

# **AGENDA**

## **ASR COUNCIL MEETING**

**4:00 – 8:15 p.m., Wednesday, August 13, 2014**  
**JW Marriott San Francisco Union Square, Salon I, Metropolitan Level (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)**

**Christopher Ellison presiding**

- 1) Review and approve minutes of last year's ASR Council Meetings (pp. 2-8).
- 2) Past-President's report on the results of the 2014 ASR Elections (p. 9).
- 3) President's report on 3-year appointments to ASR's Standing Committees, update on status of new Standing Committees (i.e., the Distinguished Article Award Committee and the Lifetime Achievement Award Committee) (p. 10).
- 4) President Elect's report on appointments of chairs of the Standing Committees, presentation of the Call for Papers for next year's Annual Meeting in Chicago, and announcement of next year's Program Chair and Furfey Lecturer.
- 5) Executive Officer's Report (pp. 11-14).
- 6) Development Committee Report (pp. 15-17).
- 7) Program Chair's Report (pp. 18-20).
- 8) Publisher's Report (see attached pdf file, as well as the Marketing Plan).
- 9) Editor's Report (pp. 21-24).
- 10) Membership Committee Report (pp. 25-35).
- 11) International Liaison Committee Report (the Gallagher Travel Grants) (pp. 36-37).
- 12) Fichter Award Committee Report (pp. 38-39).
- 13) McNamara Student Paper Award Committee Report (p. 40).
- 14) Distinguished Article Award Committee Report (p. 41).
- 15) New business.
  - a) Fundraising campaign to make it more realistic to increase the research grants.
  - b) Small stipend for a graduate assistant to help with additional analyses of Membership Survey.
  - c) Review the status of the Religion and the Social Order series.
  - d) Reorganize the EO position.

**ASR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**FIRST COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Saturday, August 10, 2013**  
**6:30-9:00 p.m.**  
**Doubletree Metropolitan, New York, New York**

Present: Fred Kniss (as President), Christopher Ellison (as President-elect), Roger Finke (as Past President), James Cavendish (as Executive Officer), Scott Schieman (as outgoing editor), Gerardo Marti (as incoming editor), and Voting Council members Jerry Park (2013), Jerome Baggett (2014), Kelly Chong (2014), Kevin Dougherty (2015), Rebecca Kim (2015), and Prema Kurien (2015). Also in attendance was Patricia Thomas, Executive Editor of the Humanities Journals of Oxford University Press.

Absent: Melissa Wilde (as incoming President-Elect), Council members Sally Gallagher (2013), Richard Wood (2013), and Amy Adamczyk (2014).

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by President Fred Kniss, who asked those present to review the minutes of the ASR Council Meetings that took place in 2012 (one of which was on August 19, 2012, in Denver, Colorado, and the other of which was on November 10, 2012, in Phoenix, Arizona). Fred announced that the minutes from Aug. 19, 2012, had already been approved by an email vote soon after the informal meeting in Phoenix in November, but asked for review and approval of the minutes from the meeting on November 10, 2012. All voted in favor of approving the minutes.

Roger Finke, the Past President of ASR, then presented his report as chair of the Nominations Committee, which was an announcement of the winners of the ASR elections in 2013. The winners of the election were Melissa Wilde as President Elect, and the following individuals to service as members of Council: Michael Emerson, Evelyn Bush, and Christopher Bader.

Fred Kniss then presented his President's Report, which announced the new members of ASR Standing Committees. (Readers of these minutes may refer to the 2013 Council Packet on the ASR website for a complete listing of these appointments.)

James Cavendish then summarized his Executive Officer's Report. He described how much of what he had set out to accomplish during his initial year as Executive Officer had been achieved. These things included the negotiation of hotel contracts, the upgrading of the website, and the use of various tools (e.g., the Constant Contact software, PayPal, etc.) to increase the efficiency and professionalism of the Association's communications and transactions. (Readers of these minutes may refer to the 2013 Council packet for a full listing of items included in Cavendish's report.)

Kelly Chong, the 2013 Program Chair, then presented her Program Chair report. She stated that because of the large number of pre-organized sessions for the 2013 Annual Meeting, including the special Presidential Panel to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Association, the Program Committee decided not to organize any "professionalization" sessions for meeting. One issue raised in Chong's report was the possibility of providing a small stipend to the Program Chair for the work of organizing the program. It was decided that Council would return to this discussion during the Second Council Meeting, during which they would discuss the budget.

Kelly Chong's Program Chair Report was followed by a presentation of reports from the Publications Committee, the Editor, and the Publisher. While a full description of the contents of these reports is available in the 2013 Council Packet, which is available on the ASR website, one particular issue that became a topic of discussion among Council members was the fact that ASR would not be receiving the same high level of royalties from Oxford University Press in 2013 (or probably any future year) that it had in 2012. As Patricia Thomas, Executive Editor at Oxford University Press, explained, the high royalties that ASR enjoyed during 2012 were the byproduct of the one-time sale of the digital archives of

the journal to libraries, and once these archives are purchased, libraries do not need to purchase them again. So, the \$107,724 in royalties that ASR enjoyed as revenue in 2012 would likely diminish to approximately \$50 or \$55k in 2013. Council acknowledged the implications that this would have on the proposed budget and suggested that we return to this conversation at the Second Council Meeting on Tuesday, August 13, 2013.

