of Council. The 2014 election ballot also included two constitutional amendments, both of which passed by overwhelming majorities. Amendment 1, which created a new Distinguished Article Award and a corresponding standing committee, was adopted, 81-2. Amendment 2, which created a Lifetime Achievement Award and a corresponding standing committee, was adopted, 80-3.

Christopher Ellison then presented his President's Report, which announced the new members of ASR Standing Committees, including the two newly created committees. (Readers of these minutes may refer to the 2014 Council Packet on the ASR website for a complete listing of these appointments.)

Jim Cavendish then summarized his Executive Officer's Report, which can be read in the 2014 Council Packet available on the ASR website. He described the accomplishments of the Executive Office over the preceding year, including updates and additions to the website, planning the Annual Meeting, working with the Development Committee in composing an Investment Policy, and perhaps most importantly, working with the Membership Committee in composing and launching the 2014 ASR Membership Survey. At the end of his report, Jim called for discussion about a restructuring of the EO position, stating that such restructuring would be necessary for him to consider serving beyond the 4-year term (2012-2016) which he had agreed to. Christopher Ellison then suggested the creation of an ad hoc committee, which would be composed of Chris Ellison, Melissa Wilde, and Fred Kniss to review the possible ways of reorganizing the Executive Office in the near future.

Kevin Dougherty, the chair of the Development Committee, presented his committee's report, which included a recommendation for the adoption of a new "Investment and Spending Policy," which can be read in the 2014 Council Packet available on the ASR website. Kevin noted that the adoption of this policy expanded the duties of the Development Committee to "periodically review with its financial advisors the mutual fund families in which it invests" and make recommendations to the Executive Officer and Council regarding any changes "in the percent of monies available to the Executive Council for allocation to projects of ASR."

Jeremy Uecker, the 2014 Program Chair, then presented his Program Chair report. He noted that we had approximately 15 fewer sessions compared to the previous two years, with the largest decline being in the number of proposed paper sessions. Unlike 2013, 2014's program had 3 professional development sessions. He also mentioned that there were a few changes made in the format of the program. Most notably, he shortened most sessions from 110 minutes to 90 minutes in order to create a more fluid conference and to make room for coffee breaks and lunch breaks on both days. He also scheduled the ASR Business Meeting during the lunch break on Thursday rather than early in the morning.

Jeremy reported that it was quite difficult to recruit participants for the Author-Meets-Critics sessions and panels because of the lack of an overlap between the ASR meeting and the ASA meeting in 2014, with many scholars citing their inability to pay for five or six nights of lodging in San Francisco. (Current ASR policy is for the ASR Annual Meeting to take place over the two days immediately preceding the day of the ASA Religion Section sessions, so when the ASA Religion Section meets on the first day of ASA, there will be no overlap between ASR and ASA.) This will likely be a challenge again in Philadelphia in 2018 when the ASA Religion Section will again meet on the first day of the ASA meeting. Jeremy recommended that when this situation occurs in the future, efforts should be made to overlap the ASR meeting with ASA in some way.

The Program Chair's Report was followed by presentations from Gerardo Marti, the Editor, and Trish Thomas, the Publisher, on the state of the journal While a full description of the contents of these reports is available in the 2014 Council Packet, one particular highlight was Gerardo's announcement that there would be a special 75th anniversary issue of the journal in which various scholars were invited to reflect upon a key question: "Why should sociologists care about the study of religion, and how does the study of religion enrich the discipline as a whole." Gerardo also asked Council to consider whether the journal may benefit from an overall increase in the page budget, which would allow for slightly longer articles or make room to publish more articles per year. He said that for the time being he would use resources from his Editor's budget to cover the cost of additional pages. Gerardo reported that he's taking a number of steps to improve the impact factor of the journal, and asked ASR to consider taking a number of additional actions to improve it, such as distributing a Table of Contents to ASR members by email, notifying ASR members of Advance Access articles by email, and encouraging authors to distribute their research to colleagues more widely. Although it was agreed that sending too many mass emails to our members would not be wise (because some people are likely to unsubscribe when they think they're getting too much email), Council was supportive of disseminating electronically clickable Table of Contents to our subscribers much like the *American Sociological Review* and the *American Journal of Sociology* do.

Gabriel Acevedo then presented an abridged version of the Membership Committee Report, which was based largely on the results of the 2014 ASR Membership Survey. He invited

everyone to attend the ASR Business Meeting where a full presentation of the survey results would be made by him and Jim Cavendish.

The Membership Committee report was followed by reports about ASR's awards, including (in the sequence in which they were presented) the International Liaison Committee report, the Fichter Research Grant Committee report, the McNamara Committee report, and the Distinguished Article Award Committee report.

Prema Kurien, the chair of the International Liaison Committee in 2014, reported that since the committee received only 2 applications by the March 1st deadline, the committee ended up extending the deadline to April 15. Furthermore, because the amount of the awards was limited, and the international scholars who had applied needed substantially more funding in order to make their travel feasible, it turned out that the committee did not make any awards to international scholars this year. In order for these grants to provide an adequate incentive for the participation of international scholars, Prema said that her committee recommends that ASR:

1) Cut down the length requirements of the paper to an extended abstract of 1000-1500 words.
2) Have a later deadline than March 1st (perhaps April 1 or April 15).
3) Discuss whether we should reimburse at least some of the travel costs for international scholars coming from further away and from the Global South. This of course means that we will be able to fund fewer people.

Council discussed and approved the first and second of these recommendations, and raised the upper cap for travel grants to international scholars to $1,000 each to address the third recommendation. It was proposed that ASR award as many as 4 grants of $1,000 each to international scholars (totaling $4,000) and use the remaining $2,000 to provide awards to graduate student applicants. Council agreed to take up this proposal at the Second Council Meeting. All of the other criteria for the evaluating the Gallagher applications, and the policies for distributing the funds (i.e., primarily through reimbursement of costs for staying in the conference hotel), will remain intact.

Council then reviewed the report of the Fichter Grant Committee. In that report, the committee recommended that a fourth person be chosen to serve on the committee to ensure the smooth working of the committee in cases when one of the members has to withdraw, either because they decided to apply for the grant or because of personal or family issues.   Council supported this idea. Melissa Wilde then recommended that ASR strive to build up its investment accounts so that it could possibly award dissertation improvement grants and/or a dissertation writing year fellowship. She stated that since other professional academic associations in religion, such as SSSR, target their large grants program to scholars who already have a Ph.D., it seemed reasonable for ASR to consider focusing its grant program on graduate students. Although Council seemed positive about this proposal, nothing was decided.

Christopher Ellison thanked everyone for their service to ASR and their contributions to a successful meeting and adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

ASR GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, August 14, 2014
11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

Present: Christopher Ellison (as President), Melissa Wilde (as President-Elect), Fred Kniss (as Past President, James Cavendish (as Executive Officer), Gabriel Acevedo (as Chair of the Membership Committee), and several other members of Council, of the Standing Committees, and approximately 40 members.

The meeting was called to order at 11:45 a.m. by Jim Cavendish, who welcomed everyone, summarized briefly the highlights of the reports that were presented at the First Council Meeting, and the presented the results of the 2014 ASR Membership Survey. (Readers of these minutes can refer to the 2014 Council Packet or the 2014 ASR Membership Survey Report available on the ASR website to see the highlights.)

A robust discussion of the Membership Survey results followed, with several members asking questions and providing comments. The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

ASR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
SECOND COUNCIL MEETING
Saturday, August 16, 2014
7:00 – 8:15 a.m.
JW Marriott Hotel, San Francisco, California

Present: Melissa Wilde (as incoming President), Christopher Ellison (as outgoing or Past President), James Cavendish (as Executive Officer), Gerardo Marti (as editor), Voting Council members Kevin Dougherty (2015), Rebecca Kim (2015), Prema Kurien (2015), Christopher Bader (2016), Evelyn Bush (2016), Michael Emerson (2016), Richard Flory (2017), Guiseppe Giordan (2017), and Milagros Peña (2017).

Absent: Lori Beaman, as incoming President-Elect

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 a.m. by incoming President Melissa Wilde, who welcomed the new members of the Council and chaired the meeting. She began by introducing the person she had selected to serve as the Program Chair for the 2015 Meeting in Chicago – Grace Yukich, who is an assistant professor at Quinnipiac University.

Outgoing President Chris Ellison briefly summarized what was discussed at the First Council Meeting.

Melissa Wilde then presented various items that she hoped to address during her year as president, and she invited Council to offer suggestions about each of these items.   Among the items discussed were the following:

1. The need for the Publications Committee to solicit bids from publishers for the publication of our journal so that it can review these proposals and decide by the end of 2015 whether it wishes to recommend that ASR continue its contract with Oxford

University Press or enter a contract with another publisher. Rebecca Kim, the Chair of the Publications Committee, agreed to begin soliciting bids from prospective publishers, so she can report on the options before the 2015 Annual Meeting.

2. The need for the Publications Committee to review our contract with Brill for the publication of the *Religion and the Social Order* book series. It was agreed that Rebecca Kim would ask Brill to extend our contract for at least another year (until 2015) to enable Bill Swatos to publish the edited volumes that he is currently working on. Rebecca stated that she would engage the Publications Committee and other interested parties in discussions about the future of the book series so that she can make recommendations to Council before the 2015 Annual Meeting.

3. The desire for the International Liaison Committee to award more money (i.e., as much as $1000) to a fewer number of international scholars to make travel more feasible for this segment of our membership. Council discussed what portion of the $6,000 budgeted for the Gallagher Travel Grants should be awarded to international scholars and what portion should be awarded to graduate students. It was decided that $4,000 would be budgeted for international scholars, making it possible to offer $1,000 awards to four individuals in 2015, and $2,000 would be budgeted for graduate student travel awards in 2015.

4. The desire to recruit new graduate student members to the Association. Melissa Wilde proposed that Council consider awarding graduate students who would be first-time presenters at our Annual Meeting one free night's stay at the ASR conference hotel in 2015. Melissa and Jim agreed that they would work out some details of what this might look like and how much money would be necessary, and present a proposal for Council to vote on by email in the upcoming months.

Jim Cavendish stated that it would be difficult at this early stage to approve a proposed budget because some expenses (e.g., how much ASR will owe to the JW Marriott) and some sources of revenue (e.g., how much ASR will receive in revenues from Oxford University Press) were still uncertain. Council agreed that before making final decisions about the 2015 budget, we would wait to see what our remaining expenses and revenues would be in 2014.

There being no other business, Melissa Wilde adjourned the meeting at 8:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James Cavendish
Executive Officer

Record of Developments and Decisions after the Council Meetings in August, 2014.

February, 2015:

Upon the request of *Sociology of Religion*'s editor, Gerardo Marti, Jim Cavendish sent the following email to the Executive Council on February 3, 2015, to solicit their input:

Dear Colleagues on ASR Council:

As Editor, I have dedicated much time in the past few months strategizing for the journal, especially toward positively affecting our impact factor. You will hear more about a few initiatives being put in place sometime in the coming year.

For now, there are a few minor items I am considering. After talking with Jim as XO and Rebecca as Chair of Publications Committee, I would appreciate the Council's input on two items:

1. I would like to change the title "Deputy Editor" to "Associate Editor." Neither Jim nor Rebecca see any negative implications to this. I simply think that "Associate Editor" sounds more appropriate and is more standard among journals. My impression of "Deputy" is almost cartoonish, so I would rather convey more dignity to the role. Do you have any strong objections on changing the title from deputy to associate editor?

2. Every issue, I find gathering information for the "contributor bio's" page to be a hassle. I am asking authors this information often long after the paper has been accepted, and sometimes the bios of people are already out of date by the time they are printed. One issue was slightly delayed from the difficulty of obtaining contributor bio information. Also, in looking at other journals like JSSR, there is no contributor page. Also, I found that our own journal has not always had a contributor page, and looks to have started with David Yamane. Finally, I believe we are in a time where up-to-date bios of people are quite easily accessible through the internet. In short, I would like to remove the pages dedicated to contributor bios. Do you have any strong objections on dropping the contributor bio page?

