

Editor's Report August 2018– August 2019
Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review

August 1, 2019

Prepared by: Gerardo Martí (Davidson College)

I. Editor, Book Review Editor, Associate Editors, and Editorial Board (Institution/Date term ends)

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Gerardo Martí (Davidson College/December 2020)

Editor Elect:

Joseph O. Baker (East Tennessee State University/December 2020)

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Associate Editors:

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Penny Edgell (University of Minnesota/December 2020)

Daniel A. Winchester (Purdue University/December 2020)

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Daniel V.A. Olson (Purdue University/December 2021)

Rachel Rinaldo, (University of Colorado/December 2020)

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Iddo Tavory (New York University/December 2019)

Jeremy Uecker (Baylor University/December 2020)

R. Stephen Warner (University of Illinois, Chicago/December 2020)

Editor Elect: Through a search process conducted through the Publications Committee (John Bartkowski, Chair; Joy Charlton, and Christopher Ellison), I am pleased that Joseph O. Baker will become the next Editor in Chief of SOR. As current Editor, I was consulted regarding the process and briefly reviewed the applications. I found that Joseph Baker is the only applicant to be invited to review for the journal. Since 2010, he accepted 32 out of 33 requests and is indicated as having the highest rating for quality and speed possible for reviewers. In other words, he is a truly excellent reviewer. Baker is also the only applicant to have served on the Editorial Board of the journal, first under Scott Scheiman, then, after an absence and due to a combination of his expertise and the quality/speed of his reviews, was asked to serve again by Gerardo Martí. I believe he has served four 3-year terms total. My own experience with Baker as a reviewer and Editorial Board member provides further affirmation of the excellence and professionalism he would bring to the role. When I read through Baker's materials, I am deeply impressed that, of all the candidates, Baker appears to be the only applicant to understand the mission and scope of the journal, to have a clearly stated and fully appropriate vision for the future of the journal, and to possess an adequate grasp of how to secure the gains of the journal so far, while forcefully stating his commitment to carry those gains even further. I believe we are very fortunate to have his skills and dedication, and we should expect great things from his editorship. He will serve as Editor Elect during my last year and will become Editor in Chief in January 2021. I will move to a new one-year position created by ASR, Consulting Editor, which guarantees my accessibility and assistance to the new Editor in the first year of full service to the journal.

Associate Editors: The continuing Associate Editors—Penny, Kevin, and Dan—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. Dan is to be thanked for his many efforts for promotion and dissemination of published research. I remain convinced of the value of Dan's role and hope that future editors will continue to dedicate an associate editor for dissemination and promotion of our publications a high priority—even if the nature of the tasks require to accomplish this role will likely change in the future.

Book Review Editor: Grace continues to be outstanding in her role for the journal. In addition to “regular” reviews, Grace has been soliciting “featured book reviews” that are longer and more substantive. The featured essay differs from a typical book review in two ways: 1) they are slightly longer (2000-2500 words), and 2) rather than following the typical summary/evaluation format that focuses solely on the book's content, the essay reflects on the state of related theory and research and how the book contributes to those areas of knowledge (e.g. more like a review essay in *Contemporary Sociology*, but focused on a single book rather than several). Grace and I are open to your feedback on these featured review essays. I am extremely happy with their depth and hope they become the “new normal.”

Editorial Board: More than any other qualities, the willingness to respond quickly and provide detailed reviews and recommendations for other reviewers are most appreciated from Editorial Board members, and the board members continue to be responsive and helpful. Over my time of service, I have recruited many new board members. In general, I strive to recruit board members who have already demonstrated excellence in reviewing for the journal; in particular, I seek 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 am especially interested in recruiting scholars that diversify institutional representation and compliment the expertise of the existing board. I also seek to balance quantitative and qualitative methodological expertise, to include a broad range of research specialties, to consider diversity in the length of tenure in their scholarship, as well as consider other issues like gender balance and geographic breadth. I consistently draw on scholars well beyond my own circle of relationships. I do still find that international scholars who would provide timely, thorough, rigorous, and sociologically-relevant reviews are a challenge to locate or to gain commitment. I continue making an effort to stagger invitations of new members to more evenly spread the terms of board members. To that effort – and as I had planned – I will allow 3-5 current members to complete their terms and will be recruiting 3-5 more board members whose terms would begin in January 2020, therefore their term would expire December 2022.

ASR Executive Officer: Rachel Kraus, continues to deserve high praise for her gracious and responsive work in relation to the journal and to the varied and important issues related to my editorship. The role of Executive Officer involves largely unseen service to the journal, and Rachel’s work over the past year is very much appreciated.

Publisher Relationships: OUP staff has become more transparent about their production processes and the communication between myself and OUP has been very good. They are sufficiently attentive to me and Grace, and they worked hard to maintain confidence in the production process. I am grateful to Michael Blong and Sarah Cooper, as well as Jill Dwiggins for all aspects of the production process.

Also, in the interest of finding ways to maintain and possibly build our Impact Factor, I again accelerated the production schedule by about two weeks in 2019, making the appearance of articles two weeks earlier than before. This acceleration of production schedule began in 2018 with good result. Effectively, the Autumn issue should release just before our annual ASR meetings and the Winter issue should be released while students and faculty are still in classes, which means they may be able to refer to the journal for writing they accomplish during the Winter break. It gives more time for attention to be drawn to articles in the journal, hopefully resulting in more citations earlier. It also will help compensate for unexpected delays in publishing issues, which is not anticipated but only stated as a possible contingency.

II. Manuscript Flow

The journal continues to be highly selective in accepting manuscripts. In 2018-2019 there was a slight decrease in overall submissions from the previous year, which is in line with general expectations. Also, generally speaking I have tried to restrain the number of second “Revise and Resubmits.” I have also worked to be conscious of any backlog of “Advance Access” articles.

The overall selectivity of the journal remains very high, with an acceptance rate of **9.5%**. I view this slight decrease in acceptance rate (from 12.4% last year, 16.6%, previous to that, 11.7% and 8.3% further back) as within “normal” range. Although some say that very low acceptance rates could discourage potential authors from submitting, this does not seem to be occurring over my tenure as Editor.

Overall, the slight increase in submissions alongside a slight decrease in acceptance rate seems to affirm two things: 1) the journal continues to be an attractive venue for publication, and 2) the quality of the manuscripts is generally higher than when I began my tenure.

- 179 manuscripts in total (new and revised submissions) were processed on or after August 1, 2018. The total for the previous year was (previous was 174, the year before 154). This is well within the “expected” range of submissions during my tenure.
- 150 original (new) manuscripts with a submission date on or after August 1, 2018—an increase of 17 from the previous year (13% increase).
 - Of the 142 that have editorial decisions, 130 were rejected (92%, a higher percentage compared to 76% last year), 10 were given “major revision” status (7%, down from 20% last year), and 2 were given “minor revision” status (1.4%, down from 4% last year). No manuscripts were accepted outright this year.
- 29 revised manuscripts with a submission date on or after August 1, 2018—a decrease of 13 from the previous year.
 - Of the 27 revised manuscripts that have decisions: 16 were accepted (59%, slightly higher than 54% last year), zero were given “major revision” status—that is, a second “major revision” (0%, down from 7%), 10 were given “minor revision” status (37%, slightly up from 32% last year), and 1 was rejected (4%, slightly down from 7% last year).
- Of all manuscripts that received an editorial decision on or after August 1, 2018, **9.5% (16/169) were accepted** (this includes the Furfey Lecture and Presidential Address), slightly down from 12.4% last year.

III. Time from Submission to Editorial Decision

Every year, I write how I have given my responsibilities with the journal top priority, and I devote nearly daily time to editorship of the journal. I believe it is not possible to process manuscripts faster. In addition, I continue to find that any significant lag times are due to waiting for reviewers to respond to invitations and to turn in their evaluation of manuscripts. These times are unlikely to grow shorter, rather they might increase—at least slightly. I continue to reach out to scholars who are not part of usual circles, and I continue to expand the reviewer database with scholars whose expertise would benefit the journal. I have also been a bit more patient in waiting for scholars to respond to invitations (they now receive 3 separate emails for any manuscript invitation) and for evaluations (up to 4 weeks past the overdue date).

Overall, I am pleased to report that decision times continue to be very fast, and the great majority of decisions on all manuscripts are made within three months. In very few unusual cases, the wait times for decisions have been longer; however, it is difficult to fully assess how much this is balanced by the rapid rejection of inappropriate submissions (i.e., *desk rejections*) and how much these decisions “throw off” the averages. By whatever angle I assess it, the evidence suggests that the time between submission and decision remains remarkably efficient. Also, anecdotal evidence suggests that active scholars have been motivated to submit to the journal in part due to their understanding that the management of manuscripts is highly efficient. Indeed, I consider the efficient times from submission to editorial decision a significant and continuing achievement of my editorship – especially since I still typically assign four reviewers per original manuscript, and the quality of the reviewers assigned is typically very high.

- Among new submissions, all editorial decisions were sent back to authors within 4 to 12 weeks of the submission date.
 - Rejected manuscripts (aside from inappropriate submissions which are rejected very quickly) averaged 19 days from submission date to editorial decision date. This compares to 24 days last year.
 - “Major revision” decisions averaged 63 days from submission date to decision (compares to 49 days last year).
 - “Minor revision” decisions averaged 8 days (compares to 20 days last year).
- Among revised submissions,
 - “Accepted” decisions average 14 days (same as last year) from submission to decision. This number, however, conceals a bifurcated distribution with few in-between times; more specifically, the broad number averages longer times (50 days) and very short times (3 days). Still, even with longer times, many manuscripts receive very quick decisions based on minor revisions or offers of conditional acceptance.
 - “Minor revision” (a 2nd R&R or “conditional acceptance”) decisions average lag is 37 days (compared to 41 days last year).
 - There were no “Major revision” decisions (a 2nd R&R) this year.
 - The only “Reject” decision lag was 20 days (compared to an average lag of 48 days last year).
- The time from acceptance to publication online in Advance Access generally remains approximately 4 – 5 weeks; with occasional glitches that can be up to 3 months. The lag from Advance Access to print had lengthened slightly to roughly 6 - 12 months, yet I expect that to decrease significantly in the coming year to 3 - 6 months. Decisions were made without regard to potential lag from acceptance to publication. As long as wait times to print are less than 12 months, I believe this is acceptable and may indeed be advantageous in allowing citations for articles before they appear in print – which directly benefits our Impact Factor. Also, I have received no complaints from authors regarding lag time to full publication.

IV. Impact Factor

Summary of Impact: The impact factor went up again this past year from 1.556 to 1.576. This again continues SOR meeting or surpassing the “1.0” level on the impact factor rating for a seventh year. (To provide a familiar point of comparison, JSSR is moving up again from 1.097 vs 1.270 and RRR

continues to climb up from .776 to .981 during this same period.) Also, The 5-year Impact Factor is now 2.357, a significant increase (compare with JSSR 2.186 and RRR 1.141), The impact factor of SOR remains **highly favorable in relation to our comparison journals**.

SOR ranks 57 out of 148 in Impact Factor in the Sociology journals category of the ISI rankings. (In comparison, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* ranks 78 out of 148 in Impact Factor in the same rankings.) The 5-year Impact Factor of 2.357 ranks Sociology of Religion 46 out of 148 sociology journals. (Last year, the 5-year impact factor was 2.0, ranking 46 out of 143 sociology journals.)

Like previous editors, I am committed to do what I can to see that the increase in visibility and impact continues. For example, I strongly endorsed the electronic distribution of TOC and Advance Access Articles to all ASR Members because the sooner others are aware of newly published scholarship, the sooner they will be cited. I thank Rachel Kraus for regularly including links to SOR's most recent issue of the journal in our email announcements.

However, I note that JSSR in the past has outpaced SOR, and **I would not be surprised if JSSR's Impact Factor would continue a fast rise compared to SOR in the coming years**. It is my belief that the interdisciplinary nature of JSSR brings the journal a larger variety of readers compared to SOR, drawing the potential for additional citations. In brief, should JSSR rise higher than SOR, it is not a failing of the journal leadership but instead a return to a pattern that had been there before the term of my own editorship. The Impact Factor has been sensitive to the efficiency of manuscript processing, and, as long as JSSR leadership stays on track, it will likely continue. In the meantime, I am confident that SOR leadership will do what it can to push the favorability toward citations using a variety of means.