The reports about ASR's publications were followed by reports about ASR's awards, including (in the sequence in which they were presented) the Fichter Research Grant Committee report, the International Liaison Committee Report, and the McNamara Committee Report. All of these reports suggested ways in which the descriptions of these awards as they appear on the ASR website could be enhanced, and James Cavendish stated that he would be happy to implement the recommended changes.

James Cavendish and Gerardo Marti then presented the Membership Committee Report, which reported trend in ASR membership over time and contrasted those trends with those of comparable organizations devoted to the social scientific study of religion. Everyone acknowledged the need to conduct some type of survey of sociologists of religion in general, or of members of ASR in particular, in order to ensure that ASR is meeting the expectations and needs of its constituents.

Although the only formal vote that took place at this First Council Meeting was the approval of the minutes, it was acknowledged that several motions would likely be made at the Second Council Meeting which would require the vote of Council.

Fred Kniss thanked everyone for their service to ASR and their contributions to a successful meeting and adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

**ASR GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**  
**Monday, August 12, 2013**  
**7:00-8:00 a.m.**  
**Doubletree Metropolitan, New York, New York**

Present: Fred Kniss (as President), Christopher Ellison (as President-Elect), Melissa Wilde (as incoming President-Elect), and James Cavendish (as Executive Officer).

Several members of the Association attended, including two members who brought agenda items – Tony Blasi and Roberto Cipriani.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 a.m. by President Fred Kniss, who welcomed the ASR members who came to the meeting. Together, Fred Kniss, Christopher Ellison, Melissa Wilde, and James Cavendish summarized the business of the Association that had been reported at the First Council Meeting on August 10, 2013. (Readers of these minutes can refer to the minutes of that meeting to see the highlights.)

Two members of the Association, Tony Blasi and Roberto Cipriani brought issues to the Business Meeting that they thought the Officers and the Council would want to discuss at a future Council Meeting.

The issue brought by Tony Blasi was a proposal for ASR (or one of its members) to assume the task he has been performing since 1976 of assembling and maintaining the ASR Bibliographic Database in the sociology of religion, which is presently an online resource available through the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA). Tony, who has volunteered his time over many years to maintain and update the bibliography, is now facing some health issues and wants to find a successor to serve as the Bibliographic

Database Editor. The problem is that prospective editors might want a stipend and currently neither ARDA nor ASR has resources to devote to this. Tony proposed requiring non-ASR members who want access to the Bibliographic Database to pay a subscription and then those subscription fees could pay the editor to maintain the database. However, ARDA cannot do this because ARDA's agreement with the Lilly Foundation, which supports ARDA, prevents ARDA from collecting money through its website. James Cavendish requested that Tony present a written proposal to him which he could then take to Council at some point in the future.

The issue brought by Roberto Cipriani was in respect to decisions made by the editor to "desk reject" manuscripts before sending them out for full, peer review. Roberto was upset that a theoretical article that he wrote was not sent out for review simply because it wasn't an empirical article. Roberto stated that he believed anyone who is a member of ASR and submits a manuscript to the journal is entitled to a full, peer review. Fred Kniss and James Cavendish responded by saying that this is not the case, that the editor has the discretion to make decisions about whether to send a manuscript out for peer review.

No other issues were brought to the General Business Meeting, so Fred Kniss passed the torch of the presidency to Christopher Ellison and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 a.m.

**ASR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, August 13, 2013**  
**7:15 – 8:30 a.m.**  
**Doubletree Metropolitan, New York, New York**

Present: Christopher Ellison (as incoming President), Fred Kniss (as outgoing or Past President), Melissa Wilde (as incoming President-Elect), James Cavendish (as Executive Officer), Scott Schieman (as outgoing editor), Gerardo Marti (as incoming editor), Voting Council members Kelly Chong (2014), Kevin Dougherty (2015), Rebecca Kim (2015), Prema Kurien (2015), Christopher Bader (2016), and Evelyn Bush (2016).

Absent: Council members Amy Adamczyk (2014), Jerome Baggett (2014), and Michael Emerson (newly elected).

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 a.m. by incoming President Christopher Ellison, who welcomed the new members of the Council and chaired the meeting. Outgoing President Fred Kniss briefly summarized what was discussed at the First Council Meeting on Saturday, August 10. He spoke briefly about the past year and reviewed the details of the committee reports that were distributed and presented at the First Council Meeting.

Christopher Ellison then led a discussion about the Annual Meeting in New York, noting how the meetings went very well. He thanked the Program Committee, especially the Program Chair, Kelly Chong, for their work in making the meeting a success. Members of Council agreed that it was nice to present the McNamara Student Paper Award during the opening night reception.

Melissa Wilde suggested that the Program Chair avoid having 5 papers in the same session because 5-paper sessions can seem very long and it doesn't allow adequate time for discussion and Q&A. Chris Ellison then suggested that in an effort to increase the quality of papers presented at the meetings, and to make it easier for the Program Chair to evaluate the quality of the submissions, it would be good to require that applicants submit abstracts of at least 300-400 words. Council discussed this recommendation and voted unanimously to approve it. Jim Cavendish said that he would incorporate this new requirement in the Call for Papers and the website's online submission portal.