Thank you all for your work — and let me remind you to be sure to cite recent SOR journal articles in your publications (early and often!) —

Gerardo

Gerardo Marti, PhD
L Richardson King Associate Professor, Department Chair
Sociology, Davidson College

In response to this email, the following Officers and Council members voted to support both proposals: Melissa Wilde, Lori Beaman, Christopher Ellison, Prema Kurien, Evelyn Bush, Giuseppe Giordan, Richard Flory, Michael Emerson, Milagros Peña, Christopher Bader, and Kevin Dougherty.

March, 2015:

On March 17, 2015, Jim Cavendish sent the following email, titled "Update on ASR Business" to the Executive Council to solicit their input and votes:

Dear Officers and Council Members of ASR:

I'm writing to ask you to review the attached minutes from our last Council meetings in August of 2014, to review the attached budgets for 2014 and 2015, and to share with you the details of the Annual Meeting in Chicago in August. As soon as you're finished reviewing the attached minutes, please let me know if you approve of the minutes as written or if you there are some things I should change.

As you examine the attached budget, you will notice the following:

1) Our revenue from the Annual Meeting was higher in 2014 compared to 2013. This is explained by the fact that (a) we increased the registration fee from $65 to $70, and (b) I included membership fees that were paid for the purpose of attending the Annual Meeting as Annual Meeting income, rather than as revenue from membership dues.
2) ASR benefitted in 2014 from the generous donations of Nancy Ammerman, Barbara Walters, and the Sociology Department at Baylor University. We may not have similarly high donations in 2015.
3) In 2014, we saved a lot of money by borrowing AV equipment from Santa Clara University for our Annual Meeting. I'm not sure yet whether we'll be able to borrow AV equipment this year, so we have to anticipate AV expenses being a lot more. It would cost about $11k to rent AV equipment at the hotel in Chicago, so if we can't borrow AV equipment from a nearby university, we will probably purchase our own equipment, which would be about half the price of renting.
4) The combination of the above three factors enabled us to run in the black in 2014. Right now, unless we are able to secure additional sponsorships, donations, and the lending of AV equipment for our Annual Meeting in August, I anticipate that our budget will be slightly in the red in 2015.

You might recall that we didn't officially approve the budget for 2015 because there were a few extra pieces of data I wanted to secure. Now that you see the proposed budget, I invite you to either endorse it as is, or make recommendations for changes. Among the things that we should consider adding to the budget either this year or next are the following:

1) Gerardo has requested that we make room in the budget for providing the two Associate Editors of *Sociology of Religion* with a $1,000 annual honorarium. This makes sense to me, and we could do it this year if Council approves and we're okay with being a little in the red (if I cannot get a donor for the AV equipment).
2) I have looked into the possibility of hiring a Business Manager to assist me in all of the financial matters of ASR, and if I secure the same person who was recently hired by RRA, this would cost somewhere in the range of $4k. As I mentioned during the last meeting, I will definitely need this kind of assistance given my current administrative assignment at USF.
3) As you know, Gerardo has been doing an excellent job as editor of the journal, and it would make sense to increase his compensation either this year or next. I can provide

you with a full listing of his accomplishments upon request. He's really doing an amazing job.

Please send me your approval of the attached minutes and your thoughts about proposed budget items by "replying to all" sometime before the end of this month, hopefully sooner.

Cheers,

Jim

James Cavendish
Executive Officer, Association for the Sociology of Religion

In response to this email, the following Officers and Council members voted to approve the minutes: Michael Emerson, Rebecca Kim, Kevin Dougherty, Prema Kurien, Chris Bader, Melissa Wilde, Richard Flory, Milagros Peña, Lori Beaman, Chris Ellison, Giuseppe Giordan, and Evelyn Bush.

In response to this email, the following Officers and Council members voted to approve only the additional expense for a Business Manager, noting that other recurring expenses might be feasible if we can balance the budget and reduce the cost of AV equipment: Rebecca Kim, Kevin Dougherty, Prema Kurien, Melissa Wilde, Milagros Peña, Lori Beaman, Chris Ellison, Giuseppe Giordan, and Evelyn Bush.

(*Note:* Several council members stated in their email replies that they "support in principle the allocation of funds for the editor or associate editors," but that they would like to see a long-term plan for how we will cover these recurring costs.)

Nominations Committee Report

July, 2015

TO: Officers and Members of Council of the Association for the Sociology of Religion

FROM: Christopher Ellison, Past-President of ASR

Re: Nominations Committee and Election Results

The Past-President's primary (to be honest, only) duty is to chair the Nominations Committee. Joining me on the 2014-15 committee were David Sikkink and Brian Steensland. They provided generous assistance in nominating a strong ballot of candidates.

I am especially grateful to those who agreed to stand for election. Very few nominees declined their nominations, which made the committee's work much easier than it might have been. It says something good about our association that so many strong candidates were eager to serve.

In January, the committee submitted the following ballot. As before, President-Elect candidates were asked to submit a short statement of their vision for ASR in addition to the standard bio. The election closed on June 1 with 92 members casting ballots. The elected candidates are highlighted in bold below.

>   President-Elect
>
>   **Michael O. Emerson**
>   Mark Chaves
>
>   Council Member
>
>   **Mary Ellen Konieczny**
>   Carol Ann MacGregor
>   Nicolette Manglos-Weber
>   **Lisa D. Pearce**
>   **Jeremy Uecker**
>   Brandon Vaidyanathan

Christopher Ellison
ASR Past-President

2015-2016 ASR Committee Appointments Made by President Melissa Wilde and Committee Chair Appointments made by Incoming President Lori Beaman

Year in parentheses indicates the year that person's term expires
Names in bold are the incoming chairs of the committees

Publications Committee
Richard Wood (2016)
Terrence Hill (2017)
Elaine Howard Ecklund (2017)
Inger Furseth (2018)

Development Committee
Kevin Dougherty (2016)
Ted Long (2017)
Michael Emerson (2018)

Membership Committee
Andrea Henderson (2016)
Gabriel Acevedo (2017)
Michael Wilkinson (2018)

International Liaison Committee
Rachel Rinaldo (2016)
Gladys Ganiel (2017)
Damon Mayrl (2018)

Program Committee
Ryan Cragun (2016)
Lori Beaman (as incoming President)
Jim Cavendish (as Executive Officer)

Joseph Fichter Award Committee
Jeremy Thomas (2016)
Richard Pitt (2017)
Cathy Holtmann (2018)

Robert McNamara Award Committee
Kathleen Jenkins (2016)
Aida Ramos-Wada (2017)
Sabrina Danielsen (2017)

Distinguished Article Award Committee
Alex Bierman (2017)
Mark Chaves (2017)
Nicolette Manglos-Weber (2017)
Rahsaan Maxwell (2018)

Lifetime Achievement Award Committee
Michele Dillon (2017)
Rhys Williams (2017)
Amy Adamczyk (2017)

ASR is grateful for the contributions of the following individuals who served as chairs of committees during 2015: Rebecca Kim (Publications), Ted Long (Development), Brian Starks (Membership), Damon Mayrl (International Liaison Committee), Orit Avishai (Fichter Award Committee), Kevin McElmurry (McNamara Award Committee), Alex Bierman (Distinguished Article Award Committee), Rhys Williams (Lifetime Achievement Award Committee), and Grace Yukich (Program Committee).

We are also grateful for the service of the following individuals whose terms of service on these committees expired this year: Rebecca Kim (Publications), Fred Kniss (Development), Gerardo Marti (Membership), Prema Kurien (International Liaison Committee), Mary Ellen Konieczny (Fichter Award Committee), Kevin McElmurry (McNamara Award Committee), and Alex Bierman (Distinguished Article Award Committee).

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Call for Papers for the
78th Annual Meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion

Location: Seattle, Washington
Renaissance Seattle Hotel, 515 Madison Street
Date: August 20-21, 2016

Theme: Exploring Diversity: Varieties of Religion and Nonreligion

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Given the location of the 2016 ASR conference and recent research about the predominance of nonreligion in the Pacific Northwest, a program theme focusing on the intersections of religion and nonreligion is fitting. The dramatic increase in those who identify as 'nones' or nonreligious on surveys about religious identity may be indicative of a new normal in the religious landscape in many countries. It also raises important questions about the study of religion and nonreligion, both methodological and theoretical. While there has long been a debate in the social sciences over secularization as a theory to explain religious change, there may be other theoretical explanations for why nonreligion is increasing. Likewise, much remains to be explained about how such an increase will change the role of religion in politics, education, healthcare, law, and other social institutions. Further, what does it mean to be religious in this context? Is religious identity and religion itself also shifting and changing? In addition to the theoretical concerns, methodological challenges are also emerging. How, for example, does one find and study those who are unaffiliated with organizations? What are the similarities and differences in the contours of lived religion and non-religion? Are there better ways to measure the degree to which people, organizations, communities, countries and cultures can be described—or describe themselves—as religious or nonreligious? Do current surveys contain adequate measures to capture the diversity among the nonreligious, or, for that matter, among the religious?

Papers and discussion sessions on all topics within the sociology of religion are welcome, but especially those related to the meeting theme, including, but not limited to the following: the shifting religious landscape; religion and power; lived religion and nonreligion; measuring religious diversity; capturing religious and nonreligious identities; social institutions and religion; the geographies and spaces of religion and nonreligion; the role of sexuality and gender in a changing religious landscape.

DEADLINES: Session Proposals are due by March 31, 2016 (submit to program chair). Paper Proposals and abstracts are due by April 30, 2016 (submit through the ASR website Member Portal at www.sociologyofreligion.com). Meeting registration is due by July 1, 2016.

PROGRAM CHAIR: Ryan Cragun, The University of Tampa, ryantcragun@gmail.com

ASR Executive Officer's Report

August, 2015

TO: Officers, Members of Council of the Association for the Sociology of Religion

FROM: Jim Cavendish, Executive Officer

RE: Report on the State of ASR

Activities and Accomplishments

Among the accomplishments of the Executive Office this past year were the following:

1) I continued to upload various ASR documents to the website to enable greater access to valuable information about the Association's history and our financial operations.
2) In the fall, I traveled to Chicago to conduct site-visits at various hotels, which resulted in ASR entering into a contract with the Renaissance Blackstone Chicago Hotel.
3) I traveled to Seattle, WA, over my Spring Break to conduct site-visits at various hotels, which resulted in ASR entering into a contract with the Renaissance Seattle Hotel.
4) I worked with our tax advisor Ken Marx of Station Capital to complete the IRS Tax Form 990 for IRC 501(c)6 organizations and posted it to the website at http://www.sociologyofreligion.com/about/financial-transparency/
5) I worked with the staff of the Renaissance Blackstone Chicago Hotel to ensure the success of this year's Annual Meeting. I'm happy to report that we have filled a sufficient number of sleeping rooms so ASR won't suffer any penalties due to attrition.
6) I worked with Council member Chris Bader to select and purchase AV equipment for use at this year's and future years' Annual Meetings. This purchase will result in substantial long-term cost savings for our Annual Meetings.
7) I worked with the Development Committee in reviewing our investment accounts and strategizing about how to increase our endowment, our revenues, and the overall financial health of ASR.

Many aspects of the association continue to flourish. To highlight a few:

- Our Program Chair this year, Grace Yukich, did an excellent job putting together a fantastic program. One-hundred-and-forty-two (142) papers are scheduled to be presented, and 210 people have registered for this year's conference.
- In this year's Editor's Report, Gerardo Marti reports that the number of manuscripts that *Sociology of Religion* processes continues to climb, with a **35% increase** this year over last year and a **59% increase** over two years. Also the impact factor of SOR remains higher than our comparison journals.
- In this year's Publications Committee report, Rebecca Kim reports that a variety of publishers are seeking a contract with ASR to publish our journal, and at least a couple of their bids show promise of increasing ASR's revenues. Kudos to Rebecca and her committee for the excellent work they did this year.