I am especially appreciative of OUP's marketing team for working to allow and promote more "Free Articles" as well as widely promote recent publications through the Twitter feeds, as well as inviting authors to submit blog posts to their widely read site that draw more attention to their article and, consequently, to our journal. Associate Editor Dan Winchester has been diligent in keeping up a steady flow of attention through social media.

I continue to appreciate the new (and good) work of our Associate Editor, Daniel Winchester. I remind you that this role was created in 2017 to disseminate newly published work of the journal. Dan has taken over my own work previous to this by devoting exclusive time to partner with OUP and authors in widely promoting new articles. Dan also agreed to start up a "Sociology of Religion Podcast" with authors of recent articles, an experiment in finding new ways to draw attention to our most recent articles. As anticipated, we are seeing the benefits to the Impact Factor.

Other initiatives to promote visibility (and citation) this past year include:

- More frequent rotation of "Free Articles" of recent publications from the journal on our OUP home page
- Working with OUP's marketing to promote the journal and specific articles through their many electronic venues, in addition to "Advance Access" and banner features
- Special features of papers and collections of papers through OUP's twitter and blog pages.
- Calls for Papers for Special Topics (which has included invited essays published in 74.4, "Dissertations in Progress" and "Does Social Theory Need Religion?")
- As of May 2016, regularly publishing a Twitter feed of recently published articles @SORJournal
- As of October 2017, a regular production of the Sociology of Religion Podcast, featuring interviews with authors of recently published articles.
- Associate Editor Dan Winchester working with authors directly to promote their work broadly in partnership with OUP.

More detail:

Sociology of Religion:

The 2018 (latest) impact factor is 1.576

2009 = .56

2010 = .91
2011 = .86
2012 = 1.08
2013 = 1.667
2014 = 1.00
2015 = 1.217
2016 = 1.370
2017 = 1.556

Comparison with JSSR:

The 2018 (latest) impact factor is 1.270

2009 = .92
2010 = 1.34
2011 = 1.34
2012 = 1.39
2013 = 1.15
2014 = .958
2015 = 1.231
2016 = 1.09
2017 = 1.097

Comparison with RRR:

The 2017 (latest) impact factor is .981

2009 = .29
2010 = .47
2011 = .45
2012 = .34
2013 = .50
2014 = .406
2015 = .414
2016 = .585
2017 = .776

V. Final Considerations

Impact factor and the number of articles per issue: We typically publish 18-20 articles per year, a figure that does not include Featured Book Reviews, Book Reviews, or ASR Announcements. Our annual page budgets from OUP will not allow more than what we are doing now. If the number of articles expands in Advance Access in the coming months, I will publish an additional article or two per issue to avoid excessive lag times from acceptance to publication in a paginated issue. The caution regarding adding more articles per issue is to avoid placing excessive burden on the Impact Factor (since each article adds to the need to have articles cited at a higher number). I caution any future editors to limit additional articles without some consideration of the effect on the Impact Factor.

Of course, I am happy to have sustained a strong Impact Factor because I believe that it generates pride in authors who successfully publish and therefore promote their work and that it seems to encourage higher quality submissions. However, everyone should be cautioned that the Impact Factor cannot be predicted or controlled. A “dip” could happen, even when editorial practices have been consistent.

I continue to be generally pleased with the quality of the journal, and I am glad to see the mix of topics, methodologies, and author seniority in submissions. In addition, I am especially pleased with the full editorial team in place.

Everyone associated with the journal is encouraged to actively CITE journal articles published in the previous year in their own journal articles. My motto: CITE EARLY, CITE OFTEN.

OUP production lags: We have had very few production lags. Production processes have improved greatly over the last couple of years.

ASR Board Planning for Editorial Transition: As I complete my second term as Editor in Chief, I am very pleased with the work of the ASR Board and Publications Committee for transitioning my role. It has been the practice of the journal to have the first year of the new editor overlap a last “transition” year by the Editor – which means that 2020 would be an “apprentice year” involving both the outgoing editor remaining “on the clock” while the new, incoming editor “learns the ropes.” The practice of apprenticeship of the last two editors (at least) has been essential for the incoming editor to understand the technical workings of Manuscript Central, the publishing relationships with OUP, the recruiting of a new editorial team (Associate Editors, Book Review Editor, and new Editorial Board Members), and the ability to adjust and anticipate the many less obvious tasks and issues that arise in leading the journal.

With the new Editor-Elect, the rough schedule for transition is the following:

Fall 2019: Announce Editor-Elect for 2020

January - March 2020: Editor-Elect Establish Editorial Team

April – December 2020: Orientation, Training, and Apprenticeship of Editor-Elect with Outgoing Editor

January 2021 – December 2023: New Editor Term of Service

I continue to welcome your feedback.

Department of Sociology
College of Liberal & Fine Arts

August 1, 2019

TO: Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR) Executive Officer and Council
FR: ASR Publications Committee

John Bartkowski (Chair), Joy Charlton, and Christopher Ellison

RE: Publications Committee 2019 Annual Report

Dear ASR EO and Council:

The Publications Committee is pleased to provide its annual report. The committee generated a detailed Call for Editor document that provided a context for the position (e.g., journal standing) and expectations related to it (e.g., editor duties) as well as required application components and a description of the review process. Once approved, the call was posted online, along with email notifications to all ASR members. The committee chair sent personal solicitation emails to approximately two dozen colleagues who current *Sociology of Religion* Editor, Gerardo Marti, and committee members identified as excellent prospective applicants.

The committee, in concert with the immensely helpful input of Gerardo Marti, reviewed the four applications that were received. Joseph O. Baker, Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at East Tennessee State University, was unanimously recommended by the committee and was subsequently offered the position of Editor of *Sociology of Religion*. As outlined in the previously submitted written report of our committee deliberations, Professor Baker's application materials showed a detailed understanding of the responsibilities of the position, demonstrated an exemplary publication record in the field and review record as an Editorial Board member, and brought considerable institutional resources to the position. In short, his application was exemplary.

Going forward, we recommend that ASR store all of our committee's documents on an ASR-designated secure cloud drive within an editor search folder to foster institutional memory with respect to editor searches. Access to that drive should be restricted, of course, and this folder would not include any applications. We believe that future searches, hopefully not needed for quite some time, would be facilitated by having such documents available. We would have found previous search documents quite useful. Thanks to all who supported our efforts!

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President's Report
Association for the Sociology of Religion
August 2019

Perhaps every presidential term has its own distinct challenges and opportunities. This year (2018-19) has been no different. Until last August, I had not foreseen that the coming year would include a search

for a new journal editor, another program chair, a review and recommendation process for Executive Officer contract renewal, matters of professionalism needing to be addressed that weren't adequately covered by the ASA Code of Ethics (to which ASR subscribes), escalating food and beverage costs that forced some difficult decisions affecting our program amenities, and much more. It certainly has been an interesting time.

Adding to the regular work of the Standing Committees, three ad hoc committees were convened at the direction of last year's Council meetings: an ad hoc Committee on Professionalism, an ad hoc Executive Review Committee, and an ad hoc Committee on Student Involvement. Each has submitted a report to Council. Thanks to a proactive and highly efficient Executive Officer, Rachel Kraus, to a Past President (Dan Olson) and President-Elect (Jim Cavendish) as well as (graduate student) Nicole Frame willing to chair ad hoc committees for which there was no precedent, an engaged Council, standing committees that effectively carried on their work, and members deeply embedded within ASA who could provide wise counsel as well as help us achieve two joint sessions, a joint welcome reception, and a joint professional development mentoring session for graduate students and new professional scholars (special thanks to Melissa Wilde, Lisa Pearce, Rhys Williams, Richard Wood, J.E. Sumerau and several others), the year has been deeply gratifying and rich in achievement, which is set forth in other reports. This work has added to ASR's strength for the future.

I would like to add a few comments regarding the Ad Hoc Committee on Student Involvement's report. It did not see the need for a standing committee, but instead it recommended a periodic ad hoc committee to offer fresh suggestions regarding involvement. This year's committee was clear that the topics of interest to the students with whom they contacted were different from those that regular members initially thought about proposing for a student-oriented session. To maximize graduate student engagement, their involvement in designing sessions of interest is important for future programs as well. Personally, I see other mutual advantages for regular visible graduate student input.

In sum, I would like to offer two advisory recommendations:

- In years when no ad hoc student committee is convened, the president would appoint an ad hoc graduate student liaison to consult with the program chair and also with other graduate students as to what might attract interest and participation. The liaison also could serve as a communications focal point regarding other student matters and ASR leadership.
- ASR should continue to solicit joint participation with ASA wherever feasible. The extent of doing so varies from year to year, especially depending on the interests of ASA. During those years when joint sessions at the ASA-wide level are not possible, perhaps working with the ASA Religion Section might open up other possibilities to explore. The differing strengths of each association, when brought into collaboration, strengthen the visibility and vitality of the field of sociology of religion overall.

As I near the end of my presidential year, I'm grateful for the opportunity to have served and am confident that President-Elect Jim Cavendish will provide strong and significant leadership ahead.

Paula Nesbitt, President

Graduate Student Committee Chair Report
Nicole Frame

This Ad hoc committee was gathered from volunteer Graduate Student members of the Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR) on the premise to outline and engender ideas for the ASR council with the goal of 1) increasing Graduate Student membership to the ASR and 2) increasing participation and attendance of Graduate Students at the annual ASR meeting. This committee consisted of four members as follows: Nicole Frame (Chair), Amanda Hernandez, Landon Schnabel, and Cory Steele. The committee members met over phone conference to discuss ideas and communicated via email.

In discussion the committee decided on four primary avenues for fulfilling our goals. First, to address the goal of increasing participation and attendance of Graduate Students at the

conference, we determined methods of creating an environment that the Graduate Students would benefit from professionally. We came to the conclusion that networking and education were the two best methods. Education in this context referring to panels and other sessions during the conference aimed at helping and education Graduate Students interested in the Sociology of Religion. We believed that as the Sociology of Religion is a relatively small field compared to other topics (gender, race, health, etc) that many Graduate Students may not be getting exposed to certain topics if their Universities do not have a Sociologist of Religion present.

Second, in conjunction with these sessions, we believed networking would also be a critical part in encouraging Graduate Students to attend and return to the ASR conference. While the ASR conferences have social gatherings at the end of each conference day many social ties and groups have been formed over the years which can then be difficult for new, young members to break into. Therefore, similar to the Women's Mixer, we proposed that a Graduate Student Mixer be put onto the schedule so Graduate Students can more easily meet the peers they will be engaging with in the field for many years to come.

The third avenue is also related to networking for Graduate Students, however, instead of building networks of future peers we believe that it is also critical for Graduate Students to be engaged in networks with those that have been in the field for some time. This again is especially necessary for those students whose primary Universities do not have someone who is knowledgeable about the Sociology of Religion. Therefore, we believed that some sort of outreach program to gather new Graduate Students as members and to help those Graduate Students already a part of ASR maintain their interest and become better invested should be created.

Finally, we believed that it was important that Graduate Students be aware of the opportunities the ASR already presents to them. This is mostly seen in the travel funds that are granted each year to Graduate Students and foreign members of ASR. Two members of this committee were not receiving the monthly newsletter from ASR which included information on the travel fund application and we believe this might be an issue for others, both Graduate Students and not, as well.

From these four primary ideas and with review from the council it was determined that at the ASR conference 2019 there would be two items enacted. It was decided that ASR and the Religion division of the ASA would co-sponsor a Graduate Student Luncheon to better facilitate networking opportunities for Graduate Students with their peers and current members of the field. Along with this a Graduate Student Mixer, approved but not hosted by the ASR, would be held at a bar/pub outside of the conference hotel as an informal social gathering of Graduate Students. Also, the Graduate Student Committee would put together ideas and an outline for a Graduate Student focused panel session to be submitted to Holly Folk for inclusion in the program. The Graduate Student Committee created an outline of topics for the panel discussing: 1) publishing sociology of religion research in non-sociology of religion journals, 2) how to engage those not studying the sociology of religion about your research, and 3) how to develop a reputation beyond the sociology of religion. The committee presented this outline to Holly Folk who gathered panelists to speak on these issues and put the session on the schedule to be moderated by the committee chair.