President Chris Ellison then presented to Council a number of recommendations that stemmed from the Standing Committee reports that had been presented at the First Council Meeting on Saturday, August 10. Among these were the following:

- The International Liason Committee's recommendations that: (a) ASR dispense more money (i.e., as much as \$1000) to a fewer number of international scholars; (b) these awards be made on a competitive basis based on the quality of applications that include a CV, a paper of 10 or more pages (double-spaced), and evidence that the applicant could actually afford to come to the meeting if the grant were given; and (c) these applications would be due on March 1. Council discussed these recommendations and voted unanimously to approve them.
- The McNamara Committee's recommendation that Council approve the proposed revision to the language of the website and the duties of the McNamara Committee as reflected on pages 25-26 of the Council packet. Council discussed this and voted unanimously to support this revision.
- The Membership Committee's recommendations that Council support: (a) an initiative to conduct a membership survey; and (b) an initiative to increase interest among scholars in joining ASR by having an annual award competitions for best article and/or best book as well as an annual "Lifetime Achievement Award." In discussing the first of these recommendations, some Council members and incoming President-Elect Melissa Wilde thought that it would be good to survey not only existing ASR members but also any contacts that ASR has had (e.g., past members, authors of articles submitted to the journal, etc.). However, it was acknowledged that the practical realities of obtaining a comprehensive list of sociologists of religion would be difficult, and that the Membership Committee would have to be guided by what was practical. In discussing the second of these recommendations, those members of Council who had worked on "The Distinguished Book" award committees for other associations noted that reviewing a large number of scholarly books each year can be a monumental task. Recognizing this, and after considerable discussion, Council voted in favor of pursuing the establishment of an annual Distinguished Article Award and a Lifetime Achievement Award, but to hold off on establishing a Distinguished Book Award. President Christopher Ellison stated that he would begin this work by establishing ad-hoc committees for each of these award competitions and offered to personally fund the initial Distinguished Article Awards. Jim Cavendish and Fred Kniss stated that if these award competitions are to become institutionalized, we will need to craft amendments to the By-Laws that would create Standing Committees to oversee each of these competitions.

Christopher Ellison then presented to Council the possibility of creating an ad hoc committee to review the ASR Constitution and propose amendments either to the Constitution or the by-laws that would make them more suited to the current operations and goals of the Association. There was general agreement that such an ad-hoc committee would be useful and that, among other things, it could craft language for the creation of Standing Committees for each of the new award competitions.

Christopher Ellison then turned the discussion to the proposed budget. Jim Cavendish stated that it would be difficult at this early stage to approve the proposed budget because Patricia Thomas, an Executive Editor at Oxford University Press, stated that ASR should not count on receiving the same high amount in royalties at the end of 2013 that it had received at the end of 2012. Council agreed that before making the final decision to approve the budget we would wait to see what types of royalties ASR receives from OUP toward the end of 2013 and then vote by email.

There were a few specific budget items, however, that Christopher Ellison and Jim Cavendish wanted the Council to consider and approve at the meeting. Among them were:

- To raise the manuscript submission fee for those who are not ASR members from \$25 to \$35 as a way of encouraging membership (membership is also \$35 and members can submit manuscripts for free).

- Jim Cavendish's proposal to hire a graduate student at USF who specializes in the sociology of religion to help with the tasks of responding to members' emails, processing new memberships and membership renewals, etc. He suggested a stipend of \$2,500.
- The Program Committee's proposal that ASR pay the Program Chair a stipend of \$2,500, which could be used as a stipend for him/herself and/or to hire an assistant to complete all of the tasks associated with developing the program.

Council voted unanimously in favor of the first proposal (i.e., raising the manuscript submission fee) and the second proposal (i.e., the hiring of a graduate student to serve as an administrative assistant for \$2,500). With respect to the third proposal, however, a couple members of Council, including Fred Kniss, suggested that because the idea of a voluntary association is to contribute by way of service, and because the Program Chair is already compensated in the form of covering transportation costs to the meeting and providing a room at the conference hotel, that the \$2,500 be used only if the Program Chair needs to hire an assistant to carry out some of the tasks associated with his/her role. Those still present at the meeting agreed with this plan, but acknowledged that the job of Program Chair can be quite labor intensive.

There being no other business, Christopher Ellison adjourned the meeting at 8:45 a.m.

### **Developments after the Council Meeting on August 13, 2013.**

Because Council decided at the Council Meeting (detailed above) to wait until after it received an estimate from Oxford University Press about the amount of royalties ASR would receive from the journal before voting on the proposed budget for 2014, *the following actions took place in December of 2013:*

- 1) In early December, 2013, the Executive Officers of ASR learned from OUP that ASR should not expect any royalties from OUP beyond the minimum \$50k that is guaranteed in our contract with OUP. This means that ASR would receive almost \$50k less from OUP this year compared to last year. In light of this and the fact that ASR ran a deficit budget in 2013, the Executive Officers and Kevin Dougherty, the Chair of the Development Committee, recommended that we search for additional ways to increase revenues and trim expenses in 2014 before voting on the 2014 proposed budget. These recommendations were detailed in a letter sent to Council on Wednesday, December, 11, 2013, in which Council was asked to vote on three specific recommendations. Among the recommendations to increase revenues were the following:
  - a) For ASR to entertain selling our mailing list to publishers who seek to reach scholars of religion, just as SSSR does.
  - b) For ASR to raise the meeting registration fee for constituent/general members from \$60 to \$70, but to leave the student registration fee at \$25. (SSSR's meeting registration fee is currently \$90.)

The Executive Officers also recommended, as a cost-savings measure in 2014, to reduce the amount provided for the Fichter Grants in 2014 from \$24,000 to \$12,000, which was the level of these awards before 2012, the year when ASR enjoyed an artificially high royalty payment from OUP.