- Brian Starks and the Membership Committee spearheaded two additions to our Annual Meeting – a Graduate Student Mentoring Lunch and a Women of ASR (WASR) "Meet and Greet" -- will likely increase participation among these constituencies.
- With 46 countries now represented among ASR's members, the Association and its journal enjoy an international reach unprecedented in its history.

Financial Status of the Association

So, what does the financial status of ASR look like at the current time? ASR's assets at the current time (August 10, 2015) are summarized below:

ASR's Assets as of….	*Aug 10, 2014*	*Aug 10, 2015*
ASR's Checking Account at the USF Federal Credit Union	$67,399.36*	$91,103.43
ASR's Savings Account at the USF Federal Credit Union	$2,513.26	$2,518.73
PayPal Account	$560.07	$19,009.45
American Funds Accounts (Mutual funds)		
Washington Mutual Investors Fund-A (Fund #01)	$105,184.85	$104,359.67
The Bond Fund of America-A (Fund #08, bond fund**)	$103,553.83	$103,310.56
American High-Income Trust-A (Fund #21, bond fund)	$116,378.08	$106,911.43
Capital World Grown and Income Fund-A (Fund #33)	$101,691.42	$104,428.50
SMALLCAP World Fund-A (Fund #35)	$110,810.88	$111,738.45
American Funds Money Market Fund-A (Fund #59)	$11,196.19	11,196.19
Total Value of American Funds Portfolio	**$548,815.25**	**$541,944.80**
TOTAL ASSETS	**$619,287.94**	**$654,576.41**

* $25k of this was drawn from investments in March, 2014, to make sure we could pay our bills. That $25k should be returned to investments after we finalized our review of ASR's cash flow and paid our bills for this year's Annual Meeting
***bond funds pay monthly*
Funds 01, 33 = growth and income, pay out quarterly.
Fund 35 = growth fund, dividends are paid once a year, with the goal of establishing equity.
Fund 59 = Money Market fund, as a cash reserve.

Based on these data and a review of bank statements, the overall financial standing of ASR can be characterized as strong. At this time last year, ASR's net assets were $619,288, and now they are $654,576. While our net assets have increased, the value of ASR's American Funds accounts is slightly lower this year compared to last, as can be seen in the table above as well as in the figure below. This can be partly explained by the performance of the market, but it is also due to ASR receiving income from these accounts (i.e., automated payments sent to our Business Checking account) which slightly exceed our current expenses. During 2014, for instance, we drew more income from the American Funds so that ASR would have a cushion in its bank accounts.

Value History of ASR's American Fund Accounts
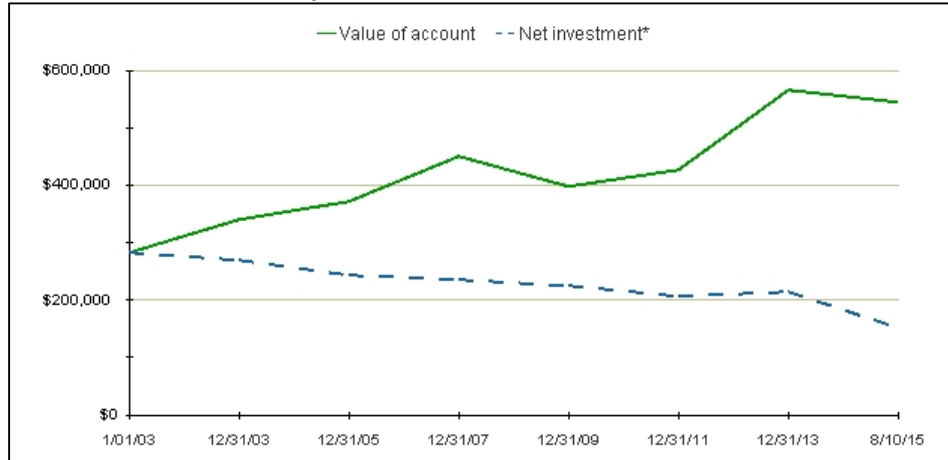
*Net investment is the total amount invested minus the total amount withdrawn.

During the last several months, ASR's Development Committee, led by former ASR EO and President Ted Long, conducted a review of the financial status of ASR. Via conference calls (including one with our financial advisor John Synder of Station Capital), we discussed how to increase ASR's endowment and revenues. These conversations resulted in the following recommendations from the Development Committee:

- To stay with the American Funds "family" of accounts. Although John Snyder invited us to consider shifting some of our investments into a Jackson variable annuity (which would allow for investments in things like real estate and precious metals), after listening to the advice of a couple other financial advisors, we decided to stay with the American Funds. Why? Our American Funds accounts have had an 8.4% annualized rate of return, they are sufficiently diversified, and unlike annuities, they have an extremely low maintenance fee (less than 1%). The maintenance fee will become even lower (close to 0%) once we reach the magical $1 million mark. Furthermore, when ASR invested in these accounts, it very shrewdly purchased Class A type shares, which allow us to move our investments easily within the American Funds family with very little cost. Also, unlike annuities, we can add money to these investment accounts at any time, and withdraw money if we need to.
- To begin to make our Annual Meeting self-sustaining (i.e., the Annual Meeting should be able to pay for itself). The EO has taken the first step in this direction by purchasing our own AV equipment. The Development Committee is in the process of creating a plan to further accomplish this objective, which will likely include recommendations about increasing registration fees and acquiring additional sponsors for our receptions. We will have a plan on the table in the upcoming months for Council to consider.
- As the Annual Meeting becomes more self-sustaining, to decrease the amount of money we draw in income from the American Funds so the endowment continues to grow.

Budget

The following page (and the accompanying Excel file, for those who want additional details) presents the budgets from past years, the anticipated budget for 2015, and a proposed budget for next year.

ASR's Annual Budgets, 2011-2015, and Proposed 2016

Income	2011 Actual*	2012 Actual*	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Anticipated Income/ Projected Expenses	2016 Proposed
Operational Income						
Membership Fees	14,345	19,455	16,454	15,905	15,000	15,000
Mailing List Rental	-	-	-	-	-	
Royalties (non-Oxford), e.g., Brill, etc.	5,210	3,239	3,308	1,511	1,500	1,500
Donations	580	812	-	2,000	-	
Total Operational Income	**20,135**	**23,506**	**19,762**	**19,416**	**16,500**	**16,500**
Annual Meeting Income	*Las Vegas*	*Denver*	*New York*	*San Fran*	*Chicago*	*Seattle*
Registrations (incl breakfast)	7,370	10,815	10,177	20,930	20,000	20,000
Book Exhibits			1,300	1,000	1,150	1,150
Advertisements in Meeting Program			400	600	400	400
Oxford Contribution			500	500	500	500
Brill Contribution			500	1,000	1,000	1,000
Soc Dept contributions (Baylor 2014; LUC, Penn 2015)				1,200	1,000	
Total Meeting Income	**7,370**	**10,815**	**12,877**	**25,230**	**24,050**	**23,050**
Journal Income						
Oxford Royalties	76,126	107,724	50,000	51,652	50,000	50,000
Oxford Stipend for Editorial Office Support			10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Processing Fees	350	200	200	-	-	-
Total Oxford Income	**76,476**	**107,924**	**60,200**	**61,652**	**60,000**	**60,000**
Investment Income						
Income from Dividends and Interest	16,042	12,911	22,244	29,865	20,000	15,000
Total Investment Income	**16,042**	**12,911**	**22,244**	**29,865**	**20,000**	**15,000**
Total Income	**120,023**	**155,156**	**115,083**	**136,163**	**120,550**	**114,550**
Expenses						
Operating Expenses						
Executive Officer Salary	5,500	5,500	10,000	7,500	7,500	7,500
Office Help	3,000	3,000	-	2,000	500	500
Social Security	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office Expenses (mail, PayPal, Constant Contact,)	4,786	6,876	2,973	1,623	2,000	2,000
Consulting Fees	-	-	-	325	500	500
Total Operating Expenses	**13,286**	**15,376**	**12,973**	**11,448**	**10,500**	**10,500**
Website Upgrades	**4,619**	**-**	**6,100**	**-**	**-**	
Annual Meeting Expenses	*Las Vegas*	*Denver*	*New York*	*San Fran*	*Chicago*	*Seattle*
Audio Visual	-	-	12,095	1,027	1,500	1,500
Receptions (& penalty in 2012)	21,227	43,706	34,116	32,667	25,000	30,000
Office Help (Registration desk, name tags)	2,500	2,500	925	895	1,000	1,000
Program Assistant	2,000	2,000	2,230	195	40	1,000
Program Printing	2,000	2,000	1,510	849	800	800
Site Selection and Travel (EO)	3,000	3,000	2,500	1,705	584	1,000
Travel Reimbursements for Officers & Program Ch	4,500	4,500	5,665	3,483	3,500	4,000
Room Costs for Officers, Program Chair, Furfey Lecturer				5,232	5,000	5,500
Meeting Supplies			125	239	250	250
Total Annual Meeting Expenses	**35,227**	**57,706**	**59,166**	**46,292**	**37,674**	**45,050**
Journal & RSO Expenses						
SOR Mailing	19,695	19,455	18,889	18,889	16,796	17,000
Editor's Stipend	5,000	5,000	7,500	10,000	10,000	10,000
Book Review Editor Stipend	1,500	1,500	2,750	4,000	4,000	4,000
Editor's Budget		5,000	5,000	3,524	5,000	5,000
Reimbursement of Editor's expenses				566	500	500
Reimbursement of Book Rev Editor's expenses				-	-	
RSO	1,291	1,334		-	-	
Total Journal & RSO Expenses	**27,486**	**32,289**	**34,139**	**36,979**	**36,296**	**36,500**
Award Expenses						
Awards	13,000	20,000				
Fichter Research Grants				17,663	16,622	15,118	12,000
Gallagher Travel Grants				4,971	1,529	6,000	6,000
McNamara Student Paper Award				500	500	500	500
McNamara Awardee's Room				418	-	500	500
Best Article Award					500	500	500
Furfey Lecture				1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Distinguished Career Award?	-	-	-	-		
Total Award Expenses	**13,000**	**20,000**	**24,552**	**20,151**	**23,618**	**20,500**
Total Expenses	**93,618**	**125,371**	**136,930**	**114,870**	**108,088**	**112,550**
Total Income	**120,023**	**155,156**	**115,083**	**136,163**	**120,550**	**114,550**
Annual Surplus/Loss Budgeted	**26,405**	**29,785**	**(21,847)**	**21,293**	**12,462**	**2,000**
Total Assets at End of Year	**465,579**	**548,162**	**588,819**	**610,424**		

16

As you can see from this budget sheet,

- The 2014 budget year closed with a surplus. This is because:

    1. ASR drew more in income from its American Funds accounts than is customary or recommended now by our recently adopted Investment and Spending Policy (see Appendix).
    2. Baylor University's Sociology Department donated $1,000 to our Annual Meeting, and Brill increased its contribution to $1,000.
    3. ASR's operating expenses decreased slightly because of increased use of electronic systems for processing payments and communicating with members.
    4. Santa Clara University donated the use of its audiovisual equipment for our Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

- 2015 and 2016 are expected to close with surpluses as well, but the surpluses will likely not be as high because:

    1. ASR has not received donations from its members in 2015 as it did in 2014.
    2. ASR may not receive as high of royalties from OUP in 2015.
    3. ASR should anticipate that the future Executive Officer, who will likely begin before the end of 2016, will either require a higher level of compensation or expect the assistance of a Business Manager or Meeting Planner.

Items Requiring Council Action

- Council should review the proposed budget for 2016 and discuss whether they would like to see any changes.
- At either this meeting or by the end of 2015, Council should approve the 2015 budget, as either currently proposed or revised through Council discussion.