As the committee chair, I would now like to speak to the efficacy and sustainability of the Graduate Student Committee. It is my opinion that this committee had a wide range of opinions and ideas when it came to helping make the ASR better for Graduate Students; all committee members were Graduate Students in different stages of their programs or recent Graduate Students and represented ethnic and gender diversity. In speaking with the committee we agreed that this committee was helpful in having our voices heard, however, we also believe that the future usefulness of this committee is limited. Where we do see the committee's future usefulness is, if the Graduate Student focused panels has positive feedback and they are continued in future years, it would be prudent to have a Graduate Student Committee outlining the topics that they find most useful. If the panels are not effective then the Graduate Student committee has little use as all other recommendations can be performed without a committee. We do recommend that a Graduate Student Committee is convened biennially or triennially to

see if the current Graduate Students of the new committee have any recommendations to add.

Report of the Nominations Committee
For the August 2019 Annual Meetings of the
Association for the Sociology of Religion
New York City, New York

Membership of the Committee: Dan Olson (Past-President), James Richardson, and Janet Jacobs

Committee Activity:

1. During the fall semester of 2018 and running into the end of December, the committee conferred by e-mail and selected a list of potential nominees for the various positions.
2. Shortly after New Year's Day I began contacting people to determine their willingness to run for office.
3. By the end of January 2019 we were able to assemble a slate of candidates for election (see list below) along with short biographies for each candidate and "vision statements" for the two Presidential Candidates. We passed on this information to Rachel Krause, Executive Officer who made it available for online voting.
4. At the end of March the elections were completed and I contacted the winners (see results below).

Questions Asked of Potential Nominees:

This year we asked potential nominees to agree to a number of statements prior to putting their names on the ballot.

1. You affirm that you have recently read and that you agree that you can fulfill the “Duties of Officers” for ASR as found at <https://www.sociologyofreligion.com/about/duties-of-officers/> paying special attention to the position for which you are being considered for nomination.
2. You affirm that you anticipate having the time available to fulfill these duties and specifically that during your term you will be able to attend the two Council meetings held just before and just after the annual meetings of ASR held each August in conjunction with the ASA meetings. If you are elected you would be expected to attend the Council meeting just after the end of the ASR conference this coming August (probably the early morning of August 14th), but you are also invited to attend the Council meeting the day before the ASR conference sessions begin (either on August 10th or 11th). You also affirm that you will read and respond to emails throughout the year related to your responsibilities of office.
3. You will maintain your status as a member of ASR throughout your term of office.
4. You affirm that you have recently read and agree to abide by the ASA code of ethics <http://www.asanet.org/code-ethics>. Article 2 of the ASR Constitution and bylaws affirms this code of ethics, see <https://www.sociologyofreligion.com/about/constitution-and-by-laws/>.
5. You know of no personal issue or impediment to serving as an officer for ASR that could compromise the integrity of ASR.

Why these questions? The first three questions arose out of a concern to make sure that incoming Council members and officers fully understood the duties of officers outlined in our bylaws, especially attendance at Council meetings.

The last two questions arose as a temporary solution/response to concerns discussed at the 2018 ASR Council meeting and parallel concerns at ASA with regard especially to issues of past harassment and sexual harassment. Given that the ASR Council had not yet, at the time of election nomination process, passed any motions with regard to how such issues should be handled, ASR President Paula Nesbitt suggested that we use the language of the last two questions to begin to protect ASR from future claims (and potential legal liability) that we took no actions to avoid electing officers who might be discovered to have committed past serious violations of the ASA code of ethics (which the ASR Constitution affirms) including sexual harassment. My personal opinion is that these last two questions may not be the final solution that the Council may settle on but these questions seem like a good first step until the ASR Council provides nominations committees with specific guidance.

Responses to these Questions: The only concerns raised by potential nominees were with regard to question 2. A number of potential nominees (both from the U.S. and from other countries) declined to accept the nomination due to difficulties committing to attending eight council meetings (the second Council meeting in 2019, both Council meetings in 2020, 2021, and 2022, and the first council meeting in 2023). The main problem was in committing to attend BOTH the first and the second council meetings associated with each annual meeting (as outlined in the duties of officers). This was not

the only reason that people declined to be nominated, but it was critical for a few people.

Election Slate and Winners:

Candidates for President Elect

Jim Spickard (elected)

Stuart Wright

Candidates for Three Open Council Seats

Gary J. Adler, Jr.
Besheer Mohamed (elected)
Rachel Rinaldo (elected)
Jörg Stolz
Geneviève Zubrzycki (elected)

Candidates for Secretary

Maureen K. Day
Tia Noelle Pratt (elected)

We made significant efforts to try to balance the nominees with regard to gender (including male nominees for Secretary), race, and international and domestic location. However, due to the fact that many people declined to be nominated (for a variety of reasons) the final slate (especially for President and Secretary) was less balanced than the list of people we contacted about their willingness to be nominated.

Respectfully Submitted

Dan Olson
Chair, Nominations Committee
Past President

Report of Ad Hoc Committee on Professionalism
Association for Sociology of Religion Annual Council Meetings
New York City, New York
August 2019

Background

Following a resolution passed by the ASR Council on August 11, 2018, the Ad Hoc Committee on Professionalism was formed to develop recommendations to present to the 2019 Council. The charge to the committee was to clarify:

- 1) the association's position on matters of sexual harassment and sexual assault,
- 2) processes and actions that the association will or may undertake regarding situations where violation of the ASA Code of Ethics (ASR Constitution, Article II) have occurred or been alleged,
- 3) any additional steps or scrutiny that ASR officers, Council members, election nominees, and possibly others should undergo.

At the 2018 Council Meeting a motion was also passed requesting that the ASR executive officer, Rachel Kraus, should look into obtaining insurance coverage that would protect ASR and its officers in the event of a lawsuit.

ASR now has purchased insurance of this type. Rachel has agreed to discuss this insurance coverage as part of her Executive Officer's report.

Membership of the Committee: 2019 President, Paula Nesbitt appointed the members of the committee: Committee Chair, Dan Olson (ASR Past-President), Jim Cavendish (ASR President-Elect), Paula Nesbitt (ASR President), Rhys Williams, Mary Jo Neitz, and Lori Beaman.

Committee Activities

Shortly after the committee was formed, the committee determined that it would be unwise to establish major policies that were not congruent with policies that had *already* been established by the American Sociological Association (ASA). As chair of the committee, I, Dan Olson, first communicated with Rhys Williams who is a member of the ASA Council, the body making final decisions on ASA policies. Later I also communicated with Nancy Kidd, ASA Executive Officer. These conversations were helpful in determining what policy decisions ASA had already made and what policy decisions might be forthcoming.

ASA Council passed a number of policies in 2017 and 2018. (Some of the motions our committee is proposing below are related to analogous policies passed by ASA.) Originally it appeared that at their Spring 2019 Council meeting the ASA Council would pass additional measures related to harassment and sexual harassment. However, these measures were delayed for further consideration at the August 2019 ASA Council meeting. At the end of this report I briefly mention some of the topics that ASA is still considering that ASR may need to consider in the near future. I also mention topics which ASA may not be planning to address but about which we may need to determine some policies.

Proposed Motions

In this section I list five motions proposed by members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Professionalism (hereafter, the Ad Hoc Committee or simply, the committee). Because time is limited during our Council meeting, and because some of these proposed motions may require more time for discussion, I have grouped the motions into two groups followed by a group of issues that are not covered by these motions and will have to be dealt with in the future.

The first group has three proposed motions that seem rather uncontroversial. I believe we can move forward with them during the Council meetings this August.

1. Extend the existence of the Ad Hoc Committee on Professionalism by at least one year.
2. Publicly reaffirm to all ASR members that ASR affirms the anti-harassment language that is part of the ASA Code of Ethics.
3. Membership and membership renewals shall require checkbox affirmation of the ASA code of ethics including section 6 on harassment.

The second group contain motions that either could be debated and voted via e-mail on after the council meeting or delayed for one year.

4. Checkbox agreement with Annual Meeting policies required for Annual Meeting registration and participation
5. Nominees for election, appointments, and awards affirm two statements. Three sub-motions, A. for nominees for election to office, B. for nominees for awards. C. for nominators of others eligible for awards.

Other issues that will need to be addressed (or may not need to be addressed) by Council in the future. I comment on issues related to each of these topics near the end of this report.

- A. How will ASR respond to accusations of harassment committed by people who have recently received awards from ASR or people who currently hold elected, appointed, or other positions of responsibility in ASR?
- B. How will ASR respond to accusations of past harassment committed by a conference participant (presenter, discussant, panelist, speaker) who is already on the preliminary program?
- C. Prior to the construction of the preliminary program, how should the Program Chair respond to paper abstracts from, or other proposals for program participation by, persons accused of past harassment?

Note that while the entire committee weighed in on the topics underlying all but the first of these proposed motions, after reading committee members' comments, I, Dan Olson, composed the wording of these motions as they appear below. In the process, I separated some issues into separate motions that were not separately discussed by the committee. Council, of course, is free to amend this wording.

Motions that we Should be able to vote on during the Council meeting

1. Extend the existence of the Ad Hoc Committee on Professionalism by at least one year

Proposed Motion: The Ad Hoc Committee on Professionalism should continue to function at least until the 2020 ASR Council meeting.

Rationale: As noted above, the committee believes it is important to follow the lead of ASA in these matters because A) our Constitution states that ASR endorses the ASA code of ethics, B) ASA has lawyers to advise them in terms of the prudence of competing policy options and by mimicking ASA policy ASR can (where appropriate) take advantage of what ASA has discerned in their policymaking process, and C) if ASR policies are challenged in a court case, ASR is able to claim that our policies follow the accepted practice of the dominant organization in our organizational field.

Since ASA has not finished determining its policies regarding a number of important issues concerning harassment and sexual harassment, the ASR Ad Hoc Committee cannot complete its task until sometime after the August 2019 Council meeting.

2. Publicly reaffirm to all ASR members that ASR affirms the anti-harassment language that is part of the ASA Code of Ethics.

Proposed Motion: Following the August 2019 Annual Meetings, ASR will send an e-mail to all current members (and/or use other suitably public ways of communicating with members such as posting on ASR webpages). The main topic of this e-mail/message will be to remind and inform members that the ASR Constitution includes an affirmation of the ASA code of ethics including part 6 on harassment (which should be quoted in the e-mail/message). The e-mail message will also include a description of other motions/policy decisions relating to harassment and sexual harassment that Council passed at the August 2019 Annual Meeting. The final text of this e-mail/message should be approved by a majority vote of the Council (vote could be by e-mail).

Rationale and related information: As noted above, part of the Ad Hoc Committee's charge is to clarify the association's position on matters of sexual harassment and sexual assault. Because Article 2 of the ASR Constitution and bylaws affirms the entire ASA code of ethics, ASR thereby also affirms part 6 of the ASA code of ethics, the paragraph on harassment which reads:

6. Harassment

Sociologists do not engage in harassment of any person, including colleagues, students, supervisees, employees, staff, or research participants. Harassment consists of a single intense and severe act or multiple persistent acts, any of which are demeaning, abusive, offensive, or create a hostile professional or workplace environment. Harassment may include unnecessary, exaggerated, or unwarranted scrutiny or attack, whether verbal or non-verbal. Sexual harassment may include unwanted sexual solicitation, physical advance, or verbal or non-verbal conduct that is sexual in nature. Acts of harassment can be based on age, race, socioeconomic status and socioeconomic origins, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, health conditions, political affiliation, marital status, domestic status, parental status, or any other applicable basis proscribed by law.

Sending communications of this type to all ASR members follows the precedent of ASA. In the fall of 2018 ASA sent a message to all their members concerning the position of ASA regarding harassment and sexual harassment (<https://www.asanet.org/message-sexual-misconduct-asa-council>) and outlined decisions/policies that the ASA council had already passed as well as issues that had not yet been resolved.

Not only does such a message provide the justification for specific policies that we may possibly adopt, but it also communicates the seriousness with which ASR views issues of harassment and sexual harassment.