- 2) By the end of December, Jim Cavendish received votes on the above three recommendations from the following Council members: Evelyn Bush, Jerome Baggett, Rebecca Kim, Prema Kurien, Christopher Ellison, Melissa Wilde, Michael Emerson, Amy Adamczyk, Kevin Dougherty, and Fred Kniss. Council unanimously supported the first two recommendations (a &

b above), and all but one voted to support the last recommendation (a decrease in the Fichter Award).

On February 10, 2014, Jim Cavendish sent the following email to the Council to update them on business and request their votes:

Dear ASR Council Members:

I'm writing to update you on a few different business items, to share with you the details of the Annual Meeting in San Francisco in August, and to ask you to consider and vote on the inclusion of two proposed Amendments to ASR's By-Laws on this year's election ballot.

First, the business items.

- 1) One of the upcoming issues of our journal will be a special 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue, which will contain a number of invited essays. In order to make room for these essays and to not create a backlog on forthcoming articles, Gerardo Marti and the Executive Officers have decided to print one additional article in each issue of Volume 75. At the Council meeting in August, we can discuss whether we would like this inclusion of one extra article per issue to be an ongoing practice based on its costs and benefits.
- 2) In the very near future, we will be adding one additional benefit to ASR members inside the Members Only area of the ASR website – namely, a link to an Oxford University Press webpage where our members can purchase OUP titles at a 20% discount.
- 3) Back in December, the Council voted to limit the Furfey Grants this year to \$12k instead of \$24k because of the \$50k+ reduction in royalties from OUP between 2012 and 2013. Subsequent to that vote, I had a phone conversation and correspondence with a financial advisor who, upon inspecting ASR's financial situation and investment portfolio, advised that ASR would be safe to withdraw and spend up to 4% of our investments on an annual basis to support our mission. He also suggested that before we begin doing so, ASR adopt a formal "Investment and Spending Policy" (much like SSSR's), which formalizes this practice. Upon receiving this advice, the Executive Officers decided that this would be the best course of action. The Development Committee is at work on an "Investment and Spending Policy." They will circulate their proposal before the Council meeting in August so that we can discuss/amend and approve that policy at the meeting.

Second, the details of the Annual Meeting. Council will hold its **first meeting on Wednesday afternoon, August 13, at either 4 or 5 p.m.** In the past, we started the meeting at 5 p.m., but given the number of items we want to discuss, I think we should all plan to be available as early as 4 p.m. that day. Council will hold its **second meeting on Saturday morning, August 16, at around 7:00 a.m.**, just before the beginning of the ASA Religion Section sessions. It is an expectation that all continuing members of Council attend both meetings, and those whose term of service will be ending in August are expected to attend at least the first Council meeting.

If you have not already done so, please book your hotel reservations now (or very soon) so you can enjoy the lower ASR rates. Last year, some waited until just weeks before the conference and ended up paying an exorbitant amount because our room block had already filled.

Finally, as you might recall from last year's meeting, Council discussed and approved a recommendation that ASR present to its members a proposal to add two additional annual awards – a Distinguished Article Award and a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Although we plan to initiate the Distinguished Article Award this year, in order for these two awards to be institutionalized on an ongoing basis, ASR's members need to vote to support this initiative – and, by extension, support the creation of two additional Standing Committees whose task would be to evaluate submissions and applications for these awards.

Please vote to either accept or reject the inclusion on this year's election ballot of the following two proposed amendments to ASR's By-Laws, which will create these two Standing Committees.

Amendment 1: For the creation of "A Distinguished Article Award Committee to encourage, recognize, and support outstanding scholarship in the sociology of religion by giving an annual certificate of honor and monetary grant to a member who has written an exceptional peer-reviewed article in the sociology of religion."

Amendment 2: For the creation of "A Lifetime Achievement Award Committee to recognize a member for his/her outstanding lifetime contributions in the sociology of religion by giving an annual certificate of honor and monetary grant."

If these Amendments are approved by Council (by email vote), they will be put before the membership in this year's election. Then, if two-thirds or more of those voting in the election support the Amendments, they will be added to By-Law I, Sec. 2, of the existing By-Laws (which can be viewed at <http://www.sociologyofreligion.com/about/constitution-and-by-laws/>).

Please send me your vote by replying to this email by Friday, February 14.

*By the middle of February, 2014*, Jim Cavendish received votes from the following Council members: Rebecca Kim, Prema Kurien, Michael Emerson, Chris Bader, Kelly Chong, Evelyn Bush, Amy Adamczyk, Kevin Dougherty, Jerome Baggett, Melissa Wilde, Chris Ellison, and Fred Kniss. All voted in favor of including these proposed Amendments on this year's election ballot.

Respectfully submitted,

James Cavendish  
Executive Officer



## Nominations Committee Report

July, 2014

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

FROM: Fred Kniss, Past-President of ASR

Re: Nominations Committee and Election Results

The Past-President's primary (to be honest, only) duty is to chair the Nominations Committee. Joining me on the 2013-14 committee were Melinda Denton and Fenggang Yang. They provided generous assistance in nominating a strong ballot of candidates.

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

In January, the committee submitted the following ballot. This year, President-Elect candidates were asked to submit a short statement of their vision for ASR in addition to the standard bio. The election closed on June 1 with 83 members casting ballots. The elected candidates are highlighted in bold below.