Program Chair's Report

July 8, 2015

TO: Association for the Study of Religion (ASR)
FROM: Grace Yukich, 2015 Program Chair
RE: 2015 Program Chair Report

Program Overview

At this writing, this year's ASR program has 50 sessions, in which 142 original research papers are scheduled to be presented, slightly more than last year (49 sessions, 135 papers). Approximately 204 individuals appear on the program as organizers, conveners, critics, panelists, authors, or co-authors, slightly fewer than last year (218 individuals). Of the 50 total sessions, eight (8) are Authors Meets Critics; six (6) are Program-Chair solicited sessions and nine (9) are paper sessions proposed by members, for a total of 15 sessions; three (3) are professional development sessions, two organized by the Program Chair and one by Kevin Dougherty; 21 are Regular sessions organized by the Program Chair from individual paper submissions; one (1) is a presidential panel; and two (2) are joint ASR/ASA sessions. Below is a detailed breakdown of this year's sessions and how they compare to the last three years.

Session Type	2012	2013	2014	2015
Pre-Organized Sessions				
Author-Meets-Critics	8	7	8	8
Program Chair-Solicited & Proposed Paper Sessions	3	11	5	15
Professional Development Sessions	2	0	3	3
Total Pre-Organized Sessions	**13**	**19**	**16**	**26**
Regular Sessions	29	27	29	21
Presidential Panels	0	1	2	1
Joint ASR-ASA Sessions	4	2	2	2
Total Sessions	**46**	**49**	**49**	**50**
Papers Scheduled to be Presented	151	152	135	142

The Process/Issues

When she was appointed, President Melissa J. Wilde named Kristin Geraty as Program Chair. The two worked together for a while, but due to health and family related issues, Kristin was forced to step down as Program Chair in late summer 2014. Melissa asked me to take over, which I was honored to do. At that point, Melissa had already selected the theme for the conference, drafted the call for papers, and been in touch with ASA representative Kareem Jenkins to begin plans for two joint ASR/ASA sessions, one to be held at the ASR venue and the other at the ASA venue.

My predecessor Jeremy Uecker recommended that I start as soon as possible, preferably in the fall, to set up some pre-organized panels for the program. He had waited until the spring, which he felt was too late to get commitments from panel organizers. He felt having pre-organized panels was important in assuring high quality in the program, since some of the general paper submissions have been of questionable quality in the past. Based on his advice, starting in fall 2014, I began making a "wish list" of topics in the sociology of religion that I felt would attract the interest of both sociologists of religion and other sociologists as well, hoping to potentially expand the circle of people who might consider attending the ASR meeting. I also sought to cover previously under-represented topics and topics that intersected with either current events or current controversies within the discipline. Then, I reached out to personal contacts who might be able to organize panels on these topics. While some were unable to do so, many agreed, for which I am grateful. Some of these sessions are paper sessions, while others are Author Meets Critics sessions. While the paper sessions were relatively easy to solicit, since the session organizers did most of the work, the Author Meets Critics sessions were more difficult. They required contacting publishers about new releases, finding authors who could attend the conference, finding possible panelists, and arranging for books to be mailed to them. In the future, I would recommend that the Program Chair organize only 1 or 2 Author Meets Critics sessions ahead of time because of the time it required. Another possibility would be to contact the publishers and ask them to encourage some of their new authors to submit AMC proposals to ASR. That way, the authors would take the initiative on submissions. Only a few authors self-submitted proposals this year, so having more authors submit their own proposals in future years would be important. After the deadline for general submissions, I organized regular paper sessions. The original preliminary program was posted online on May 31, 2015. I drafted most of the program myself. ASR Executive Officer James Cavendish also enlisted assistance in finalizing program formatting and in constructing the index for the program. This assistance cost ASR $40.00, well below the Program Chair budget.

In drafting the program, I retained the changes that my predecessor made. He switched the font to Georgia throughout the program to make the program less cluttered and more readable. He also excluded abstracts, as the Program Committee had agreed they are not necessary for the program going forward and would save printing costs. I thought both of these changes were very positive, so I used the same font and excluded abstracts from the program.

This year was the second time web submission via the association website was the exclusive means of submission. This was done to ensure that participants were members of the association who had registered for the meetings. In his Program Chair report last year, Jeremy Uecker listed several ways the system could be improved. He wrote:

> For example, there should be a way for the Program Chair to download the abstracts as a single file rather than individually. The administrative portal is also clunky to navigate. For example, after updating the status of an abstract (from Pending Review to Approved, for example) there is no way to access the next abstract except by clicking on "Manage Meetings & Abstracts," then clicking on "Abstracts," then scrolling down the list again to find the next abstract. There should be links for "Next Abstract," "Previous Abstract," and "Return to List of Abstracts" on the confirmation page after an abstract has been updated. Moreover, the status of submissions with special characters was unable to be changed. This was a problem for abstracts that were cut-and-pasted from Microsoft Word. There were other technical glitches that caused inefficiencies throughout the submission and review process.

All of these remained problems this year, making the process take longer than it should. As a special note of advice, if the new Program Chair experiences problems accepting an abstract, it may be because of a technical glitch, as Jeremy mentioned. In my case, the system did not like apostrophes. If I removed them one by one from each abstract, the system would accept it. But this demonstrates how inefficient and time-consuming the problem can be. I recommend that the next Program Chair address these issues as soon as s/he is appointed by asking Jim Cavendish for Neil Luft's contact information and contacting Neil about making changes to the system.

After the submission deadline, I sent a list of eight (8) abstracts to the program committee that I considered borderline acceptable. After gathering their input, seven (7) were rejected. Rejections were based on the papers not being sociological. Because the number of panels was sufficiently high due to having a good number of pre-organized panels and paper submissions, we felt more able to reject low quality submissions. This was one of the benefits of having a higher number of pre-organized sessions this year.

Last year, Program Chair Jeremy Uecker made several logistical changes to the program compared with years past. Most sessions were shortened from 110 minutes to 90 minutes, which allowed for more fluid sessions and a greater number of breaks. I retained the various changes he made, as the reasoning behind them seemed sound to me and the flow of last year's program was generally regarded as a success.

After the program was constructed, I recruited conveners for all sessions that still needed them. The open call for conveners produced a few volunteers, but only a few (less than five). As of this writing, I have conveners for all panels, but some of them are participants in the panels and many are people I've had to ask to do several things in the program. This is less than ideal. There are a few possibilities for addressing this in future years. One might be to ask all ASR officers and committee members, as part of their duties, to convene one panel. This could be an assignment that officers and committee members are aware of when they take their positions, and are reminded of when the program is being put together. The Program Chair could then assign them to panels. Ideally, officers and committee members would be attending the entire conference anyway, so they should be available for any panel. A second option would be, in the open call for conveners, to include a phrase that says "including your own panel" as well as a one-sentence description of what is required of conveners. Some members may be hesitant to commit to an additional panel but willing to convene their own panel, and others may be hesitant because they are unsure of what it will require. Providing this additional information may result in an increase in responses to an open call for conveners, which would cut down on the number of solicitations in which the Program Chair has to engage.

All paper sessions have 3-5 panelists, either paper authors, book critics, or discussants/respondents. In the original construction of the program, all 3-paper sessions were in the 8:15 time slots and there were a very small number of 5-paper sessions. With withdrawals and scheduling conflicts, however, some changes had to be made. In some cases, I recruited discussants for sessions that had fewer than 4 papers (because of a withdrawal). However, as the number of withdrawals increased, it became too time consuming to find a discussant for all sessions.

Recommendations for Next Program Chair

To summarize my recommendations up to this point, I suggest the following: 1) begin soliciting pre-organized sessions from friends and colleagues starting in late summer or fall 2015; 2) rather than organizing more than 1-2 AMC sessions yourself, ask publishers (ex: Theo Calderara at Oxford, Fred Appel at Princeton, Jennifer Hammer at NYU) to encourage their new authors to submit AMC proposals to the ASR; 3) in late summer or fall 2015, contact Jim Cavendish and Neil Luft about making changes to the online abstract submission system; 4) if the ASR does not start to require officers to convene panels, consider inviting them to do so and including the additional language I mentioned in the open call for conveners next year.

In addition to these recommendations, I suggest reading the description of the Program Chair duties as soon as you are appointed: http://www.sociologyofreligion.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Program-Chair-Description.2014.pdf. This may seem obvious, but I was not aware of the document's existence for several months, probably because I took over the position partway through the Program Chair term. A great deal of helpful information is contained there. Of course, the Program Chair should also feel free to contact EO Jim Cavendish or me to ask any clarifying questions about PC duties.

Relations with ASA deserve special mention, as this was one of the struggles I faced this year, largely, I believe, because I came into the position late. The ASA meetings run on much earlier deadlines than the ASR does. For example, while most of the ASR PC's work putting together the program does not occur until May because of the April 30 abstract submission deadline, the ASA posts its invited sessions online in December (so the deadline for submission is even earlier), allows updates/corrections until March, and posts its preliminary program in April. You probably already know that the President-elect must make requests for joint ASR/ASA sessions, both number and theme, very far in advance—long before the President and Program Chair actually begin their "year" of duties. Once those have been approved by ASA, typically the President organizes the panels, selecting and inviting panelists. However, these must be finalized and submitted to ASA (in the past, Kareem [Jenkins—Jenkins@asanet.org](mailto:Jenkins@asanet.org)) much sooner than any of the other ASR pre-organized panels. In late summer/early fall 2015, you should email Kareem to ask him for the deadline for submitting the panel information, which you send directly to him. ASA does not require abstracts for these submissions since they are invited panels, only panel titles, paper titles, and the names, affiliations, and email addresses of participants. You should clarify with the President which of the two of you will send the panel information to him to ensure it is done prior to the deadline. I also recommend you ask that Kareem include the Program Chair on all emails about the joint sessions, just to be sure that the communication lines are clear. This year, the ASR and the Religion section of the ASA also co-sponsored a reception at the ASA hotel. If this is done again, I recommend that it is decided on as soon as possible to give the ASR PC and Kareem at the ASA plenty of time to include the correct time and information in the ASA program.

Perhaps most importantly, I am happy to report that I believe overlapping the ASR with the ASA has helped with attendance and the smoothness of the process. Last year, PC Jeremy Uecker wrote that the biggest problem he encountered was the lack of overlap with ASA, since many people could not afford to stay for the length of time required for both conferences. Many invited participants turned down invitations to participate citing funding issues, and he wrote, "in many cases, I was forced to make promises to participants that their session would be scheduled for Friday," which led to multiple high-profile sessions being scheduled at the same

time. Fortunately, this was not a major problem this year. No one who withdrew cited funding issues related to being forced to stay longer in Chicago, and only a very small number (maybe 1-2) requested being on the earlier day. I did encounter a couple of instances of presenters having conflicts with the timing of their panels, which conflicted with ASA panels to which they had already committed (since the ASA program is in place earlier). However, this only happened twice, and in both cases I was able to rearrange the panels to accommodate everyone. While it was time-consuming to do so, I still believe it resulted in a stronger program, as a greater number of people were able to participate and I was able to space out high-profile panels. Also, it provided the potential for greater coordination with the ASA Religion Section in our co-sponsorship of the reception. In the future, if the overlap is repeated, I would recommend that the ASR & ASA Religion section explore further collaboration. For instance, both held mentoring events for the first time this year. In the future, perhaps those mentoring events could be combined in a co-sponsored lunch or other event.

Acknowledgments

First, thanks to Melissa Wilde for inviting me to serve in this capacity, as well as for helping to plan several of the sessions, and to Kristin Geraty for the work she did before I took over as Program Chair. I also thank Jim Cavendish for his constant help and guidance through every step of the process. As someone who came in partway through the process, I really could not have done it without him. Thanks also to Jeremy Uecker, the previous Program Chair, for his advice, and to the administrative assistants at the University of South Florida for their assistance with the program formatting and indexing. Finally, thanks to my husband Jonathan and daughter Eleanor for keeping me sane during the busiest times of the process.