3. Membership and membership renewals shall require checkbox affirmation of the ASA code of ethics including section 6 on harassment.

Proposed Motion: As soon as technically possible following the August 2019 Annual Meetings, the ASR web pages for joining or renewing membership in ASR will include a checkbox indicating that the prospective member has recently read and affirms the ASA code of ethics and, in particular, section 6 on harassment. A link to a copy of the ASA code of ethics will be provided for the convenience of prospective members so they can read the code ethics prior to affirming it. New or renewing memberships will not be allowed unless this box is checked.

Rationale: Requiring this step at the point of first membership and membership renewal is another way of publicizing ASR's position on these issues. It alerts all members to the kinds of behavior that ASR expects of its members. Finally, because all members are required to knowingly affirm the ASA code of ethics, this requirement provides further justification and rationale for other policies and actions ASR may take based on a commitment to this code of ethics.

Some might object that if this motion is approved without alteration, it would mean that even members who never attend an Annual Meeting, but only join to get the journal would have to make these affirmations. Also, people who join ASR in order to submit a manuscript for consideration by the journal *Sociology of Religion* would also need to make the affirmation.

Motions that could be delayed until after the August 2019 meeting

4. Checkbox agreement with Annual Meeting policies required for Annual Meeting registration and participation

Proposed Motion: Beginning with the 2020 Annual Meetings, the website handling meeting registrations shall include a checkbox indicating that the prospective registrant has recently read and affirms the ASR Annual Meeting Anti-Harassment Policy (a yet to be written policy that will mimic as closely as possible the ASA 2019 Annual Meeting Anti-Harassment Policy). A link to the ASR Annual Meeting Anti-Harassment Policy will be provided for prospective registrants who will not be allowed to complete their registration unless the box is checked. Final enactment of this policy would require that ASR Council approve, by majority vote, the final wording of the ASR Annual Meeting Anti-Harassment Policy.

Rationale and related information: ASA has already adopted this policy. Their policy can be found at <https://www.asanet.org/2019-asa-annual-meeting-anti-harassment-policy>. A copy of this policy appears as an appendix to this committee report. Assuming ASA grants permission to copy much of their policy for ASR adoption, much of the work in formulating an Annual Meeting policy is already done.

There are at least two ways in which a policy for ASR might differ from the ASA policy. First, The ASA policy applies not only to conference registrants, but also to “contractors, vendors, and exhibitors.” There might be technical difficulties in securing agreement to the policy from all of these parties. If so, the proposed motion could be implemented without including these groups.

Second, the ASA policy includes the following language:

Attendees are encouraged to immediately report instances of harassment during the Annual Meeting to the ASA Executive Officer, Nancy Kidd, at nkidd@asanet.org, (646) 408-9063 or to the Director of Meeting Services, Michelle Randall, at mrandall@asanet.org. Reports will be treated as confidential. Violations of this policy may lead to removal from the Annual Meeting.

Including analogous language in an ASR version of an Annual Meeting policy might require additional training and preparation on the part of ASR staff (the EO?) and volunteer workers concerning how they will respond to reported violations of the policy. Nancy Kidd, ASA Executive Officer, indicated that she had received such training.

5. Nominees for election, appointments, and awards affirm two statements. Three sub-motions.

Proposed Motion 5a: When the Nominations Committee contacts potential nominees for elected office the potential nominees will be told that a condition of being placed on the ballot is that they (the potential nominees) affirm the following two statements (or similarly worded statements). The same affirmations shall be required of people before they can serve as Executive Officer, Editor, or serve in any appointed position (e.g., Program Chair or appointed members of committees such as the Nominations Committee).

1. You affirm that you have recently read and agree to abide by the ASA code of ethics <http://www.asanet.org/code-ethics>. Article 2 of the ASR Constitution and bylaws affirms this code of ethics, see <https://www.sociologyofreligion.com/about/constitution-and-by-laws/>.
2. You know of no personal issue or impediment to serving as an officer for ASR that could compromise the integrity of ASR.

Rationale and related information: On the advice of the current President Paula Nesbitt, the Nominations Committee asked these two questions of all potential nominees for elected office prior to placing them on the 2019 election ballot. The process went smoothly. At this time, the Ad Hoc Committee does not recommend that ASR engage in any investigative procedures prior to allowing people to hold ASR offices. By relying on self-evaluation and disclosure, statement number 2 avoids two important vulnerabilities: It avoids the accusation that ASR takes no actions to avoid placing people in office whose past behavior reflects badly on ASR. It also avoids being charged with harming someone's reputation on the basis of incomplete investigations that rely on possibly false hearsay evidence.

Although I do not believe that ASA currently has this policy (described in proposed motion 5a), I think they are likely to institute something like this soon. Moreover, in conversations with Nancy Kidd, ASA Executive Officer, the ASA lawyers argue that since receiving awards and being nominated for office is not an entitlement, it is easier to defend against damages claimed by people excluded from running for election or excluded from an award competition, especially when the exclusion is based on rules and policies that apply to everyone. It is much more difficult to legally defend against law suits from persons whose awards or offices are removed after they have received them.

Along these lines, if the Council were to decide that nomination committees and awards committees should do some preliminary investigations into potential nominees or awardees, a nominations committee or an award committee (see below) would be on firmer legal ground were the committee to do informal inquiries into the backgrounds of potential nominees (or awardees) *before* a person is contacted and invited to consider nomination or *before* an awards committee began its deliberations.

Finally, if proposed motions 5a-5c are adopted, some procedures will need to be developed for the occasional person who brings up a past behavior that is borderline, or beyond borderline, in terms of possibly reflecting badly on ASR. Nancy Kidd gave the example of someone who said (my paraphrase) "Yes, in 2007 I was found passed out drunk on the front lawn of my University campus. I have since gone through treatment for alcoholism and have been sober for the past 10 years. I think I should be allowed to run for office." Nancy Kidd indicated that the lawyers advising ASA, and people she contacted from other organizations, said that these kinds of situations do arise, even situations where someone might say (my hypothetical example) "Yes, I

committed sexual assault and served time in prison for it.” Some decision-making procedures need be developed before-hand to deal with such situations.

Proposed Motion 5b: Persons whose articles, books, or research grant proposals are being considered for awards or funding will be contacted and asked to agree with the two statements (listed above—with appropriate rewording to accommodate the award or grant) before their works or research proposals are evaluated. In the case of book and article awards where someone other than the author(s) nominates an article or book, the author(s) will be contacted and asked to affirm both statements.

Proposed Motion 5c: In cases of awards where someone other than the potential recipient submits the nomination without necessarily notifying the potential recipient, e.g., the Lifetime Achievement Award, the person making the nomination shall answer a version of question 2 based on their best knowledge of the person they are nominating. In the event of multi-year nominations (where previously nominated persons who did not win the award are automatically nominated for the award in subsequent years), then the original nominator shall answer a version of question 2 each year before the nominee can be evaluated again for the award.

Rationale and related information: I believe ASA has adopted policies similar to proposed motion 5c and they may have a policy similar to proposed motion 5b. Much of the rationale and potential issues discussed with regard to proposed motion 5a also applies here.

Major Topics Not Addressed by the Above Motions

There are at least two important topics (and a possible third topic) that has not yet been addressed either by ASA policy or by the proposed motions above. I comment on each of these issues in the indented text following the listing of each issue.

1. How will ASR respond to accusations of harassment committed by people who already hold elected, appointed, or other positions of responsibility in ASR? Similarly, how will ASR respond to accusations of harassment committed by people who have received awards (recently?) from ASR?

This is a topic that the ASA Council intends to address, but so far they have not reached any conclusions. Once ASA reaches some conclusions, ASR will need to see if the ASA solutions also fit ASR.

2. How will ASR respond to accusations of past harassment committed by a conference participant (presenter, discussant, panelist, speaker) who is already on the preliminary program? Would such people be disinvited? This is the type of situation that was the impetus for forming the Ad Hoc Committee.

In my informal phone conversation with Nancy Kidd, ASA Executive Officer, I gathered that these are not issues that ASA intends to take up (though I imagine that could change). She implied that this situation has arisen in ASA more than once. She indicated that ASA is not in a position to tell someone who has been accused that they cannot present. She also acknowledged that she didn't want the session to blow up and have people demonstrating at the session. In the past she has followed the policy of contacting the person who has been accused and informed them that there could be problems at the session. She has offered the person the opportunity to withdraw from the session. She said that in every case except one, people have chosen to withdraw. In the one exception where the

person refused to withdraw, she found, after some cursory investigation, that the charges against the accused were “frivolous.”

My own opinion about this informal policy is that such a solution is both the most likely to resolve the situation in a satisfactory manner and the least likely to expose ASR to lawsuits.

3. Similarly, how should the program chair respond if a person that has been accused of past harassment submits a paper abstract for possible presentation at the Annual Meetings? Should the program chair not accept their proposal? Such a response could be problematic, especially if most proposals are routinely accepted.

How this situation is handled probably needs to be congruent with the manner in which situation number 2 above is handled.

Appendix: Example Annual Meeting policy we could adapt for ASR

2019 ASA Annual Meeting Anti-Harassment Policy

ASA reminds everyone: Our Annual Meeting is convened for the purposes of professional development and scholarly educational interchange in the spirit of free inquiry and free expression. Harassment of colleagues, students, or other conference participants undermines the principle of equity at the heart of these professional fora and is inconsistent with the principles of free inquiry and free expression. Consequently, harassment is considered by ASA to be a serious form of professional misconduct.

The following Anti-Harassment Policy outlines expectations for all those who attend or participate in ASA meetings. It reminds ASA meeting participants that all professional academic ethics and norms apply as standards of behavior and interaction at these meetings.

Purpose. ASA is committed to providing a safe and welcoming conference environment for all participants, free from harassment based on age, race, sex, ethnicity, national origin, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, disability, health conditions, socioeconomic status, marital status, domestic status, or parental status (hereafter, simply harassment). “Participant” in this policy refers to anyone present at ASA meetings, including staff, contractors, vendors, exhibitors, venue staff, ASA members, and all other attendees.

Expected Behavior. All participants at ASA meetings are expected to abide by this Anti-Harassment Policy in all meeting venues including ancillary events as well as official and unofficial social gatherings.

- Follow the norms of professional respect that are necessary to promote the conditions for free academic interchange.
- If you witness potential harm to a conference participant, be proactive in helping to mitigate or avoid that harm.
- Alert conference security personnel or law enforcement if you see a situation in which someone might be in imminent physical danger.

Unacceptable Behavior. Harassment of any participant is unethical behavior under the American Sociological Association Code of Ethics. Harassment may consist of a single intense

and severe act or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts which are demeaning, abusive, or offensive, or create a hostile professional or workplace environment. Harassment may include sexual solicitation, physical advance, or verbal or non-verbal conduct that is sexual in nature; it may also include threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group; epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping based on group identity.

Attendees are encouraged to immediately report instances of harassment during the Annual Meeting to the ASA Executive Officer, Nancy Kidd, at nkidd@asanet.org, (646) 408-9063 or to the Director of Meeting Services, Michelle Randall, at mrandall@asanet.org. Reports will be treated as confidential. Violations of this policy may lead to removal from the Annual Meeting. To read the American Sociological Association Code of Ethics in its entirety, visit www.asanet.org and follow the link to [Ethics](#).

ASR EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT 2019

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

FROM: Rachel Kraus, Executive Officer

RE: Report on the State of ASR

What I've been working on this past year:

- 1) A new membership and registration system along with cosmetic updates of the websites.
 - a. Implementing new membership system and forcing payment.

- b. Automatic update current memberships and automatic update/display registration status. Membership renewals would be automatically sent and membership would expire based on the day someone registers rather than Dec. 31 for everyone. People who renewed around the transition needed to update passwords. That has been challenging, but it should be a one-time necessity.
 - c. This initiative has taken up the majority of my time as EO.
- 2) Securing insurance
- a. We now have general liability (bodily injury, property damage) and Directors & Officers (accusations of wrong doing, including sexual harassment, ADA accommodations, and discrimination) insurance. Hotels typically ask for proof of insurance and we are covered against a variety of potential legal situations. As part of this coverage, we have access to free legal advice. We don't pay any kind of a retainer; we just pay a yearly premium. Our current policy is set for three years, but if we don't want to keep it for three years, that is ok.
- 3) Securing cloud storage for ASR documents: Gmail account (ASREO1984@gmail.com) \$20 a year for extra storage. My contact information will be rerouted to the Gmail account so there will be a track record of emails that can be used by future EOs. The alias that I will publicize to route to this account is contact@sociologyofreligion.com.
- 4) Added the position of Secretary to our elected officers. Welcome Tia!
- 5) Working with Paula, Holly, and their contacts to secure a sign language interpreter at our annual meeting at the request of an attendee.