### President-Elect

**Lori Beaman**  
Prema Kurien

### Council Member

John Evans  
**Richard Flory**  
**Giuseppe Giordan**  
Mary Ellen Konieczny  
**Milagros Peña**  
Melissa Wilcox

The ballot also included two constitutional amendments. Amendment 1 was adopted, 81-2. Amendment 2 was adopted, 80-3.

Fred Kniss  
ASR Past-President

**2014-2015 ASR Committee Appointments Made by President Christopher Ellison**  
**Committee Chair Appointments will be made by Incoming President Melissa Wilde**  
*Year in parentheses indicates the year that person's term expires*

Publications Committee

Rebecca Kim (2015)  
Richard Wood (2016)  
Terrence Hill (2017)  
Elaine Howard Ecklund (2017)

Development Committee

Fred Kniss (2015)  
Kevin Dougherty (2016)  
Ted Long (2017)

Membership Committee

Gerardo Marti (2015)  
Andrea Henderson (2016)  
Gabriel Acevedo (2017)

International Liaison Committee

Prema Kurien (2015)  
Rachel Rinaldo (2016)  
Gladys Ganiel (2017)

Joseph Fichter Award Committee

Mary Ellen Konieczny (2015)  
Jeremy Thomas (2016)  
Richard Pitt (2017)

Robert McNamara Award Committee

Kevin McElmurry (2015)  
Kathleen Jenkins (2016)  
Aida Ramos-Wada (2017)

Distinguished Article Award Committee

John Bartkowski (2015)  
Alex Bierman (2017)  
Nicolette Manglos-Weber (2017)

Lifetime Achievement Award Committee

Michele Dillon (2017)  
Rhys Williams (2017)  
Amy Adamczyk (2017)

ASR is grateful for the contributions of the following individuals who served as chairs of committees during 2014: Kevin Dougherty (Development), Gabriel Acevedo (Membership), Prema Kurien (International Liaison Committee), Helen Berger (Fichter Award Committee), Kathleen Jenkins (McNamara Award Committee), John Bartkowski (Distinguished Article Award Committee).

We are also grateful for the service of the following individuals whose terms of service on these committees expired this year: Nancy Nason-Clark (Publications), Michael Wilkinson (Development), Paula Nesbit (Membership), Giuseppe Giordan (International Liaison Committee), Helen Berger (Fichter Award Committee), and Perry Chang (McNamara Award Committee).

## ASR Executive Officer's Report

August, 2014

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

FROM: Jim Cavendish, Executive Officer

RE: Report on the State of ASR

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

- 1) I worked with our web-designer, Neil Luft, to initiate the online abstract submission feature for our Annual Meeting.
- 2) I worked with Oxford University Press and our web-designer to include an additional benefit to our members (i.e., a 20% discount on OUP books purchased through the Members Only area of the website).
- 3) I continued to upload many of ASR's documents to the website to enable greater access to valuable information about the Association's history and greater transparency of our financial operations. Among these is a new page titled "Tax Exempt Status and Financial Transparency" in the "About the Association" section of the website.
- 4) I completed the IRS Tax Form 990 for IRC 501(c)6 organizations and posted it to the website.
- 5) I worked with the staff of the JW Marriott to ensure the success of this year's Annual Meeting. I'm happy to report that we have filled a sufficient number of sleeping rooms here at the JW Marriott so ASR won't suffer any penalties due to attrition.
- 6) With the assistance of Jerome Baggett, I negotiated with Santa Clara University for the use of their audiovisual equipment during our Annual Meeting, which has saved ASR approximately \$10-\$12k in audiovisual rental expenses.
- 7) I've begun to negotiate a contract for a hotel and meeting room space for next year's Annual Meeting in Chicago which will likely include the provision of low-cost rooms which can be used by graduate students or members on a fixed budget.
- 8) I worked with the Development Committee in composing an Investment Policy.
- 9) I worked with the Membership Committee in composing and disseminating the 2014 Membership Survey.

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

- Our Program Chair this year, Jeremy Uecker, did an excellent job putting together a fantastic program.
- In this year's Editor's Report, Gerardo Marti reports that *Sociology of Religion* continues to climb in the rankings, now ranking 16<sup>th</sup> among journals in sociology.
- The results of the 2014 Membership Survey reveal that many ASR members are quite satisfied with the current mission and operations of the Association.

So, what does the financial status of ASR look like at the current time? ASR's assets at the current time (August 9, 2014) are summarized below:

<b>ASR's Assets as of August 9, 2014</b>	
ASR's Checking Account at the USF Federal Credit Union	\$67,399.36*
ASR's Savings Account at the USF Federal Credit Union	\$2,513.26
PayPal Account	\$560.07
<i>American Funds Accounts (Mutual funds)</i>	
Washington Mutual Investors Fund-A (Fund #01)	\$105,184.85
The Bond Fund of America-A (Fund #08, bond fund**)	\$103,553.83
American High-Income Trust-A (Fund #21, bond fund)	\$116,378.08
Capital World Growth and Income Fund-A (Fund #33)	\$101,691.42
SMALLCAP World Fund-A (Fund #35)	\$110,810.88
American Funds Money Market Fund-A (Fund #59)	\$11,196.19
<b>Total Value of American Funds Portfolio</b>	<b>\$548,815.25</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$619,287.94</b>

\* \$25k of this was drawn from investments in March to make sure we could pay our bills. That \$25k should be returned to investments after we pay our bills for the Annual Meeting

\*\*bond funds pay monthly

Funds 01, 33 = growth and income, pay out quarterly.

Fund 35 = growth fund, dividends are paid once a year, with the goal of establishing equity.