In his Program Chair report last year, Jeremy Uecker wrote that "organizing the ASR program has been at turns fun, interesting, enlightening, and frustrating." I agree. I have learned a lot about just how much work goes into putting together these academic conferences that, as attendees, we sometimes take for granted. While it was a lot of work, it was also a privilege to have the chance to shape what the Association for the Sociology of Religion is and will become. Deciding on which themes to highlight in pre-organized panels, which books to feature in Author Meets Critics sessions, and how to piece individual submissions together into coherent themes exposed me to vibrant new work and emerging scholars in the field that I may not have encountered otherwise. Inviting more seasoned scholars to participate in panels and serve as conveners reminded me of the generosity of my colleagues. I am grateful to have had the chance to represent such a dynamic and thoughtful group of scholars.

Editor's Report August 2014–August 2015
Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review

August 1, 2015
Prepared by: Gerardo Martí (Davidson College)

I. Book Review Editor, Associate Editors, and Editorial Board

Book Review Editor:
Rebecca Y. Kim (Pepperdine University)

Associate Editors:
Kevin Dougherty (Baylor University)
Penny Edgell (University of Minnesota)

Editorial Board Members (Institution/Date term ends):
Nancy Ammerman (Boston University/December 2017)
Eileen Barker (London School of Economics/December 2017)
John Bartowski, University of Texas at San Antonio (December 2017)
Kraig Beyerlein (University of Notre Dame/December 2018)
Alex Bierman (University of Calgary/December 2017)
Philip Brenner (University of Massachusetts, Boston/December 2018)
Wendy Cadge (Brandeis University/December 2017)
Nanlai Cao (Remin University of China/December 2018)
James Cavendish (University of South Florida/August 2018)
Michael Emerson (Rice University/August 2017)
Patricia Snell Herzog (Rice University/August 2017)
Jonathan Hill (Calvin College/December 2017)
Rachel Kraus (Ball State University/August 2017)
Agata S. Nalborczyk (University of Warsaw/December 2018)
John O'Brien (New York University, Abu Dhabi/December 2018)
Atalia Omer (University of Notre Dame/August, 2017)
Rachel Rinaldo, University of Virginia (December 2017)
Philip Schwadel (University of Nebraska, Lincoln/December 2018)
Susan Crawford Sullivan (College of the Holy Cross/August 2017)
Jenny Trinitapoli (University of Chicago/December 2017)
Jeremy Uecker (Baylor University/December 2017)
R. Stephen Warner (University of Illinois, Chicago/December 2017)
James Wellman (University of Washington/August, 2017)

The Editorial Board continues to be responsive and helpful. More than any other quality, the willingness to respond quickly and provide detailed reviews is most appreciated from Editorial Board members. The Associate Editors—Penny and Kevin—have been truly outstanding in their readiness to work quickly, the thoroughness and care of their judgments, and their thoughtful feedback on the broader issues in managing the journal. A special thanks to Rebecca for the smooth functioning in her solicitation and publication of book reviews for the journal.

Many terms of board members expired in the past year, so I recruited many new board members. In general, I strived to recruit board members who had already demonstrated excellence in reviewing for the journal; in particular, I sought reviewers who are timely in responding to invitations, timely in turning in reviews, and whose reviews indicate detail, rigor, and careful reading of manuscripts. I was especially interested in recruiting scholars with expertise in Jewish and Muslim dynamics, as well as those with expertise in China. I also sought to balance quantitative and qualitative methodological expertise, to include a broad range of research specialties, to consider diversity in length of tenure in their scholarship, as well as considerations of gender balance and geographic breadth. I believe that I was mostly successful, drawing on scholars well-beyond my own circle of relationships, although expertise in Jewish dynamics is still lacking on the board and international scholars who would provide thorough and rigorous reviews are a challenge to locate or gain commitment.

I am making an effort to stagger invitations of new members to more evenly spread the terms of board members. To that effort, I intend to recruit 3-5 more board members whose terms would begin in January 2016, therefore expire December 2019.

Although Jim Cavendish is an Editorial Board member, he deserves special mention in this report for his service to the journal through his role as Executive Officer of ASR. Jim has been very responsive when necessary in regard to a number of miscellaneous issues related to the journal and my editorship. His largely unseen service is much appreciated.

II. Manuscript Flow

Overall, the significant rise in original submissions corresponds with a lower number of manuscripts accepted and, therefore, a rise in the overall selectivity of the journal.

- 230 manuscripts in total (new and revised submissions) were processed on or after August 1, 2014. The total for the previous year was 170 (and the year before 145). This is a **35% increase** over last year and a **59% increase** over two years.

- 187 <u>original</u> (new) manuscripts with a submission date on or after August 1, 2014—an increase of 77 from the previous year (a 42% increase).
  - Of the 187 that have editorial decisions, 139 were rejected (82%, same percentage as last year), 26 were given "major revision" status (15%, up from 9% last year), and 4 were given "minor revision" status (2%, up from 0% last year). Other than the Furfey Lecture, no manuscripts were accepted outright this year.

- 43 <u>revised</u> manuscripts with a submission date on or after August 1, 2014—a decrease of 9 from the previous year. This may indicate a slightly greater selectivity in the previous year or it may indicate more authors who are not following through on an R&R.
  - Of the 43 revised manuscripts that have decisions: 16 were accepted (44%, up from 39% last year), 15 were given "major revision" status—that is, a <u>second</u> "major revision" (42%, up from 12% last year), 15 were given "minor revision" status (42%, up from 31%), and 4 were rejected (11%, down from 19% last year).

- Of all manuscripts that received an editorial decision on or after August 1, 2014, **8.**3% **(17/206) were accepted** (this includes the Presidential Address and Furfey Lecture). If I remove manuscripts that were rejected because of their inappropriateness (lack of proper formatting, no evidence of membership or submission fee, excessive page length, not blinding the manuscript properly, etc.), that would remove 36 submissions (last year there were 18); of the submissions that were successfully submitted, 10% (17/170) were accepted.

III. Time from Submission to Editorial Decision

Given the priority and nearly daily time I give to editorship of the journal, I believe it is not possible to process manuscripts much faster. Any significant lag times are due to waiting for reviewers to turn in their evaluation of manuscripts. Moreover, as my editorship continues these times are unlikely to grow shorter, rather they may increase—at least slightly. Overall, I consider these efficient times from submission to editorial decision a significant achievement of my editorship, especially since I typically assign four reviewers per original manuscript, and the quality of the reviewers assigned is typically very high.

- Among <u>new</u> submissions, nearly all editorial decisions are sent back to authors within 4 to 8 weeks of the submission date (a slight decrease from 4 to 9 weeks last year).
  - Rejected manuscripts averaged <u>23 days</u> from submission date to editorial decision date. This compares to 33 days last year, and 40 days the previous year before that.
  - "Major revision" decisions averaged <u>49 days</u> from submission date to decision. This compares to 51 days last year, and 68 days the previous year before that.
  - "Minor revision" decisions averaged <u>50 days</u> (no "minor revisions" last year).

- Among <u>revised</u> submissions,
  - "Accepted" decisions average <u>1 day</u> (compared to 2 days last year and 15 days the previous year before that) from submission to decision.
  - "Minor revision" (a 2nd R&R or "conditional acceptance") decisions average lag is <u>25 days</u> (compared to 56 days, and 67 days the previous year before that).
  - "Major revision" decisions (a 2nd R&R) average time to decision is <u>6 days</u> (compared to 38 days last year and 85 days the previous year before that).
  - "Reject" decisions average lag is <u>47 days</u> (compared to 58 days last year and 52 days the previous year before that).
  - Observing the overall increase in expediency of decisions, the particularly rapid processing of "accepted" manuscripts is due in part to my practice of asking authors to "finalize" their manuscript with suggestions/expectations for slight revisions that are quickly reviewed by me.

- The time from acceptance to publication online in Advance Access remains approximately 4 – 5 weeks; from Advance Access to print remains roughly 3 - 6 months.

IV. Impact Factor

Summary of Impact: The impact factor dropped this past year from 1.667 to 1.00. However, there is good news. First, this continues SOR surpassing the "1.0" level on the impact factor

rating for a third year. Second, the journals we compare ourselves with most also experienced a drop in their impact factor. To provide a familiar point of comparison, JSSR moved from 1.15 to .958 and RRR moved from .50 to .406 during this same period. Third, the impact factor of SOR remains **higher than our comparison journals.**

Long-term trend: In 2009: SOR ranked 80th in sociology; JSSR ranked 47th (IF = .92). And for comparison to a top journal, Social Problems ranked 9th (IF = 1.69).

Now based on the 2014 calculations: SOR ranked 52nd in Sociology. JSSR ranked 57th (IF = .958) and Social Problems ranked 15th (IF = 1.729)

The current impact factor continues to reflect editorial decisions made long before I became editor (since the calculations are based on 2013 citations, see publisher's report from Oxford University Press). Like previous editors, I am committed to do all that I can to see that the increase in visibility and impact continues. This includes:

- More frequent rotation of "Free Articles" from the journal OUP home page
- Advocating for electronic distribution of TOC and Advance Access to ASR Members
- Calls for Papers for Special Topics (last year's invited essays published in 74.4 and this year's "Dissertations in Progress"

More detail: *Sociology of Religion* ranks 52 out of 142 in Impact Factor in the Sociology journals category of the ISI rankings. (Last year, *Sociology of Religion* ranked 16th out of 137 in Impact Factor in the sociology journals category of the ISI rankings.) The 5-year Impact Factor is 1.363, ranking Sociology of Religion 55 out of 142 sociology journals. (Last year, the 5-year impact factor was 1.678, ranking 41 out of 137 sociology journals.)

Impact Factors by Year

Year	*Sociology of Religion*	*JSSR*	*RRR*
2009	.56	.92	.29
2010	.91	1.34	.47
2011	.86	1.34	.45
2012	1.08	1.39	.34
2013	1.667	1.15	.50
2014 (latest)	1.00	.958	.406

Near future considerations: Because the current Impact Factor is calculated based on 2013 and years previous, we have yet to feel the full effect of decisions made under my editorship. For example, in honor of the 75th Volume of the journal, the Associate Editors and I solicited eight essays from a range of scholars (younger to more established, various arenas of scholarly focus, gender and racial considerations, etc.) for a special Winter 2014 75.4 issue that all reflect upon a key question of interest to our readership and within our discipline more broadly: "Why should sociologists care about the study of religion, and how does the study of religion enrich the discipline as a whole?" The essays were reviewed by both Associate Editors, and myself. As anticipated, I believe these essays were well-received and broadly read. The essays are shorter, and there are more of them, which means that eight articles will appear instead of a typical five or six. To make room for this invited issue, and to prevent considerable lag of publication from

regular submissions, it was decided to increase the number of articles in the first three issues by one. Also, Scott Schieman published a "comment" and "reply" exchange in 2013 Winter issue 74.4 (his last issue), and this issue included an additional article as well.

As indicated in last year's Editor's Report, the additional articles published in 2014 could result in a "dip" in our impact factor, as the number of articles may be higher before the citations for those articles "catch up." However, our trajectory and increased articles may well be positive for the calculation of future impact factor scores since the attention received from the Winter 2014 issue was very good, and my impression is that the readership and citation of these articles has been encouraging.

Also, I strongly endorse the electronic distribution of TOC and Advance Access Articles to all ASR Members. I do not believe we should wait until they "opt in," rather, as part of membership, I believe members should automatically receive updates of our publications. The sooner others are aware of newly published scholarship, the sooner they will be cited.

V. Final Considerations

Page budget considerations: Observing the higher number of articles published over the past year provides opportunity to consider whether the journal may benefit from an overall increase in page budget. I still believe one of the challenges is constraining authors to 35 pages. This is very often difficult to accomplish, particularly as authors respond to reviewer comments. A larger page budget would allow slightly longer articles to accommodate data, tables, and/or discussions often demanded by reviewers. Also, the increase in submissions observed over the past two years (from 139 to 230) may indicate a need to provide the ability to publish more articles per year. As I wrote in last year's report, the increased selectivity may discourage potential authors from submitting.