Upcoming Conferences

- 1) 2020 San Francisco
 - a. Aug 7 (welcome reception; first council meeting) – Aug. 10 (2nd council meeting)
 - b. ASA: Aug. 8 – 11; Religion Section day 3 (Aug. 10)
 - c. \$279/night for king or double bed rooms
- 2) 2021 Chicago, TBA depending on ASA section rotation
 - a. ASA: Aug. 7 – 10
- 3) 2022 Los Angeles, TBA
 - a. ASA: August 6-9
- 4) 2023 Philadelphia, TBA
 - a. ASA: August 19-23
- 5) 2024 Montreal, TBA
 - a. ASA: August 10-13
- 6) 2025 San Francisco, TBA
 - a. ASA: August 9-11
- 7) 2026, New York, TBA
 - a. ASA: August 8-11

Holly Folk, our Program Chair and our President, Paula Nesbitt, have put together an excellent program. We will have 6-7 concurrent sessions in the same time slot. We have two joint sessions with ASA, a joint Welcome Reception, and a joint Graduate Mentoring Event.

Many other aspects of the association continue to flourish. *Sociology of Religion* continues to climb in the rankings. Congratulations to Gerardo for his tremendous service as the journal's editor.

This year's committee reports are a testament to each committee's hard work to make their operations more efficient and identify areas in need of improvement. All committees' work has been stellar.

Regarding our membership: As of July 21, 2019, we have 402 active members:

- 17 active low income members
- 94 active student members
- 291 active professional members

Unfortunately, this number reflects a slight decline from our membership numbers in past years (458 in 2018, 587 in 2017). However, the general trend for membership in the ASA Religion Section and the SSSR in recent trend has also been one of slight decline. So although it's not ideal for our membership numbers to be slipping, the trend we are seeing is on par with other associations.

This year, we added a three year membership option, which was approved by council in the past, but could not be accommodated under our old system.

Regarding the raising of registration fees: Council approved a two-year tier in registration fee increases. The approved registration fee increase is as follows:

CATEGORY 2018 2019

Students	40	50
All Others	95	140

ASR's assets at the current time are summarized below:

<i>Banking Accounts</i>	<i>Value as of 7/21/19</i>
ASR's Checking Account at Forum Credit Union	\$100,802.00
ASR's Savings Account at Forum Credit Union	\$1.80
PayPal Account	\$3,132.00
Total Value of Banking Accounts	\$103,936.00
<i>American Funds Accounts</i>	<i>Value as of 7/21/19</i>
Washington Mutual Investors Fund-A (Fund #01)	\$142,999.00
The Bond Fund of America-A (Fund #08)	\$112,671.00
American High-Income Trust-A (Fund #21)	\$121,054.00
Capital World Grown and Income Fund-A (Fund #33)	\$126,140.00
SMALLCAP World Fund-A (Fund #35)	\$144,297.00
American Funds Money Market Fund-A (Fund #59)	11,538.00
Total Value of American Funds Portfolio	\$658,697.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$762,633.00

The Association is in very good financial shape. At the writing of this report, our room block almost sold out with additional rooms being counted toward our block. So, we should be in no danger of paying any kind of penalty on empty rooms. Our Conference Services Manager, Kerry Rinaldi, helped a great deal with reservations.

I thank Holly Folk, our Program Chair, and Paula Nesbitt, our President, for their continued commitment to the association and deep desire to put together a thought-engaging conference. I am also very grateful to our Council Members, Committee Chairs, and Committee Members. Without their hard work and dedication, the conference and the work of the ASR would not be possible. Thanks so much!

	2016 Seattle	2017 Montreal	2018 Philadelphia	2019 New York Current and Projected	2020 Sa
<i>Contributions, Gifts Total</i>	23,023	34,691	23,897	18,494	20
Memberships	23,023	32,891	23,897	18,494	20
Professional				16,220	
Student/Low income				2,274	
Donations; Unused Fichter		1,800			
<i>Program Service Revenue Total</i>	70,320	90,901	93,485	104,986	10
Publications Total	52,354	71,707	71,690	71,182	71
Journal submission fee		742	743	371	4
Processing Fees					
Oxford Royalties	50,000	55,000	55,000	55,000	55
Oxford Stipend for Editorial Support		15,000	15,135	15,000	15
Brill Royalties	1,187	412	412	412	4
EBSCO Royalties		99	186	185	1
Cengage		131	130	130	1
Copyright Clearance Springer		84	84	84	
Non-Oxford Royalties	1,167				
Annual Meeting Total	17,966	19,194	21,795	33,804	30
Registrations (incl breakfast)	12,547	12,944	15,245	21,440	21
Professional				17,976	18
Student				3,464	3
Book Exhibits	1,719	1,050	1,050	950	1
Program Ads	200	200	200	200	1
OUP Co-sponsor Reception	500	1,000	1,000	1,000	1
Brill Co-sponsor Reception	1,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	1
Louisville Instit. Co-sponsor Reception	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2
Other Reception Sponsors			1,300 (memorial)	3,000 (ASA-Relig) \$500 USC	
Session Sponsors				250 (Religion and Science group)	
<i>Investment Income Total (dividends, interest)</i>	19,317	83,594	10,000	15,000	15
Total Revenue/Income	112,660	174,495	134,311	138,480	13
Expenses					
<i>Grants Total</i>	16,121	17,500	22,124	17,903	23
McNamara	500	500	500	500	5
SoR Article	500	500	500	0	

Lifetime Achievement		500	500	0	
	3,250	3000	5,266 (23 room nights)	4,403 (discounts) Olga B. \$640 (3) Hernandez \$640 (3) Lourdes \$725 (3) Meek \$640 (3) Prickett \$428 (2) Tanriverdi \$428 (2) Yi \$474 (2) Colin \$428 (2 nights)	10,000
Gallagher					
Fichter	11,871	12,000	14,000	12,000	12,000
Furfey		1,000	1,358 (358 from 2-17 payment)	1,000	1,000
Salary/Stipends Total	24,000	31,500	28,500	32,500	33,000
Executive Officer	7,500	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
EO Course Buyout		3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
Executive Officer Office Help			500	500	500
Soc of Relig Editor	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500
Editor Elect					1,000
SoR Book Review Editor	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Other Expenses Total	66,962	72,812	85,611	78,185	68,000
Management/Website Total		4,851	3,883	2,000	2,000
Office Total	1,707	1,420	4,579	4,173	3,000
Constant Contact		480 (40/mo)	540 (45/mo)	540 (45/mo)	540
Network Solutions				80	80
Wordpress		200	200	200	200
Quickbooks		331/year	401		401
American Express Fee		179	179	179	179
Articles of Incorp. Renew		50	50	50	50
Office Expenses/Supplies	1,269	125	290 (new PayPal reader)	200	200
Consulting Fees	438	54.50	294	300	300
Taxes			125	125	125
Social Media Partnership			2,500	2,500	2,500
Travel Total/EO Site Select	2,309	1,581 (NY and SF)	0	2,000	2,000
Conference Consultant				1,000	1,000
Conference/Ann Meet Total	47,641	39,590	76,432	70,512	60,000
AV	1,896	1,925	7,025	7,000	7,000
AV Shipment	1,167	3,153	500	1,000	1,000
Food and Beverage	34,093	21,822	55,769	45,000	35,000
Room Costs (Officers, Program Chair, Furfey)	3,964	6,004	4,081	6,125 President: comped Pres-E: (\$853 5 nights) EO (1,022 6 nights) Furfey (343 for 2 nights)	6,000

				SoR (6 nights for 1415) PC (5 nights 1639) FPC (853 for 4 nights)	
Registration workers	1,260	760	1,120	1,000	1
Furfey dinner		396	550	500	5
Awards		113	202	195	
Name tags, ribbons		228	178	30 for ribbons, points for name tags and holders	
Standard supplies	110	198	242	0	
Program Assistant			840	500	1
Program Printing	1,094	758	752	1,000	1
Sign Language interpreters				2,762	
Meet Travel Reimburse	4,057				
President		771	858	1,000	1
President - Elect		500	498	500	5
EO		647	843	600 (flight is 370)	5
Furfey		457	595	600	5
Lifetime Achievement			727	500	5
Journal Editor		830	494	500 (flight 235.32)	2
Program Chair		257	622	600	1
Future Program Chair		771	536	600	1
Other Journal Expenses Total	15,305	24,703	16,810	22,000	21
Payment to OUP for member subscriptions	15,225	17,380	16,265	16,500	16
Editor's Budget		2,500	0	5,000	5
Reimburse Editor's Expenses (journal related gatherings at annual meeting)	80	815	545	500	
RSO					
Apple computer for editor		3,341			
Depreciation Total	667	667	630	600	0
Future Hotel Payments			19,749	0	
Park Central NYC			9739	0	
Hotel Nikko SF			10,010	0	
Insurance (Gen liability, D&O)				1,843	1
Total Expenses	107,083	121,812	141,521	120,531	11
Total Income	112,660	174,495	134,311	138,480	13
Total Income - Expenses	5,577	52,583	-7,216	17,949	17

2019 Notes:

- Book exhibits:

- Scholars Choice: 3 tables
- Brill: 2 tables
- OUP: 2 tables
- NYU: 1 unstaffed table
- Program Ad: Berghahn Books
- Expenses, Supplies: I estimated another \$200 for paper, toner, etc. used at Ball State. Some meeting supplies were paid for using AmEx points on Amazon.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Consider allowing non-members to be on our program and raise our non-member registration rates? Here are the 2019 SSSR registration rates for comparison:
 - Early-bird: Member \$115, Non-member \$145
 - Pre-registration: Member \$135, Non-member \$170
 - Regular registration: Member \$150, Non-member \$190
 - Late registration: Member \$170, Non-member \$220
- I will email council when I have information from the ASA regarding their section rotation so we can start making plans for Chicago and beyond.
- Raise Gallagher availability for 2020 given the cost of SF? Connect with ASA Religion Section about their student grants being made in ASR hotel rooms.
- Acceptable levels of food and beverage throughout the conference
 - Morning coffee/tea? No other food/drink except receptions?
 - Welcome Breakfast in SF?
- Increase funds for EO tech and program help
- Funds for a Conference Consultant

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachel Kraus

James Cavendish

Background:

According to the ASR Constitution, the Executive Officer (EO) of the Association holds an elected four-year position and is responsible to the Executive Council. Duties are specified in the EO's contract. Although the Executive Council, as the chief governing body of Association, has the authority to periodically review the performance of the EO and to make decisions about his/her appointment, the Association has had no institutionalized process of orderly review and transition for the EO position. In the past, the transition has only occurred when the incumbent decided to resign, leaving no mechanism for mutual review and discussion concerning the EO's performance. In 2018, our current EO requested that a review and transition process be developed as standard practice for the Association as a step to strengthen organizational professionalism. (It should be noted that SSSR does not have a review process of its EO, and RRA uses an annual post Board-meeting questionnaire with a question to measure EO effectiveness.)

The Committee and Its Charge:

2019 ASR President Paula Nesbitt appointed an Ad Hoc Executive Review Committee to develop a formal process of review of the Executive Officer (EO). It was especially important to do so before our current Executive Officer's final year of her four-year contract so that the Review Committee could make a recommendation to Council for the renewal of Dr. Rachel Kraus's contract. The committee consisted of current ASR President Paula Nesbitt, Past ASR President Dan Olson, former ASR President Fred Kniss, and me, Jim Cavendish, serving as both President-Elect of ASR and Chair of the Ad Hoc Executive Review Committee.