Fund 59 = Money Market fund, as a cash reserve.

I think it's a bit premature for us to vote on a budget for next year because there are still too many things up in the air that could affect that budget. So, like last year, I'd like to request that we hold off on actually approving a budget until after I receive estimates for the cost of certain things. For instance, I still don't know:

- 1) Whether we will have to pay a rental fee for meeting room space in Chicago next year. We've customarily held our Chicago meetings at the Essex Inn, which is adjacent the main ASA hotel on Michigan Ave., but the Essex Inn does not have sufficient meeting room space. So, if we meet again at the Essex, we will likely have to rent supplemental meeting room space from either East West University (like we've done in the past) or from a place called Venue SIX10. The executive officers are reviewing possibilities at the current time.
- 2) Whether we will have to rent audiovisual equipment in Chicago, like we did in NYC, or whether we can get one of the universities in the Chicago area to donate the use of their equipment.

I will try to compose a full budget sheet for distribution at the Council meeting on Wednesday, but if you're anxious to see our spending for last year, you can peruse the 990 Form that I submitted to the IRS back in May, which I've posted to <http://www.sociologyofreligion.com/about/financial-transparency/>. I will say that on the basis of discussions I've had with our financial advisors and with our executive officers, it seems unwise for us to increase (at least by very much) the money we give out to our members in the form of research and travel grants until after we've grown our endowment. Yes, it is true that we can draw a certain percentage (4-5%) from our investment accounts each year to support our mission, but we have already been doing that to support our current grant allocations and operations. I've gotten a clear message from our financial advisors that to return the annual Fichter grant allocation to \$24k would be unwise, at least not until after we increase our investment accounts/endowment to over \$1 million.

As I have conveyed to the Officers of our Association, because my dean at USF has given me additional administrative responsibilities with the university, my current level of work for ASR will not be sustainable beyond a single term, at least not without a new arrangement and/or restructuring of the EO position in 2016. In light of this, I've asked ASR's officers to begin considering various options for either replacing me as EO in 2016 or restructuring the position so as to reduce the current work load. Among the options I've asked them to consider are the following:

- 1) ASR could try to identify someone who is capable of doing all of the tasks of EO and who is willing to step up and serve ASR as the next EO (thus replacing me at the end of my current term of service). Although the work of EO exceeds the level of compensation, some folks might be willing to put in a single term of service, as I have done this term. Furthermore, because I have done a lot of work to organize the administrative aspects of ASR, I think it would be fairly easy for someone to step in and assume my role under my initial guidance;
- 2) ASR could, in addition to trying to identify someone who is capable and willing to do most of the current tasks of EO, think about ways that the current tasks could be reduced (e.g., by farming out the processing of memberships to Oxford University Press or whoever might be publishing our journal at the end of my term). This is a viable option, but it would diminish ASR's control over its membership list and it would require negotiating this with our publisher. As I recall from our last negotiation with Oxford University Press, OUP was willing to process memberships as part of the package (i.e., at no additional cost to ASR);
- 3) ASR could divide the current tasks of the EO into two or more separate positions so that no single person feels overwhelmed (e.g., an EO who handles Membership, Finances, Communications, and the Website and a Meeting Planner who handles everything with respect to planning the Annual Meeting). I think this is a good option because about half of my time is spent doing things related to the Annual Meeting, so to have someone assume the role of Meeting Planner would take a huge load off of the EO and make both positions into ones that could be reasonably performed by individuals working as university or college professors. In this scenario, the EO and the Meeting Planner could be equally compensated, but with two positions instead of one, it would likely cost ASR slightly more money (at least I don't know of anyone who would be willing to do either of these two jobs for just half of the current EO stipend);
- 4) We could negotiate an arrangement with an individual and his/her institution whereby ASR enters into a contractual agreement with the EO's primary employer (like SSSR has done with Art Farnsley's institution, IUPUI) in which ASR either pays a portion of the EO's salary and benefits directly to the institution in exchange for release time from that institution, or pays the institution for a full-time graduate assistant to help the EO. This is a good option but it would probably require the most money, which means that ASR would have to generate substantially more revenue from things like membership dues or fundraising campaigns. I believe that SSSR currently pays IUPUI between \$26-\$30k to provide Art with course release, partial salary, and health benefits), and even under this arrangement, Art's dean has told him that his current term as EO of SSSR is his last;
- 5) If we are unable to find volunteers who are willing to commit to a term of service as EO (i.e., options 1 and 2 above) and we are unable or unwilling to generate new revenue to support option 3 or 4 above, then we could consider (although this is my least favored option) taking an economies of scale approach and merging with a similar association (like SSSR) so that equipment and resources could be shared and membership processing, email communication, website management, financial accounting, meeting planning, etc., is done more efficiently by a single administrative body. This option would only be viable if the members of each association voted to support such a merger and each association respected the distinct identity of the other and found a way to preserve their distinct identities, meetings, and journals. The benefit of this kind of administrative centralization, though, would be the sharing of equipment and resources (e.g., AV equipment for meetings) that would result in substantial cost savings that could then be allocated to our primary missions.

I don't advocate for any one of these 5 options over any of the others, but I can say that my own ability to serve as EO beyond 2016 would depend on ASR adopting option 3 or 4, both of which will require additional financial resources from ASR. I share this with you now because this requires planning and attention to our current financial situation and forecasts. It will require that we, following the advice of our financial advisors, develop a strategic plan that presents a five-year forecast of our revenues and expenses so that we can build a sustainable future.