Efforts to improve the impact factor: I worked with OUP this past year to increase the number and frequency of "Featured articles" on the Sociology of Religion webpage; Also in working with OUP, we had a slight increase in the promotion and visibility of our articles through OUP, especially Advance Access and featured "banner" topics; and, I will continue to select and solicit high quality articles with greater citation potential, timely subjects, and broader appeal.

Potential to improve the impact factor: Distribute Table of Contents to ASR members by email (supplemental service to printed journal already received by ASR members); Notify ASR members of Advance Access articles by email; Directly encourage authors to distribute research to colleagues widely with link to access articles.

Publications Committee Report 2015

July 2015

TO: Officers, Members of Council of the Association for the Sociology of Religion

FROM: Rebecca Y. Kim, Chair

RE: Report to Council on the activity of the Publications Committee for 2014-2015

Background
The primary task of the Publication Committee for this year was to solicit proposals from publishers in anticipation of our contract renewal with Oxford University Press. Secondarily, the Publication Committee explored what, if anything, we may want to do with the *Religion and Social Order* Book Series, which is currently housed with Brill.

Item 1: Contract Renewal with Oxford/Publishing Proposals for SOR

From September 2014, members of the Publication Committee sought publishing proposals from ██████████████████████████████████████.[1] By mid-June 2015, we received proposals/responses from all of the four publishers. These proposals along with the existing contract with Oxford were circulated among the members of the Publication Committee.

After some discussion, the members of the Publication Committee recommend that we continue to pursue our contract renewal with Oxford, but ask them to: increase the royalty on all revenue; provide a higher guarantee on revenue; and increase our editorial stipend.

Besides revenue, we should consult our journal editor and seriously consider: ease of use in submitting and working with manuscript processing (e.g., an online submission system that also tracks and maintains reviewers; a system of managing license agreements); quality of the final online as well as print production and design; advertising/visibility that SOR would receive for the potential of increased citation (e.g., provision of "free preview" articles on our webpage); the general accessibility and ease of working with the publisher; increasing the annual page budget.

If Oxford is not willing to renegotiate, we should consider pursuing a contract with ████████████████████████████.

Oxford currently assures us of: a) 35% royalty on all revenue or a minimum of $50,000.00 per year; b) $10,000 to pay our editor

Bids from other publishers (highlights):

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[1] We also considered Elsevier as a potential publisher, but realized quickly that it was not a good match. They focus mostly on publishing in the field of science, health, and technology.

██: 50% royalty on all revenue up to $50,000; 65% royalty on all revenue greater than $50,000 with a guarantee on revenue of $55,000; $15,000 editorial stipend.

██: 40% royalty on all income; a guaranteed annual payment, which increases from $56,000 in the first volume year to $60,000 in the fifth volume year; 2017 amount for cost of editorial activities is $12,000 with an annual increase of 3% thereafter.

███: annual royalty of 40% of net revenue; a guaranteed advance against royalties of $35,000 per year; annual administration stipend of $40,000 (for editorial operations) per year; one-off fee of $25,000 on signature of the contract.

██: Failed to make a financial offer that matches what we currently receive from Oxford. █████████: "We see ████████████ as a natural home for SOR from an editorial perspective…. We have experimented with a variety of approaches to improve upon the financial offer your currently receive from Oxford, and it is with regret that I must inform you that we're unable to do so."

Based on the three competing bids, we recommend that we ask Oxford to increase royalties and the editorial stipend and discuss the non-revenue related upgrades.

Item 2: Religion and Social Order Book Series

From September 2014, members of the Publication Committee along with the Editor of SOR as well as members of ASR's Executive Council sought to evaluate the status of SOR's Religion and Social Order Book Series, which is currently housed with Brill and under the General Editorship of William H. Swatos, Jr. On September 24, 2014, Rebecca Kim contacted Brill (Ingrid Heijckers-Velt, Acquisition Editor of Brill for Religious Studies) and was able to request that the book series contract renewal, which was due in 2014, be pushed back for another year to 2015.

Background: The series *Religion and the Social Order* was initiated by ASR in 1991, under the General Editorship of David G. Bromley. The initial publication contract was with JAI Press and ten edited volumes were published. In 2004, an agreement between Brill and the ASR renewed the series, under the General Editorship of William H. Swatos, Jr. From 2004 to 2014, fourteen edited volumes were published with Brill.

Based on discussions that various ASR council members have had with one another as well as with publishers that have shown interest in housing a book series with ASR, the Publication Committee has compiled a list of the following recommendations and considerations:

1. General questions that we must ask ourselves: A) Do we want to continue a book series, whether with Brill or another press? B) If we want to continue a book series, what kind of book series do we want to have?

2. If we want to continue with the book series, we should consider the following:

a. Do we want to continue with Brill or work with another press like Oxford University Press? Assuming that we will continue to have a positive relationship with Oxford in publishing our journal, the Publication Committee would recommend that Oxford be one of the presses that we pursue to house our book series.

b. Do we want to do edited volumes or monographs or both? In answering this question, we should note that the reputable presses like Oxford University Press are NOT interested in edited volumes (We spoke with editors of ▉▉▉▉ ▉▉▉▉, Oxford University, and ▉▉▉▉). They would all prefer monographs. They also shared that there is "little wiggle room on the overall price of such volumes, as publishers have a very difficult time making any money." Thus, going with another publisher would not mean that we could make the volumes significantly cheaper or that we would bring in considerably more money for the association. If we were to pursue the monograph series with another publisher like Oxford, the benefits would be largely a symbolic/status increase for our members (versus a revenue increase). [According to the contract agreement with Brill, ASR receives 5% in royalties on the net receipts from the sale of copies sold. According to Brill's 2010-2014 sales figures, the average number of copies that the edited volumes sold was 99 (range: 14-233)].

c. If we want to pursue working with another press, we need to put together a new book-series proposal. Most likely, the publication committee would put together a proposal along with members of the Executive Council. The proposal should articulate how the series editor(s) would be selected, how the manuscripts would be selected and peer-reviewed, how many books would be published within a certain timeline, what kind of advertisement support the association would provide for the books and what we would expect from the publisher, etc. (AAR publishes their book series with Oxford, so we could speak with their book series rep/publication committee chair about it if we want to proceed with Oxford).

Membership Committee Report

August 9, 2015

TO: Officers and Council Members of the Association for the Sociology of Religion

FROM: Membership Committee members Brian Starks (Chair), Andrea Henderson-Platt, Gabriel Acevedo, and Gerardo Marti

RE: Report to Council on the Membership of ASR during 2015

Two years ago, ASR began a serious push to increase membership, particularly among grad students. At that time, it was apparent that several forces were pushing towards long term decline in membership, and efforts to counter these forces were needed. One force was relatively unique to ASR. Recognizing ASR's Catholic origins, Bill Swatos noted, "One thing we need to realize, simply as a secular demographic trend, is that a lot of the Catholic crowd who remained very faithful as members, whether or not they attended our meetings, are now being called up yonder, and there is not a corresponding value-commitment sector to take their place." The other forces of decline, however, are not unique to ASR, as numerous academic associations are seeing declines in membership. These negative forces likely include the weak job market and/or greater access to online journals reducing incentives for group membership (in order to receive the journal) among others.

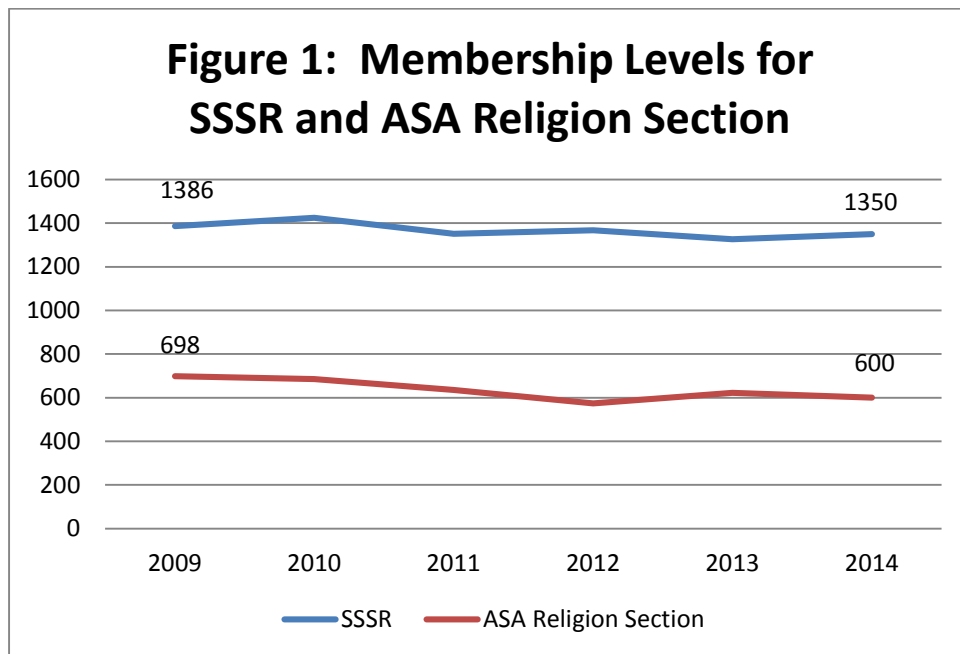Figure 1: Membership Levels for SSSR and ASA Religion Section

Figure 1 illustrates this tendency for declines in membership in academic associations. Though we were unable to get exact numbers from SSSR or ASA's religion section for this year, we know that the religion section earlier in the year was close to 500 members and struggling to add members to avoid losing conference session slots for next year.

Two major efforts were undertaken by ASR in 2013-14 to counter these trends. First, ASR conducted a membership survey in 2014, and last year's committee report summarized many of the results of that survey. Second, it was agreed that professional opportunities for graduate students attending the annual conference were to be emphasized. Consequently, a session entitled "Landing an Academic Job" was organized for the 2014 conference.

In 2014-15, ASR built on these earlier efforts.

Graduate Students:

In 2012, it was noted that the ASR had a lower percentage of student members than either SSSR or the ASA Religion Section. At that time, Chris Ellison motioned that "Student members should be job # 1," Richard Wood seconded the motion, and it carried. It appears that, despite a deteriorating overall membership, our student numbers have increased in the years since, though only slightly. We explain more below.

First, continuing our focus on graduate students, Melissa Wilde, in collaboration with ASA's Religion Section, organized a mentoring luncheon for the 2015 conference. One important finding from last year's membership survey was that less overlap exists among ASA religion section and ASR members than exists among ASR and SSSR members. It will be important to see if coordination and collaboration with the ASA Religion Section increases membership overlap and leads to membership growth. Regardless, the association needs to publicize to sociologists of religion the many benefits that ASR's resources and autonomy provide for our community of scholars, and this is an excellent forum for allowing graduate students to see these benefits in action.