Developing a Review Process that Can Be Institutionalized:

Early in the Committee's deliberations, we decided that it would be important to gather information about the EO's performance from both the EO her/himself in the form of a self-review and from those who have worked closely with the EO over the last three years. We decided that the review should focus specifically on the tasks that the EO is requested to perform by the EO contract, which focusses on four areas: 1) Managing finances; 2) Planning and executing the Annual Meeting; 3) Communicating with the public and ASR members through the website, the journal, and email correspondence; and 4) Communicating with, and facilitating the work of, various ASR Standing Committees.

Early in the summer, I (Jim Cavendish) asked Rachel if she would write a self-reflection about her achievements in each of these four areas while also identifying the areas where she thought there could be improvement if she had sufficient resources and support. Simultaneously, I drafted a brief online survey in Qualtrics, which addressed each of the EO's core tasks, and sent it to all current and recent Officers, Council Members, Standing Committee Members, and Program Chairs of ASR with whom Rachel has interacted over the last three years. The initial mailing was sent on July 8, and the follow-up/reminder mailing was sent on July 17.

Results of Dr. Kraus's Self-Reflection and the Evaluation Survey:

Among the achievements that Rachel highlighted in her self-reflection are the following:

- Hiring a new webmaster who is extremely responsive and helpful;
- Redesigning the website and overhauling the membership renewal system making it more streamlined;
- Establishing a Secretary position to take minutes of Council meetings, thereby enabling Rachel to devote her full attention to the Council meetings themselves;
- Securing hotel contracts earlier than was typical, thereby ensuring a wider range of hotel options and the possibility of lower room rates;
- Obtaining General Liability and Directors and Officers Insurance for ASR;
- Facilitating ASR's Inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award;
- Securing cloud storage space for ASR's documents; and

- Exploring the possibility of changing ASR's tax designation from a 501c6 to a 501c3 organization;

In addition to these achievements, Rachel reported that there are at least a few areas that she would like to continue to improve. Among them are:

- Always staying on top updating some sections of ASR's website (primarily those sections that are least urgent to update), leading her to wonder whether she should hire a student assistant out of her assistance budget to help manage website updates;
- Containing the ever-increasing costs associated with our Annual Meeting;
- Finding creative ways of encouraging attendees of our Annual Meeting to stay in the conference hotel so ASR doesn't get charged for unused sleeping rooms; and
- Reviewing and discussing ASR's investment funds with financial advisors more frequently.

The members of the Ad Hoc Executive Review Committee appreciate Rachel's candid self-reflection and believe the fact that Rachel is aware of areas that could use improvement is itself a testament to her commitment to the Association and to her work as its Executive Officer.

The results of the Evaluation Survey that was distributed during July, 2019, reveal an overall very positive evaluation of Rachel's performance as Executive Officer along with some very useful suggestions for improvement, primarily in the areas that Rachel has already acknowledged. The results reveal that those who have interacted – and continue to interact -- with Rachel in carrying out the various functions of the Association are very pleased with her performance as the Executive Officer of the ASR. Respondents praised her for communication skills and her promptness in responding to questions and issues that arise when conducting the Association's business.

Proposed Motions of the Ad Hoc Executive Review Committee:

Based on our Ad Hoc Committee's review of both the EO's self-reflection and the survey results, we propose the following motions. Note that while the entire committee weighed in on the topics underlying all of these motions, after reading the committee members' comments, I, Jim Cavendish, composed the wording of these motions as they appear below. Council, of course, is free to amend this wording:

- 1) That our Executive Officer, Dr. Rachel Kraus, be asked to serve a second four-year term as EO of ASR.**

Rationale: Having thoroughly reviewed Rachel's performance as EO of ASR, the members of the Ad Hoc Executive Review Committee believe that we, as an Association, are very lucky to have someone at the helm who is as devoted to doing a good job as Rachel is.

- 2) That our current Executive Officer, Dr. Rachel Kraus, should she be willing to serve a second term, be placed on the ballot as the sole candidate for the Executive Officer position in the next election.**

Rationale: It has been customary in our Association for the name of only one candidate for the Executive Officer position be placed on the election ballot before her/his new 4-year term because of the nature and demands of the position, and we recommend continuing this practice.*

- 3) That the Ad Hoc Executive Review Committee continue its work for at least as long as necessary to discuss with Dr. Kraus whether there are specific terms of her contract that should be modified and/or renegotiated.**

Rationale: Rachel has indicated that if she were to continue as EO of ASR, that she would likely need to reallocate existing resources, or acquire some new resources, to carry out the improvements that she believes will lead to an even smoother functioning of the Executive Office and of the Association in general. After the Ad Hoc Committee has had an opportunity to thoroughly review these items with

Rachel, we propose presenting the terms of a new contract for Rachel to the Council for their vote via email within the next couple months. Among these items might be:

- the creation of an unpaid Treasurer position to be held by a member of ASR (either chosen through election or appointed by the Executive Officers) to help oversee the financial operations and investment accounts of ASR. A Treasurer could help the EO by monitoring ASR's investments and seeking investment advice; reviewing past annual budgets and composing projected annual budgets; reviewing the terms of hotel contracts; etc.;
 - the hiring of a conference consultant so the EO does not need to be as reliant on Helmsbriscoe (which could cost approximately \$1,000/year but potentially save the Association thousands of dollars per year); and/or
 - the hiring of a website assistant, which, if combined with re-allocation of resources, would be of minimal additional annual cost to the Association.
- 4) That ASR adopt a process of regularly reviewing the Executive Officer, similar to the one adopted here, which would be conducted after the first year of a new Executive Officer's first term (for the purpose of identifying areas in need of improvement), as well as during the third year of an Executive Officer's four-year term (for the purpose of deciding whether to recommend the renewal of the incumbent's contract).**

Additional Recommendations that Pertain to the EO Position:

At the second 2018 ASR Council meeting, Council also briefly discussed the need for a contingency plan to have a backup to the EO in case of incapacitation. Although this wasn't considered to be part of the ad hoc Executive Review Committee's charge, it is a matter that falls into the extended scope of reviewing the EO position, and we recommend that the Ad Hoc Executive Review Committee continue to discuss this.

*Although the Association has typically placed the name of only one candidate for the EO position on the ballot after a process of vetting candidates with the necessary skills, the Ad Hoc Committee recognizes that the Association has many talented members, some of whom may wish to be given the opportunity to exercise their leadership skills in the position of EO. If we did not already have an outstanding EO occupying the position, then we would certainly recommend a process of identifying interested candidates. We recommend that ASR invite members who are interested in learning more about the administrative functions of ASR to volunteer to help/work with Rachel in one or more areas that interest them.

Membership Committee report:

The membership committee consists of Katie Corcoran, Maureen Day, and Laurel Kearns, chair.

Our main focus was getting people to come to the annual meeting, so we made a major outreach effort in getting the CFP out, figuring that there are a lot of schools in the region, and that NYC is a desirable destination.

Maureen Day reached out to faculty in both Sociology and Theology/Religious Studies at 14 Franciscan and Jesuit schools that seemed like a "doable commute" to New York City, so that people who were marginally interested could come without much transportation expense. Based on their school's profiles, she targeted the faculty that seemed like they would be the most interested in ASR. Please see the list below.

Katie Corcoran used a list that she has previously compiled of Sociology and Religion department contacts around New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Montreal and SF/LA and sent the CFP to those contacts. The excel sheet is attached. This is a multi-year effort. Please see the attached excel spreadsheet.

With the help of a student assistant, Laurel Kearns reached out to 28 different American Academy of Religion units, including the Mid-Atlantic regional AAR that included the NYC metro area, and two other associations that would have interested members, as well as faculty at area Theological Schools with Ph.D programs. Please see the list below.

Laurel reached out, per Paula Nesbitt's suggestion, to Amy Adamczyk about the need for graduate student helpers, which seemed to be under control, and to Nazanin Shahrokni and offered to be a contact person for international scholars attending the meeting. Nazanin is not attending the meeting, and was quite busy, so that task was not accomplished.

Maureen Day and Laurel Kearns plan to attend the opening reception and welcome breakfast to make contact with new attenders and be a friendly face.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurel Kearns, chair.

Katie Day Franciscan and Jesuit ASR CFP list

Felician College (Lodi, NJ)
Hilbert College (Hamburg, NY)
Siena College (Loudonville, NY)
St. Francis College (Brooklyn Heights, NY)
Villa Maria College of Buffalo (Buffalo, NY)
Saint Francis University (Loretto, PA)
Alvernia University (Reading, PA)

Canisius College Buffalo, New York
Fairfield University Fairfield, Connecticut
Fordham University Bronx, New York
Le Moyne College Syracuse, New York
Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Saint Peter's University, Jersey City, New Jersey
The University of Scranton, Scranton, Pennsylvania

Laurel Kearns ASR CFP list

*indicates that the contact responded and distributed the CFP

Sent the CFP to the following AAR units. Not all units had mailing lists for distribution. These chair names could change:

Afro-American Religious History Unit: *

- Alexis S. Wells-Oghoghomeh, alexis.s.wells@vanderbilt.edu

- Lerone Martin, lerone.martin@wustl.edu

African Association for the Study of Religions

- Althea Spencer Miller, aspencer@drew.edu
- Esther Acolatse, esther.acolatse@utoronto.ca

Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society

- Melissa Borja, mborja@umich.edu
- SueJeanne Koh, sjkoh@alumni.duke.edu

Black Theology

- Adam Clark, clarkadam@xavier.edu
- Eboni Marshall Turman, eboni.marshall-turman@yale.edu

Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis

- Lori Brandt Hale, hale@augzburg.edu
- Stephen R. Haynes, haynes@rhodes.edu

Childhood Studies and Religion

- Sally Stamper, sstamper@capital.edu

Class, Religion, and Theology*

- Jeremy Posadas, prof.posadas@gmail.com
- Ken Estey, kestey@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence

- Diane Fruchtman, dsf79@religion.rutgers.edu
- Kelly Denton-Borhaug, denton-borhaugk@moravian.edu

Comparative Religions and Ethics

- Jonathan K. Crane, jonathan.k.crane@emory.edu
- Jung Lee, ju.lee@neu.edu

Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion*

- David Walker, dwalker@religion.ucsb.edu
- Sean McCloud, spmclou@uncc.edu

Cultural History of the Study of Religion*

- Elizabeth Ann Pritchard, epritcha@bowdoin.edu
- J. Barton Scott, barton.scott@utoronto.ca

Ethics Unit*

- Christophe D. Ringer, christophe.ringer@ctschicago.edu
- Frederick Simmons, frederick.simmons@ptsem.edu

Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection

- Meredith Minister, mministe@su.edu
- Tom Berendt, tom.berendt@temple.edu

Gay Men and Religion

- Marco Derks, marcoderks@hotmail.com
- Roger A. Sneed, roger.sneed@furman.edu

Graduate Student Committee

- Andrew Klumpp, aklumpp@smu.edu
- Meghan Johnston Aelabouni, meghan.johnstonaelabouni@du.edu
- Rachel Toombs, rstoomb@gmail.com

Islam, Gender, and Women

- Justine Howe, justine.howe@case.edu
- Saadia Yacoob, saadia.yacoob@williams.edu

Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society

- Jeremy V. Cruz, cruzj@stjohns.edu
- Lauren Frances Guerra, laurenguerra18@gmail.com

Lesbian-Feminisms and Religions

- Michelle Wolff, michellewolff@augustana.edu
- Sarah Bloesch, sbloesch@smu.edu

Men, Masculinities, and Religions

- Amanullah De Sony, amanullah.desondy@ucc.ie
- Linda G. Jones, linda.jones@upf.edu

Queer Studies in Religion*

- Heather White, hwhite@pugetsound.edu
- Thelathia Young, nikki.young@bucknell.edu

Religion and Ecology

- Chris Carter, christophercarter@sandiego.edu

Religion and Families in North America

- Samira Mehta, smehta@albright.edu
- Susan Ridgely, susan.ridgely@wisc.edu

Religion and Sexuality

- Jennifer S. Leath, jennifer.s.leath@gmail.com
- Nina Hoel, ninahoel@gmail.com

Religion and the Social Sciences

- Kristy Nabhan-Warren, kristy-nabhan-warren@uiowa.edu
- Nichole Phillips, nichole.r.phillips@emory.edu