## Development Committee Report

July 9, 2014

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

FROM: Kevin Dougherty

The purpose of the Development Committee is “to advance the Association’s long-term financial condition (including investments and fund-raising) and generate financial support for the annual meeting in its various locales.” Members of the 2013-2014 Development Committee were Kevin Dougherty and Michael Wilkinson. A third committee member withdrew early in the academic year.

One of the primary activities of the Development Committee is to provide financial accountability to the Executive Officer and Council. Toward this end, our committee was involved in numerous discussions and decisions pertaining to the budget, expenditures, and investments. We worked with Jim Cavendish to produce a revised budget reflecting the royalties from Oxford University Press. We supported the decision to employ a financial advisor for ad hoc consultation. We provided input on other financial matters as needed.

A major initiative of the Development Committee for 2013-2014 was to craft an Investment and Spending Policy. ASR has over \$500,000 in investment holdings. Until now, no formal policy was in place to govern these assets. Our new financial advisor, Ken Marx, recommended that we put such a policy in place. The policy document for ASR is based on the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion’s investment policy. After consulting with SSSR and other professional associations, we determined that ASR could safely spend up to 4% of the fair market value of its investments each year. Over the past several years, the Association has spent between 2.5% and 3.8% of its investments, while gaining 8% annually in returns. Setting investment spending at 4% will give ASR a stable basis of income (and more income) without a reduction in total assets. We submit the Investment and Spending Policy for Council approval.

Finally, the Development Committee assisted in fund-raising efforts for the 2014 annual meeting. The committee was able to secure the Baylor University Department of Sociology as a co-sponsor for the ASR Presidential Reception.

## **ASSOCIATION FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION INVESTMENT AND SPENDING POLICY**

### **I: Investment Objective**

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

### **II: Asset Allocation**

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

### **III: Equity Investments**

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

### **IV: Fixed-Income Investments**

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

### **V: Tactical Asset Allocation**

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

### **VI: Statement of Social Responsibility**

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

### **VII: Spending Policy**

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



investments over time adjusted for inflation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Program Chair's Report

July 25, 2014

TO: Association for the Study of Religion (ASR)

FROM: Jeremy Uecker, 2014 Program Chair

RE: 2014 Program Chair Report

### Program Overview

At this writing, this year's ASR program has 49 sessions, in which 135 original research papers are scheduled to be presented. Approximately 218 individuals appear on the program as organizers, conveners, critics, panelists, authors, or co-authors. Of the 49 total sessions, eight (8) are Authors Meets Critics, five (5) are member-organized paper sessions, 29 are Regular sessions organized by the Program Chair from individual paper submissions, three (3) are professional development sessions (organized by Kevin Dougherty and Gerardo Marti), two (2) are joint ASR/ASA sessions, and two (2) are presidential panels. Below is a detailed breakdown of this year's sessions and how they compare to the last two years.

<b>Session Type</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
<i>Pre-Organized Sessions</i>			
Author-Meets-Critics	8	7	8
Proposed Paper Sessions	3	11	5
Professional Development Sessions	2	0	3
<b>Total Pre-Organized Sessions</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>
Regular Sessions	29	27	29
Presidential Panel	0	1	2
Joint ASR-ASA Sessions	4	2	2
<b>Total Sessions</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>
Papers Scheduled to be Presented	151	152	135

The number of original papers to be presented is down from previous years. We have had 14 original submissions withdrawn from the program as of this writing.

### The Process/Issues

Beginning in summer of 2013, President Christopher Ellison organized two joint ASA/ASR sessions. One is to be held at the ASA venue and one at the ASR venue.

In the spring of 2014, I worked to organize several Author Meets Critics and panel sessions and, after the submission deadline, organized regular paper sessions. The original preliminary program was posted online on May 28, 2014. I drafted the program myself and enlisted administrative assistant from Sharon

Tate and Jamie Carlton, both of Baylor University, in constructing the index and adding e-mail addresses to the program. This assistance cost ASR \$195, well below the Program Chair budget.

In drafting the program, I made considerable formatting changes to make the program appear more contemporary. I switched the font to Georgia throughout the program and made the program less cluttered and more readable. Because abstracts this year had a word limit of 300 words, it was not feasible to print abstracts in the program. Although this was the principal reason for excluding abstracts, it was the opinion of the Program Committee that printed abstracts are not necessary for the program going forward and will save printing costs. Future program chairs should take this into consideration when drafting future programs.

This year was the first time web submission via the association website was the exclusive means of submission. This was done to ensure that participants were members of the association who had registered for the meetings. There are ways this system could be improved. For example, there should be a way for the Program Chair to download the abstracts as a single file rather than individually. The administrative portal is also clunky to navigate. For example, after updating the status of an abstract (from Pending Review to Approved, for example) there is no way to access the next abstract except by clicking on "Manage Meetings & Abstracts," then clicking on "Abstracts," then scrolling down the list again to find the next abstract. There should be links for "Next Abstract," "Previous Abstract," and "Return to List of Abstracts" on the confirmation page after an abstract has been updated. Moreover, the status of submissions with special characters was unable to be changed. This was a problem for abstracts that were cut-and-pasted from Microsoft Word. There were other technical glitches that caused inefficiencies throughout the submission and review process. Neil Lutz was not always quick to respond.