Figure 2: ASR Membership Levels
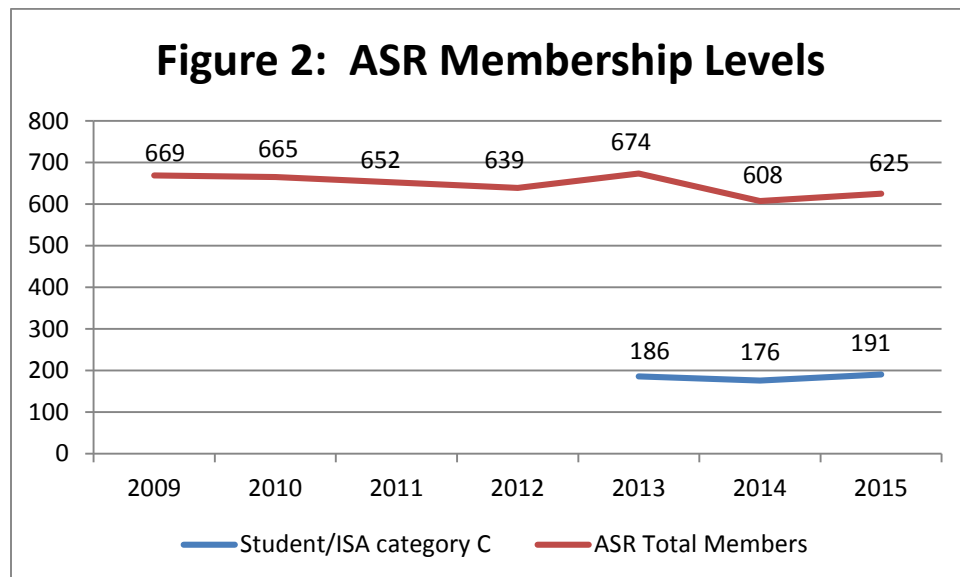
In 2013, we had a rise in membership to our recent high-water mark of 674 members. This was followed by a decline of almost 70 members in 2014 and then a slight upward regression towards the mean this past year (to 625). Since 2013, our ratio of $35 (constituent members) to $15 members (students and ISA-C) has improved from 2.62 to 2.33. This means that the

percentage of "student" members has increased from 27.5% of all members to approximately 31% of all members. Unfortunately, this increasing percentage of "student" members is only partly due to attracting more students. It also results from the loss of constituent members. In 2014, we lost 56 constituent members and 10 student members. In 2015, we gained back 2 constituent members as well as incorporating an additional 15 student members. Thus, since 2013, we are up 5 student members and down 54 constituent members, suggesting that our efforts with graduate students have paid some dividends, but also highlighting ongoing concerns for constituent members.

We should briefly mention a couple methodological considerations. First, the above "student" numbers include both student members and "ISA category C" members together, since both groups pay $15 dues. Unfortunately, the membership data provided to the membership committee did not allow for distinguishing solely student members. In the future, it will be useful to separate these two categories out, if possible. Second, because membership numbers are cumulative "point in time" measures, the 2015 figure will continue to rise over the course of the year as more people sign up as members. Thus, the best numbers for comparison are end-of-year membership numbers. However, since membership committee reports are due each summer, end of year figures are not the numbers provided in membership committee reports, and all numbers provided here are from summer committee reports. To give some context, about two months ago, we had only 527 members for 2015, and now we have 625 (obviously conference registration is a big driver for membership—renewal or otherwise). So, this source of measurement error should be recognized.

Women of ASR

The membership committee (with Andrea Henderson-Platt taking the lead) helped organize a "Women of ASR" meet and greet event for the 2015 conference. Melissa Wilde generously agreed to help support the event and at least three previous ASR presidents will be attending. As we noted earlier, there is a need to expand beyond just graduate students in terms of recruiting and retaining members. Efforts such as this 'meet and greet' could serve as an excellent opportunity for networking and to develop ongoing relationships within ASR. Furthermore, the demographics of sociology as a discipline, especially among the younger generation, requires recognition that growing ASR will mean reaching out to women—as the majority of sociology graduates (at both the undergraduate and graduate level) are now women. At the same time, the membership committee sees the need for these types of events for men as well as women and would be open to additional suggestions along these lines, especially when interested members come forward willing to pursue them. Because of the late scheduling of this event, we will consider 20-30 attendees a success. Ideally, we would like to see this become an annual event, but we recognize that there are additional considerations involved. Since Andrea is still part of the membership committee next year, she is ready and willing to take the lead in organizing this event again next year under the auspices of the membership committee. As a long-term goal, we would like to see a Women of ASR (WASR) committee created. A future WASR committee could take the lead in efforts regarding the growth and retention of women within ASR. Andrea is planning to attend the meet-and-greet event and will explore whether there is interest among attendees in making this an annual event, hopefully generating "grassroots" enthusiasm for the effort.

Finally, we would like to thank James Cavendish and Grace Yukich for their efforts in scheduling and fitting this event into an already packed program!

International Liaison Committee Report 2015

July 1, 2015

TO: Officers, Members of Council of the Association for the Sociology of Religion

FROM: Damon Mayrl, chair

RE: Report to Council on the activity of the International Liaison Committee for 2014-2015

The International Liaison Committee was comprised this year of Damon Mayrl (chair), Rachel Rinaldo, and Gladys Ganiel.

Background

The primary task of the International Liaison Committee is to provide input into selecting the international scholars and graduate students who receive the Ralph A. Gallagher Travel Grants (total amount of $6000, with $4000 earmarked for international scholars and $2000 earmarked for graduate students). This funding was intended primarily to cover expenses at the conference hotel, though international applicants were also permitted to allocate some of the money to airfare. Based on the experience of previous years, Council encouraged us to award fewer grants in larger amounts (maximum $1000 per grant) so that international scholars would be more likely to receive sufficient funding to enable them to actually attend the conference.

To allow the Committee to make an informed choice among candidates, applicants were required to submit a CV, statement of need, extended abstract (1000-1500 words), and evidence they could attend the meeting in the event of receiving an award. The call indicated that applications would be evaluated based on the quality and contribution of the papers; that we would prioritize applications from graduate students needing to travel a farther distance; and that we would prioritize applications from international scholars with a research and publication record.

2015 Experience

To encourage submissions from international applicants, the Committee advertised the call through the listservs and social media outlets of kindred organizations, including the European Sociological Association Sociology of Religion Research Network, ASA Religion Section, ISA RC22 mailing list, and Diaspora mailing list. We received ten applications total by our deadline of April 15. Six of these applications came from international faculty (from five countries), four from domestic graduate students, and one from an international graduate student. Initially, it was not clear whether we should consider the international graduate student applicant as part of the international

scholar pool or as part of the graduate student pool. Ultimately, we decided to treat him as part of the graduate student pool. The Committee shared the application files among themselves through a Dropbox folder.

The committee ranked the six international applicants, and the four graduate student applicants, separately, and recommended awarding $1000 to our top four international candidates, and $500 each to all four graduate student applicants. The Program Committee accepted our recommendation, with the caveat that the dollar figures would be converted into nights at the conference hotel (two nights minimum), to help us meet our room bloc.

Recommendations

Overall, the changes to the application process made in previous years allowed the Committee's work to proceed smoothly and quickly. However, based on our experience this year, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

(1) Some recipients of the Gallagher Grants were subsequently found not to have submitted a regular abstract to the conference. We suspect this was because they thought that applying for the Gallagher Grant was simultaneously to submit a proposal to the conference. We recommend adjusting the language of the call to make sure applicants know these are separate application processes.

(2) Consider formally separating the international and graduate student grants. While the Committee did not find managing the graduate student awards to be onerous, it was unclear at times whether the primary responsibility for the graduate student awards lay with the International Liaison Committee or with the Program Committee. Ultimately, we developed a solution organically, but creating a firmer division of labor might help the process go more smoothly in the future. Further, the relatively low number of graduate student applicants may reflect the fact that graduate students ignored the call because it was combined with a call for applications from international scholars and instructions to apply through the International Liaison Committee. Should the Council decide to separate the two grants, we further recommend that it also decide and advertise whether international graduate students should be instructed to apply to the international fund or the graduate student fund.

Respectfully submitted,

Damon Mayrl
Chair, International Liaison Committee
Assistant Professor of Sociology
Department of Social Sciences
Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
Getafe, Madrid, España

Fichter Award Committee's Report

July, 2015

To: Officers, Members of Council of the Association for the Sociology of Religion

From: Orit Avishai, chair of Fichter Research Grant Committee

Regarding: Report to Council on the activity of the Fichter Research Grant Committee for 2015

2015 Activity Summary

The Fichter Research Grant Committee was comprised this year of Mary Ellen Konieczny, Jeremy Thomas, and Richard Pitt, and Orit Avishai.

We received 26 proposals. Four were from research teams; ten from doctoral students; and four from scholars located outside the U.S. Of those, we funded four, each at $3,000.

Name	Institutional affiliation	Project
Ryan Cragun, J. Edward Sumerau, Lain Mathers	Cragun: Associate Professor, University of Tampa Sumerau: Assistant Professor, University of Tampa Mathers: PhD candidate, University of Illinois, Chicago	Transgender Religion Survey
Shanna Corner	PhD candidate, Notre Dame	Localizing the legitimacy of women's rights: how particularistic cultural models about religion matter for the universalization of support for international human rights
Andrew Whitehead	Assistant Professor Clemson University	Is a Christian American also a more patriarchal one? Gathering data to examine gender traditionalism and Christian nationalism
Beth Packer	PhD Candidate, Ecole des hautes etudes, France	Out of bounds: Islam, politics, and women's soccer in postcolonial Senegal

We were very pleased with the quality and range of applications; they reflect the breadth of excellent work on religion, gender, and sexuality. The funded projects utilize a range of methodological and theoretical approaches to study key questions in these areas. We regretfully could not support several highly competitive grants. We decided that rather than funding more projects at a lower amount we would support fewer projects with sufficient funds to fully carry out at least one component of the project.

<u>Recommendations</u>

Technical matters
Handling, storing, and distributing documents is very time consuming. The following suggestions should help reduce workload.
1. Document names should be standardized—perhaps something along the lines lastname.doc or lastname.pdf.
2. Applicants must submit one file that contains ALL components. While the call specifies this requirement, we suggest adding the proviso that proposals that do not conform to this requirement will be disqualified.

Substantive issues
1. The call should specify a ceiling for funding. Some proposals were unrealistically high in comparison with available funding. In some cases, funding was not feasible because we thought that partial funding would not be meaningful.
2. The field of religion, gender, and sexuality is diverse in terms of topic areas, methodological and theoretical approaches, and intellectual interventions and this diversity should be reflected in the membership on this committee. We felt that previous Presidents captured this diversity when populating the committee and hope that future presidents follow their example. One component that could be strengthened is adding a non-U.S. based scholar to the committee; this will reflect the Association's international makeup.
3. The committee spent some time debating the grant's goals and corresponding criteria. In particular, we were divided on whether achieving a diversity of topics, methodologies, and recipients (international, PhD candidates) could be used as a criterion. Adding language that encourages such diversity to the Call would be helpful. For example, the Call could include a statement about encouraging diverse methodological approaches and applications from international and early career applicants.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the support and guidance from Jim Cavendish and the collegial cooperation among committee members.

Orit Avishai
2015 Chair of the Fichter Grant
Associate Professor of Sociology and Co-Director Women's Studies
Fordham University

McNamara Award Committee Report

July, 2015

TO: Officers and Members of Council of the Association for the Sociology of Religion
FROM: Kevin McElmurry, Chair
Re: McNamara Award Committee Results

Dear Officers and Council Members,

I am pleased to report that 20 high-quality papers were submitted for the 2015 McNamara Student Paper Award. These papers demonstrate a breadth of topic and approach, and signal continued vitality within the sociology of religion.

Committee members reviewed all submissions through a two-stage selection process. Each committee member first selected a short list of five papers from the original pool of 20. With some overlap in members' selections, this produced a set of eight "finalists." These eight papers are listed below.

Each committee member then assigned a ranking score to the eight finalist using a scale of 1-5, five indicating "strongest recommendation." The chair tallied mean ranking scores and led a brief discussion of the results.

Our selection for the 2015 McNamara Award is Orestes P. Hastings for his paper "Not a Lonely Crowd? Social Connectedness, Religious Attendance, and the Spiritual But Not Religious."

Mr. Hastings has been notified of our decision. He is looking forward to sharing his award-winning work during our annual meetings.