Religions, Social Conflict, and Peace

- Atalia Omer, aomer1@nd.edu
- Ellen Ott Marshall, ellen.marshall@emory.edu

Sociology of Religion*

- Rebekka King, rebekka.king@mtsu.edu
- Warren S. Goldstein, goldstein@criticaltheoryofreligion.org

Womanist Approaches Religion and Society

- Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan, cduggan@shawu.edu
- Teresa L. Fry Brown, rev_drt@bellsouth.net

- P. Kimberleigh Jordan, pkjordan@drew.edu

Women and Religion

- K. Christine Pae, paec@denison.edu
- Stephanie May, stepmay@gmail.com

Non AAR contacts:

Feminist Studies of Religion

- Midori Hartman, Efsr@fsrinc.org

ISSRNC (International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture) *

- Amanda Baugh, amanda.baugh@csun.edu
- Evan Berry, berry@american.edu
- Elaine Nogueira-Godsey, egodsey@mtso.edu
- Sarah Pike spike@csuchico.edu

Mid-Atlantic AAR*

- Chris Fici, cfici@centerforearthethics.org
- Gerald Vigna, Gerald.vigna@alvernia.edu Jerry.Vigna@alvernia.edu

Center for African-American Religion, Sexual Politics, and Social Justice at Columbia University*

Nikki Young, tny001@bucknell.edu

Union Theological School, Princeton Theological School and Drew Theological School faculty

International Liaison/Gallagher Grants Committee Report 2019

6 August 2019

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

From: Nazanin Shahrokni, Chair

Re: Report to Council on the activity of the International Liaison/Gallagher Grants Committee for 2019

The Committee

The International Liaison Committee was comprised this year of Elisabeth Arweck (University of Warwick), Afe Adogame (Princeton Theological Seminary), and Nazanin Shahrokni (Syracuse University)

Background

The main task of the International Liaison/Gallagher Grants Committee is to provide suggestions for selecting the international scholars and graduate students who receive the Ralph A. Gallagher Travel Grants (total amount of \$7000).

For applications in 2019, there were separate arrangements for graduate students and international scholars:

—international scholars could apply for up to \$500 to be used towards airfare and 3 nights in the ASR conference hotel.

—graduate students could apply for up to 3 nights in the ASR conference hotel

To allow the Committee to make an informed choice among candidates, applicants were required to submit a single document, including:

- + their CV
- + an extended abstract to the ASR conference of 1000-1500 words
- + a statement of financial need
- + evidence that they could attend the meeting, should they receive an award.

In addition, applicants were asked to state their specific requests regarding the number of room nights for which they were applying and the specific amount of money (up to \$500) for which they were applying, to be used towards airfare (for international applicants).

The call indicated that

- = applications would be evaluated based on the quality and contribution of the papers
- = applications from graduate students needing to travel a farther distance would be prioritised; 2

2

= applications from international scholars with a research and publication record would be prioritised.

The committee also took into account whether applicants had presented their cases in the required way, in other words, did they include all the documents and were the documents in the required shape/length.

The Committee's Experience in 2019

To encourage submissions from international applicants, the call was advertised in the usual ways: through the listservs and social media outlets of related organisations, including the European Sociological Association Sociology of Religion Research Network and the ASA Religion Section. The Committee received 9 applications. Of these, 8 had met the deadline of 15 April, 1 did not meet the deadline, but was nevertheless accepted as we had received fewer applications than last year. The total of 9 applicants means that 4 less applications had been received this year than in 2018. Of these 9 applications, 4 came from domestic graduate students and 5 from international scholars. The geographical spread of the international applicants was, similar to 2018, wide, including Argentina, Canada, Netherlands, South Korea, and Italy.

The Committee shared the application files among themselves as e-mail attachments. The applications were also uploaded on Google drive for easier access.

The Committee members first considered and ranked the international scholars and graduate students separately.

Taking into account the criteria cited above and after an elaborate discussion, the committee made the following recommendations:

- = everybody who applied was offered funds this year
- = award 2 repeat domestic graduate students \$500 (2 x \$500)
- = award 2 domestic graduate students the maximum amount of \$675 (2 x \$675)
- = award 2 of the international scholars the maximum of \$1175 which covers hotel and airfare (2 x \$1175)
- = award 1 repeat international scholar \$750 (1 x \$750)
- = award 1 international scholar \$675 as they had requested (1 X \$675)
- =award 1 international scholar (late submission) \$875 which is what was left after all the other funds were distributed (1 X \$875) 3

As a committee we had extensive discussions about the following items:

= What to do with repeat applicants in terms of:

- a. the number of times they can apply
- b. whether to consider a cap

Ultimately, we settled for the following rationale:

1. Max. \$1175 for international scholars (unless otherwise requested by the applicant)
2. Max. \$675 for domestic students (unless otherwise requested by the applicant)
3. For repeat domestic applicants we set the cap at \$500 and for repeat international applicants we set the cap was set at \$750
4. One application was late so we allocated to them what was left after all the other funds were distributed.
5. We agreed that none of this sets any precedents.
6. We also agreed that some of these issues should be brought up in the Council meeting as we were not certain whether we should limit the number of times an applicant can apply for the travel grant, and if multiple applications is OK, whether or not there should be cap (separately defined for international and domestic applicants). Unfortunately, I had to change jobs and countries and was not able to follow up with the committee on these issues, but I am hoping that the Council and the next International Liaison Committee will be able to address and resolve the abovementioned issues.

Recommendations

In the light of this year's committee experience, we make the following recommendations:

=I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to Elisabeth Arweck and Afe Adogame for their prompt responses and thoughtful feedback on all items. Having benefited from Elisabeth's past experiences on the committee, I want to reiterate here the point that was mentioned in our report last year: the importance of the continuity and thus experience in the committee. As Elisabeth Arweck puts it: "...the role of chair is a challenge and then, once this role has been played once, the expertise/experience gained is kind of lost because the next person assumes this role. In a way, each chair has to re-invent the wheel. So, I would recommend that a different way be found, also to ensure consistency and continuity across the committee and its members and across applicants year on year. This *could* be a kind of instruction booklet which can be added to as new points arise. Or this could be a chair being in place for more than a year."

= to introduce the new committee member—e.g. by e-mail—to the other committee members, so that there is some connection between the new team before we all need to work together on the applications.

= to continue with the separate calls for graduate students and international scholars

= to keep the categories of 'graduate students' and 'international scholars' so that the former is understood as graduate students located in the US and the latter is understood as applicants from outside the US, which may include established scholars and graduate students (this is how the Committee dealt with applications this year) 4

= to make it clear in the call that applicants whose applications do not include the requested documents in the required format or length will not be considered (similar to last year, the Committee was not strict about this this year)

= to set a clear protocol for late applications (as the chair I decided to include one late application but as discussed in the committee it is best if we are strict about the deadline, both to be fair to those who met the deadline, and to avoid further complications.)

Submitted by

Nazanin Shahrokni

Chair, International Liaison/Gallagher Grants Committee

Syracuse University

Department of Sociology

nshahrok@syr.edu

*All the points written in this report are taken from our email exchanges with all the committee members. However, I have to note that because I put together this report just a few days ago, we haven't been able to get Afe's confirmation/approval. I will update the Council should Afe raise new points or suggestions. Otherwise, please consider this final. Thanks to all.

ASR Fichter Committee Report, 2019

Committee members included Tanice Foltz, Chair, IUN, Dawne Moon, Marquette U., and Sabrina Danielsen, Creighton U.

We received 18 applications and our process included creating what we each considered the three most relevant categories (such as design, theoretically compelling, contribution to the literature, innovation, feasibility) and each member evaluated all candidates on these categories, with 1 being the lowest, and 5 the highest number of points. Those candidates with the highest scores were then considered by the committee.

We shared our scores with excel sheets on Box and had a zoom discussion as well as email communications to make our final decisions. The awards will go to the following candidates, who were contacted on June 1st with instructions.

2019 Winners – Totaling \$12,000

(In the order that we selected them)

Yuksel Sezgin: \$2750 for “IRAMFAL: A Tool for Spatio-temporal Analysis of Women's Rights under Muslim Family Law”

Nicolette Manglos-Weber: \$4000 for “Religion and Community Caregivers in Uganda”

Madeleine Cousineau: \$2100 for “Activist Nuns and the Emergence of Social Movements in Brazil”

Michelle Mueller: \$2000 for “Interviews with Mormon Polygamist Men and Women on the Subject of Plural Marriage”

Amanda Dawn Hernandez: \$1150 for “Feminism, Feminists, and Faith: Intersecting Identities and Boundary Work”

***Action Item:** The Committee would like to request that, in the future, **a portal be set up for the submission of Fichter proposals**, and in this way all committee members will have access to them immediately, and this would reduce the chance of a proposal being lost in the vast number of emails that we all receive daily. Once the candidate submits their proposal, they should receive some sort of email reply that their submission was received.

DISTINGUISHED SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION JOURNAL ARTICLE AWARD 2019

Journal Article Award Committee:

Chair: Adair Lummis, Hartford Seminary (2020)

Chaeyoon Lim University of Wisconsin-Madison (2019)

Scott Desmond, Indianapolis University, Purdue University – Columbus (2021)

Committee Purpose and Procedure:

The 2019 ASR Distinguished Article Committee of Chaeyoon Lim, Scott Desmond and Adair Lummis, had the assignment of selecting just one winner from the eligible 18 articles published last year in *Sociology of Religion*. “Eligible articles” for this award include all peer-reviewed manuscripts published in volume 79 (2018) of *Sociology of Religion*. Not included as eligible are the: ASR Presidential Address, Furfey Lecture, Featured Review Essays, and Book Reviews.

The procedure in selecting the award winner entailed Committee members filling out email forms indicating their article top choices. Three “ballots” were sent and returned email to Adair the Chair, who reported the results back on each. On the first ballot (mid-May) we checked which 9 of the 18 articles should be considered as possibly prize-worthy. The second ballot (early June) included 9 articles with at least two checks, with the request to the

Committee to now check their first five choices. The third ballot (mid-June) included 5 articles which has received at least 2 nominations, requesting the Committee now indicate their first and second award choice among the five listed.

Given Committee members' somewhat varying research interests, these "ballots" displayed differences among us on which articles should be considered further. Some reviewer diversity in assessing the value of an article is good. Good too, is that by third week of June we three had fully agreed on the winning article. Interestingly, the prize article was the only one getting three checks on the first ballot. Rachel Krauss was notified before July as requested that: the Distinguished Article Award should go to:

Andrew L. Whitehead, Samuel L. Perry, Joseph O. Baker

"Make America Christian Again: Christian Nationalism and Voting for Donald Trump in the 2016 Presidential Election". *Sociology of Religion*, 79 (summer 2018):147-171

ASR Lifetime Achievement Award for Contributions to the Sociology of Religion

Report from 2019 Selection Committee

Committee members: Peter Beyer, Chair; Nancy Ammerman, Kevin Christiano

The committee voted unanimously to make this year's award to N. Jay Demerath III, Emile Durkheim Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Others nominated this year included Sandra Lynne Barnes, Roberto Cipriani, Steven M. Cohen, William D'Antonio, Roger Finke, Neal Krause, James T. Richardson, and Robert Wuthnow. Only Barnes and Finke were new nominations. The rest were carried over from last year and were nominated last year.

As last year, we interpreted the stated intellectual and service contribution criteria stated in the award description. We were again looking for intellectual contributions of breadth and impact – breadth and depth in addressing issues across the discipline (and even across disciplines) and impact nationally and internationally on how we think about our field. We were looking, as well, for service both to the profession and to the public visibility and impact of the discipline.

For this year's award we added a new feature: the award now includes the organization of a special ASR session giving a retrospective of the award winner's work and contribution. Accordingly, for the description of the award on the ASR website, in addition to asking nominators to include a letter of nomination and the nominee's current *curriculum vitae*, also asks nominators to submit " a list of six or seven names with contact information of people who might be asked to participate in a special ASR session giving a retrospective of the nominee's work and contribution." The session for this year's award recipient is in the program, scheduled for Monday afternoon, the 11 August 2019.

Although we considered nine strong nominations, we were, like last year, again concerned about increasing the gender diversity of the pool. We therefore intend that next year's committee (of which Beyer and Christiano will still be members) will do its best to solicit not only additional strong nominations, but also such as will solidly address this lack of diversity.