All the best,

Kevin McElmurry

2015 Finalists (in no particular order)

Courtney Ann Irby: Creating a Loving Union: Marriage Preparation as Collective Meaning-Making in Catholic Parishes

Dilara Kadriye Üsküp: Blue Bible, Red Bible: Sin or Right? Examining the Impact of Theology on Morality Based Opinions Among Faith Centered African Americans

Landon Schnabel: More Religious, Less Dogmatic: Reexamining Gender Differences in Religiosity

Orestes P. Hastings: Not a Lonely Crowd? Social Connectedness, Religious Attendance, and the Spiritual But Not Religious

Bradley J. Zopf: Egyptian Diaspora in the aftermath of the Egyptian Revolution: Egyptians in Chicago as a case study

Cole Carnesecca: Theologies of the State: the Meiji Restoration and the Emergence of Religious Modernity in Japan

Brandon Gorman: Global Boundary Inversion: International Organizations, Identity, and Shari'a Law

Wes Markofski: The Public Sociology of Religion

Distinguished Article Award Committee Report

June, 2015

TO: Officers and Members of Council of the Association for the Sociology of Religion
FROM: Alex Bierman, Chair
Re: Distinguished Article Award Committee Report

Dear Officers and Council Members,

This is the second year for this award, and articles were considered if they were published in a peer-review print journal (i.e., not online-only) between January 1, 2013 and April 30, 2015. Nominations were accepted by authors, journal editors, and members of ASR. In addition, each member of the committee examined six journals—*American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Social Forces*, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Sociology of Religion*, and *Review of Religious Research*—for relevant papers and suggested articles that should be considered by the committee.

In accordance with the previous committee, this year's committee evaluated the quality of scholarship exhibited in the articles, including (but not limited to) theoretical, empirical, and methodological considerations. Additional consideration was given to the significance of the article's contribution to the sociological study of religion and to broader societal understandings of religion.

The paper which received this year's award is: Maxwell, Rahsaan and Erik Bleich. 2014. "What Makes Muslims Feel French?" *Social Forces* 93:155-179. This paper uses sophisticated methods to address an important and timely question that is highly relevant to the sociology of religion, while also providing a significant contribution the theoretical literature on group boundaries. The paper also presents an incisive demonstration of the public importance of the sociology of religion by providing research which, in the words of the authors, "speaks directly to debates about the integration of Muslims in France" and "contribute[s] to discussions about the integration of Muslims in Europe more broadly." In addition to a certificate, an award of $500 was split between the two authors. In addition, because the authors were not members of ASR, they were each awarded a one-year membership.

The committee would like to bring four items forth for the Council's consideration for future competitions:

1. *The question of online-only journals.* During the nomination period, a member of ASR wished to submit a paper published in a peer-reviewed journal, but the journal was online-only. The member asked that we expand the eligibility of the award to encompass papers published in online-only journals. After some discussion among committee members, we decided not to consider papers published in online-only journals for this year's award because we did not want to change the criteria during the middle of the submission period. It should also be said that there was a diversity of opinions among committee members in regards to the question of online-only journals. It was generally recognized by committee members that some online-only journals do publish good pieces, but there was also some question raised in regards to the rigor of

the peer-review process for other online journals. One suggestion was that criteria for the award be changed to focus on whether journals follow blind peer review, as opposed to whether they are online or print. Based on this, we recommend that the ASR Council consider at their next meeting whether to expand the eligibility for the distinguished paper award in future years to include online-only journals.

2. *The membership of award winners*. The guidelines for the award indicate that the recipients must be members of ASR, but this year neither author was a member. It was for this reason that a one-year membership was awarded to each author. We suggest that the Council codify that a one-year membership will be awarded to the winner(s), if membership is not pre-existing.

3. *Codification of the nominating process*. We suggest that the nomination process be made clearer, especially in that it be codified that the committee will scan articles from the six journals we examined, but also welcomes nominations, particularly from journals outside of these six journals.

4. *Increased external nominations*. In total, we received eight external nominations, including two from the same person. If external nominations are considered important, we suggest increased efforts should be made to publicize the call for nominations. In particular, starting in January, monthly email messages to the ASR membership focused on calling for nominations may be useful, as well as an additional message two weeks before the award's deadline.

2015 Distinguished Article Award Committee: Alex Bierman, Chair, aebierma@ucalgary.ca; Nicolette Manglos-Weber, Nicolette.D.Manglos.1@nd.edu; Mark Chaves, mac58@soc.duke.edu.

Lifetime Achievement Award Committee Report

July, 2015

TO: Officers and Members of Council of the Association for the Sociology of Religion
FROM: Rhys Williams, Chair
Re: Lifetime Achievement Award Committee Report

Proposal for: Lifetime Achievement Award for Contribution to the Sociology of Religion

Committee:
Amy Adamczyk, John Jay College, CUNY
Michele Dillon, University of New Hampshire
Rhys H. Williams, Loyola University Chicago (chair)

The committee deliberated over email, and heartily endorsed the idea of establishing a Lifetime Achievement Award. We considered a number of things that would need to be decided if such an award were established, such as eligibility, criteria for recipients, nomination process, composition and term of award committee, and the like. The committee came to agreement on several of these issues, and those recommendations are below in Section One. On a few issues, the committee felt there were strong arguments for a number of different directions and that it was best left to the first actual award committees to make the determination as to what practices in fact worked best. Those items are listed in Section Two.

Section One. Areas of Committee consensus.

1.   Naming the award
The committee concluded that it was best not to name the award itself, beyond the descriptive "Lifetime Achievement Award." Any given name risks unnecessarily excluding – for example, why Max Weber and not Emile Durkheim? Why Andrew Greeley and not Robert Bellah? The simple descriptive phrase itself was thought to be honor enough.

2.   Criteria for winning the award.

        a. The committee was in complete *agreement* that the main criterion for winning the Lifetime Achievement Award had to be "major intellectual contributions, theoretical or empirical, within the sociology of religion." That is, while contributions to other subdisciplinary fields could be important for consideration, contributions to the sociology of religion had to be the centerpiece.
        b. The committee agreed, however, that contributions to *the organization or professional thriving* of the sociology of religion could be an important, if secondary criterion. That is, organizational service (such as presidencies, journal editorships, etc.) or noted mentoring, should also be weighed by the Award Committee, with the ideal candidate combining scholarly, teaching, and service contributions. We agreed, however, that the scholarly was the most important factor.
        c. The committee agreed this award was to recognize a career or long period of contribution – thus most appropriate for a later period in one's career and considering a corpus of work as a whole.

4. Nomination process
        a. After considering a number of possible processes, the committee concluded with the simplest form: that any member of the Association could nominate a candidate by submitting a letter of nomination and an up-to-date c.v. of the nominee to the Award Committee. Members of the Award Committee may *not* nominate candidates during their tenure on the committee. Supporting letters from members other than the primary nominator are *not* encouraged.
        b. Once a person is nominated, that person's candidacy remains active for five (5) years and will be considered by the Award Committee each year during that period. A person may be re-nominated at the end of the five-year period.
        c. We did not think it necessary that the nominator get an expression of willingness to be nominated from the potential candidate prior to making the nomination.

4.   Award Committee Composition
The Award Committee should be an odd number of members – three makes sense and is probably easier than five. We agreed that they should serve on a staggered-term basis, and for three-year terms – with two years as a committee member and the final year as committee chair.

We agreed that Award Committee appointments made by the ASR President would be the most practical way to fill the committee. While the first Award Committee would require the President to make three appointments, each year thereafter would require that the President appoint only one new member.

Section two.   Area left undecided.

1.   Eligibility for award consideration.
Several questions emerged regarding eligibility.
        a. The committee was of the opinion that a nominee need *not* be a member of the Association to be eligible for consideration.
        b. The committee had differing opinions as to whether a person could be nominated if a member of the Award Committee or the ASR President had been a co-author, a student, or a mentor, of the nominee. On one hand this prohibits conflicts of interest, and having nominations active for five years and rotating committee members means that no potential candidate should have to wait more than a year or two to be eligible for nomination. On the other hand, a person with a large number of former students or co-authors (and thus perhaps most worthy of consideration) could find themselves waiting for a considerable period of time.
        c. The committee could not decide if there should be a temporal criteria for nomination. For example, the Baseball Hall of Fame only considers players after five years of retirement. That does not seem feasible. Alternatively, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame makes someone eligible 25 years after their first record. While measuring years since first publication seems relatively easy, what number of years? And is this even necessary to decide in the Award guidelines – could it just be left to individual Award Committees to determine from the available nominees (recognizing the intent to make this a career of lifetime award)?

In sum, the committee members strongly recommend the ASR Council act to establish a Lifetime Achievement Award for Contributions to the Sociology of Religion, and that the ASR President appoint an initial Award Committee. We further recommend that the Award be made publicly each year at the annual meeting.

We follow that primary recommendation with recommendations that the Award be organized according to the point that this committee agreed upon, supplemented with Council discussion and decision regarding the final points of open consideration.

ASSOCIATION FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION
INVESTMENT AND SPENDING POLICY

I: Investment Objective

The investment objective for the Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR) assets is to provide current income to support the programs of the Association and to achieve growth of principal and income over time that will preserve or increase purchasing power.

II: Asset Allocation

Based upon historical evidence that equity type investments have produced substantially greater returns net of inflation than returns from fixed-income investments such as bonds and money market securities, the primary emphasis should be on equity related investments, with fixed-income securities normally comprising no more than forty percent of investment assets.

III: Equity Investments

Equity investments will normally constitute sixty percent of the investment assets. The principal category of equity investments will normally be no-load or low-load mutual funds investing in high quality, investment grade stocks in companies that are financially sound and that have favorable prospects for earnings growth. The portfolio of investments may be made through a single mutual fund family or through separately managed funds with proven records of superior results over time.

IV: Fixed-Income Investments

Investments in fixed-income securities will not normally exceed forty percent of the investment assets as a long term guideline. These investments shall normally be made through the purchase of shares in investment grade no-load funds.

V: Tactical Asset Allocation

While the normal asset mix of investment securities shall be at or near the ratio of sixty percent equities to forty percent fixed-income securities, the actual market exposure to stock and bonds may vary from 0% to 100% on a shorter term basis through strategies normally referred to as tactical asset allocation. Such tactical asset allocation shall not be employed for the purpose of short-term market timing. Rather, the objective of tactical asset allocation is to make conservative re-allocations that will improve portfolio performance during major market trends.

VI: Statement of Social Responsibility

It shall be the objective of the Development Committee to invest in equities and fixed income securities that are in keeping with the objectives of ASR. To achieve this objective, it shall be the responsibility of the Development Committee to periodically review with its financial advisors the mutual fund families in which it invests and determine whether there are ways to invest in more socially responsible funds without placing the Association at financial risk.

VII: Spending Policy

It is the intention of this policy that investment returns shall equal or exceed the sum of spending from the assets plus inflation. Therefore, the general spending policy of ASR is to allocate to the support of its programs a share of investment assets that will permit maintaining or increasing the value of the investments over time adjusted for inflation.

In order to preserve current assets and assure for long range growth that will hedge against inflation, it shall be the policy of ASR to maintain a spending discipline that does not exceed 4% of the fair market value of the investments using a twelve quarter trailing average.

Whenever higher net-returns of the most recent twelve quarter trailing period exceed 4% and reliable forecasts project into the future net returns of greater than 4%, the Development Committee may recommend either a fix-sum dividend or an increase in the percent of monies available to the Executive Council for allocation to projects of ASR.

VIII: The Development Committee of the Association for the Sociology of Religion

The Development Committee, like other Standing Committees of ASR, shall consist of at least three members each of whom serves a three-year term. The President, at the end of his/her term, shall appoint a new member to succeed the member whose three-year term is expiring. The Executive Officer and President shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Development Committee.

The Development Committee shall have general responsibilities for reviewing the financial policies and practices of the Association and shall report such recommendations as they may periodically have to the Executive Officer and Executive Council.

The Development Committee is responsible for selecting an investment manager(s), supervising the investments, monitoring adherence to investment policy guidelines, at least once a year having a short-term consultation with an appropriate outside financial consultant, and recommending to Executive Council any changes in investment policies. The Executive Officer is responsible for timely execution of investment decisions and for forwarding financial statements to the Committee.