As per the policy set out, the eight nominations not awarded this year will remain in the pool. A shareable Dropbox folder was created last year and has been maintained to preserve the nomination letters and *curricula vita*.

Peter Beyer, Chair
2019-July-25

Development Committee
Melissa Wilde, Jim Cavendish, Ted Long

The development committee met via conference call in the spring and discussed various ways to improve the financial situation of ASR. Our primary recommendation remains the same: that we would like ASR leadership to continue to work on making the conference self-sustaining, or closer to being self-sustaining. Doing so would allow ASR to grow its endowment, something that would ultimately benefit our members. As a committee, one way that we sought to help with this was by asking leaders of centers and other research organizations to sponsor something at the conference. We have received one \$500 donation from USC's Center for Religion and Civic Culture for 2019 and a promise from the Center for the Study of Religion at Notre Dame to consider a sponsorship for ASR's 2020 conference.

ASR President-elect Report
August 1, 2019
New York, NY
James Cavendish

The primary activity for the 2018-19 year has focused on thematic development of the 2020 annual meeting program, proposing joint ASA-ASR sessions (two thematic and two special sessions, which, unfortunately, were declined by ASA), and issuing a Call for Papers. The theme, “Communicating Religion’s Relevance,” seeks to challenge us, as sociologists of religion, to more effectively communicate the relevance of religion to our fellow academics and to the larger public. It challenges us to more effectively articulate our response to the “so what?” question, whether it is asked by our academic colleagues, by our students, or by members of the educated public.

This broad theme lends itself to discussion and exploration of a variety of topics and questions, including:

- What role(s) do sociologists of religion play in communicating the relevance of religion to fellow academics and to the broader public?;
- Have various sectors of our society misunderstood, or failed to fully understand, religion and/or its relevance in today’s world? Can sociologists of religion remedy these misunderstandings?;
- How do social and political elites, as well as ordinary citizens, employ religion when communicating about, or working to address, issues of local, national, or international concern, and to what effect?;
- How do various social actors, including social movement leaders, draw upon religion and religious narratives to frame social problems?... to appeal simultaneously to human cognition, emotion, and morality?;
- What are religion’s unique features that distinguish it from other social phenomena and help explain its distinct capacity to influence human and social life?;
- How, and under what circumstances, does religion contribute to new forms of identity, community, meaning, self-understanding, expression, moral conviction, and social control? If we, as sociologists of religion, come to new understandings of religion’s relevance in these facets of our individual and collective lives, how do we communicate those understandings effectively to others?

The theme, in addition to being broad, is open to creative interpretations, and it is hoped that prospective session and paper proposers will exercise their imaginations when thinking about how they can relate their own scholarship to this theme.

Presidential panels are envisioned to address the key thematic topics listed in the Call for Papers. Our priorities, like those of the Program Committee this year, will include helping scholars new to ASR get acquainted with our Association and its members, mentoring or professional development for junior scholars and students, and building scholarly discussion across international contexts.

Call for Papers
82nd Annual Meeting of the
Association for the Sociology of Religion

Location: San Francisco, CA
Hotel: Hotel Nikko San Francisco, 222 Mason Street
Date: August 7 (welcome reception) – August 9
Program Chair: Brian Starks, Kennesaw State University

Theme: Communicating Religion's Relevance

Although scholars of religion are keenly aware of the relevance of religion in today's world, too often social elites and academics diminish the importance of religion. Even scholars who are well aware of religion's relevance sometimes do an inadequate job explaining how religion permeates practically every aspect of social life. As sociologists of religion, we understand the relevance of religion to individuals as well as its consequences in the social, cultural, political, and economic dimensions of modern societies.

The 2020 annual meeting's thematic sessions will focus on several key topics:

- What role(s) do sociologists of religion play in communicating the relevance of religion to fellow academics and to the broader public?;
- Have various sectors of our society misunderstood, or failed to fully understand, religion and/or its relevance in today's world? Can sociologists of religion remedy these misunderstandings?;
- How do social and political elites, as well as ordinary citizens, employ religion when communicating about, or working to address, issues of local, national, or international concern, and to what effect?;
- How do various social actors, including social movement leaders, draw upon religion and religious narratives to frame social problems?... to appeal simultaneously to human cognition, emotion, and morality?;
- What are religion's unique features that distinguish it from other social phenomena and help explain its distinct capacity to influence human and social life?;
- How, and under what circumstances, does religion contribute to new forms of identity, community, meaning, self-understanding, expression, moral conviction, and social control? If we, as sociologists of religion, come to new understandings of religion's relevance in these facets of our individual and collective lives, how do we communicate those understandings effectively to others?

Papers and sessions may be thematic or they may focus on any other topic within the sociology of religion. Those that pursue and stimulate new avenues of research and innovative theoretical and methodological approaches are especially encouraged. Specialty sessions, including book salons, teaching and professional development, and salon discussions that focus on a particular question, are also welcome.

DEADLINES:

- Session proposals: March 31, 2020
- Paper abstract submissions: April 30, 2020

- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** All session and abstract submissions should be made through the ASR website at www.sociologyofreligion.com.

Membership in the ASR is required for organizing or convening a session, presenting a paper, serving as a panelist, or holding another role in the program. All are expected to register for the meeting by July 1, 2020. For questions, contact Brian Starks (bstarks3@kennesaw.edu), James Cavendish (jcavendi@usf.edu), or Rachel Kraus (contact@sociologyofreligion.com).

International Liaison/Gallagher Grants Committee Report 2019

6 August 2019

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

From: Nazanin Shahrokni, Chair

Re: Report to Council on the activity of the International Liaison/Gallagher Grants Committee for 2019

The Committee

The International Liaison Committee was comprised this year of Elisabeth Arweck (University of Warwick), Afe Adogame (Princeton Theological Seminary), and Nazanin Shahrokni (Syracuse University)

Background

The main task of the International Liaison/Gallagher Grants Committee is to provide suggestions for selecting the international scholars and graduate students who receive the Ralph A. Gallagher Travel Grants (total amount of \$7000).

For applications in 2019, there were separate arrangements for graduate students and international scholars:

—international scholars could apply for up to \$500 to be used towards airfare and 3 nights in the ASR conference hotel.

—graduate students could apply for up to 3 nights in the ASR conference hotel

To allow the Committee to make an informed choice among candidates, applicants were required to submit a single document, including:

- + their CV
- + an extended abstract to the ASR conference of 1000-1500 words
- + a statement of financial need
- + evidence that they could attend the meeting, should they receive an award.

In addition, applicants were asked to state their specific requests regarding the number of room nights for which they were applying and the specific amount of money (up to \$500) for which they were applying, to be used towards airfare (for international applicants).

The call indicated that

= applications would be evaluated based on the quality and contribution of the papers

= applications from graduate students needing to travel a farther distance would be prioritised;

= applications from international scholars with a research and publication record would be prioritised.

The committee also took into account whether applicants had presented their cases in the required way, in other words, did they include all the documents and were the documents in the required shape/length.

The Committee's Experience in 2019

To encourage submissions from international applicants, the call was advertised in the usual ways: through the listservs and social media outlets of related organisations, including the European Sociological Association Sociology of Religion Research Network and the ASA Religion Section.

The Committee received 9 applications. Of these, 8 had met the deadline of 15 April, 1 did not meet the deadline, but was nevertheless accepted as we had received fewer applications than last year.

The total of 9 applicants means that 4 less applications had been received this year than in 2018. Of these 9 applications, 4 came from domestic graduate students and 5 from international scholars. The geographical spread of the international applicants was, similar to 2018, wide, including Argentina, Canada, Netherlands, South Korea, and Italy.

The Committee shared the application files among themselves as e-mail attachments. The applications were also uploaded on Google drive for easier access.

The Committee members first considered and ranked the international scholars and graduate students separately.

Taking into account the criteria cited above and after an elaborate discussion, the committee made the following recommendations:

- = everybody who applied was offered funds this year
- = award 2 repeat domestic graduate students \$500 (2 x \$500)
- = award 2 domestic graduate students the maximum amount of \$675 (2 x \$675)
- = award 2 of the international scholars the maximum of \$1175 which covers hotel and airfare (2 x \$1175)
- = award 1 repeat international scholar \$750 (1 x \$750)
- = award 1 international scholar \$675 as they had requested (1 X \$675)
- = award 1 international scholar (late submission) \$875 which is what was left after all the other funds were distributed (1 X \$875)

As a committee we had extensive discussions about the following items:

= What to do with repeat applicants in terms of:

- a. the number of times they can apply
- b. whether to consider a cap

Ultimately, we settled for the following rationale:

1. Max. \$1175 for international scholars (unless otherwise requested by the applicant)
2. Max. \$675 for domestic students (unless otherwise requested by the applicant)
3. For repeat domestic applicants we set the cap at \$500 and for repeat international applicants we set the cap was set at \$750
4. One application was late so we allocated to them what was left after all the other funds were distributed.
5. We agreed that none of this sets any precedents.
6. We also agreed that some of these issues should be brought up in the Council meeting as we were not certain whether we should limit the number of times an applicant can apply for the travel grant, and if multiple applications is OK, whether or not there should be cap (separately defined for international and domestic applicants). Unfortunately, I had to change jobs and countries and was not able to follow up with the committee on these issues, but I am hoping that the Council and the next International Liaison Committee will be able to address and resolve the abovementioned issues.

Recommendations

In the light of this year's committee experience, we make the following recommendations:

=I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to Elisabeth Arweck and Afe Adogame for their prompt responses and thoughtful feedback on all items. Having benefited from Elisabeth's past experiences on the committee, I want to reiterate here the point that was mentioned in our report last year: the importance of the continuity and thus experience in the committee. As Elisabeth Arweck puts it: "...the role of chair is a challenge and then, once this role has been played once, the expertise/experience gained is kind of lost because the next person assumes this role. In a way, each chair has to re-invent the wheel. So, I would recommend that a different way be found, also to ensure consistency and continuity across the committee and its members and across applicants year on year. This *could* be a kind of instruction booklet which can be added to as new points arise. Or this could be a chair being in place for more than a year."

= to introduce the new committee member—e.g. by e-mail—to the other committee members, so that there is some connection between the new team before we all need to work together on the applications.

= to continue with the separate calls for graduate students and international scholars

= to keep the categories of 'graduate students' and 'international scholars' so that the former is understood as graduate students located in the US and the latter is understood as applicants from outside the US, which may include established scholars and graduate students (this is how the Committee dealt with applications this year)

= to make it clear in the call that applicants whose applications do not include the requested documents in the required format or length will not be considered (similar to last year, the Committee was not strict about this this year)

= to set a clear protocol for late applications (as the chair I decided to include one late application but as discussed in the committee it is best if we are strict about the deadline, both to be fair to those who met the deadline, and to avoid further complications.)

Submitted by Nazanin

Shahrokni

Chair, International Liaison/Gallagher Grants Committee Syracuse

University

Department of Sociology

nshahrok@syr.edu

*All the points written in this report are taken from our email exchanges with all the committee members. However, I have to note that because I put together this report just a few days ago, we haven't been able to get Afe's confirmation/approval. I will update the Council should Afe raise new points or suggestions. Otherwise, please consider this final. Thanks to all.

The Robert J. McNamara Student Paper Award Committee, made up for Suzanne Macaluso, Todd Fuist, and Stuart Wright, received 20 submissions with the first submission being received on February 12th but the vast majority of submissions coming in between May 28 to June 1 (the deadline). The chair of the committee sent all papers to the rest of the committee with instructions to select their top three papers. All three committee members had one common top author. The committee selected Eman Abdelhadi's paper "The Hijab and Muslim Women's Employment in the United States." Overall, the process was fairly simple. The only problem was the timing and that there is one month, that is during the summer when many faculty are traveling or out of the office, between the deadline for submission and the notification being sent to the recipient. It did not prove to be a problem this year but we may want to consider changing the deadline to May 15, making it closer to the end of the school year for those on the semester system. However, that comes with its own problems and could lead to fewer submissions. My recommendation is to keep the deadline as is and be sure to communicate with the committee that they will need to be available during the month of June to review submissions.

Submitted by,
Suzanne Macaluso