After the submission deadline, I sent a list of 10 abstracts to the program committee that I considered borderline acceptable. After gathering their input, two (2) of these papers, as well as three (3) others that were clearly not appropriate, were rejected. One (1) of the original rejections ultimately made it on to the program after dogged persistence on the part of the author. Thus, four (4) papers were ultimately rejected. Rejections were based on the papers not being sociological. Because the number of submissions was already low, my hands were relatively tied in terms of quality control. Low paper quality is a concern.

There are several logistical changes to the program from year's past. Most notably, most sessions have been shortened from 110 minutes to 90 minutes. Even with 20-minute paper presentations, 30 minutes for questions and answers is often excessive, and there are awkward time gaps between sessions. By shortening the sessions, I hope to create a more fluid conference. Additionally, the shortened sessions allow for a morning coffee break on both days as well as a lunch break. The ASR Business Meeting is being held during the lunch break on Thursday rather than early in the morning. The program committee and I hope that this will boost attendance at the business meeting. In addition, Gabriel Acevedo and Jim Cavendish will present results from the ASR membership survey. Because all sessions in the first time slot on Thursday are 3-paper sessions, I have changed the start time to 8:15 am. This was originally the plan for Friday as well, but due to withdraws and other scheduling issues, there is a 4-paper session in the Friday time slot, so it will start at 8:00 am. Sessions begin at 8:15/8:00 am, 10:00 am, 1:00 pm, 2:45 pm, and 4:30 pm. The 4:30 pm sessions are longer in order to accommodate 5-paper sessions and in order to match the time that appears in the ASA program for the ASA/ASR joint session on Friday afternoon.

After the program was constructed, I recruited conveners for all sessions. As of this writing, we still need three conveners. Open calls for conveners are not effective.

All paper sessions have 3-5 papers. In the original construction of the program, all 3-paper sessions were in the 8:15 time slots and there were no 5-paper sessions. With withdrawals and scheduling conflicts, however, some changes had to be made. Two of the three 5-paper sessions are in a 105-minute time slot and should be easily accommodated. The third 5-paper session is in a 90-minute session and will be pressed for time. In some cases, I recruited Discussants for sessions that have 3 papers (because of a

withdrawal). However, as the number of withdrawals increased, it became too time consuming to find a Discussant for all sessions.

**The primary problem I encountered with the program this year is the meeting's lack of overlap with ASA.** Recruiting participants for Author Meets Critics sessions and panels was extremely difficult, with many scholars citing their inability to pay for five or six nights of lodging in San Francisco. Many of the scholars who withdrew (which strike me as numerous at approximately 10%, though I have no point of comparison) cited funding issues. In many cases, I was forced to make promises to participants that their session would be scheduled for Friday. Chris Ellison made similar promises to those in the panels he organized. As a result, the program is back-loaded with many of the higher profile sessions appearing on Friday. In at least one case this has led to the ASR's version of the "Group of Death," with three high-profile sessions being scheduled concurrently. I recommend overlapping the ASR meeting with the ASA meeting, especially when the meeting is held in an expensive location.

### **Acknowledgments**

Organizing the ASR program has been at turns fun, interesting, enlightening, and frustrating. On the whole, however, it has been a good experience. I thank Chris Ellison for inviting me to serve in this capacity, as well as for helping to plan several of the sessions. I also thank Jim Cavendish for his unswerving support and guidance. His help has been invaluable, and his patience with ridiculous requests (mostly from conference participants, but also probably from me) is truly amazing. I would also like to thank Kelly Chong, the previous Program Chair, for her advice, and my Baylor colleague Chris Pieper for his insights and role as therapist in helping me deal with some of the frustrating aspects of the job—or at least for listening to my rants. Special thanks are also due to Sharon Tate and Jamie Carlton for their assistance with the program index and e-mail addresses.

## **Editor's Report August 2013– August 2014** **Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review**

August 1, 2014

Prepared By: Gerardo Marti (Davidson College)

### **I. Book Review Editor, Deputy Editors, and Editorial Board**

Book Review Editor:

Rebecca Y. Kim (Pepperdine University)

Deputy Editors:

Kevin Dougherty (Baylor University)

Penny Edgell (University of Minnesota)

Editorial Board Members (Institution/Date term ends):

Nancy Ammerman, Boston University (December 2017)

Joseph O. Baker (East Tennessee State University/August, 2014)

Eileen Barker, London School of Economics (December 2017)

John Bartowski, University of Texas at San Antonio (December 2017)

Alex Bierman, University of Calgary (December 2017)

Matt Bradshaw (Duke University/August, 2014)

Wendy Cadge, Brandeis University (December 2017)

James Cavendish (University of South Florida/August, 2014)

Dave Dixon (St. Joseph's College/August, 2014)

Michael Emerson (Rice University/August, 2017)

Patricia Snell Herzog (Rice University/August, 2014)

Ines Jindra (University of Notre Dame/August, 2014)

Rachel Kraus (Ball State University/August, 2014)

Rebekah P. Massengill (Swathmore College/August, 2014)

Andrew McKinnon (University of Aberdeen/August, 2014)

Atalia Omer (University of Notre Dame/August, 2014)

Rachel Rinaldo, University of Virginia (December 2017)

Susan Crawford Sullivan (College of the Holy Cross/August 2014)

Jeremy Uecker, Baylor University (December 2017)

R. Stephen Warner, University of Illinois, Chicago (December 2017)

James Wellman (University of Washington/August, 2017)

The Editorial Board has been responsive and helpful, and the new Deputy Editors—Penny and Kevin—have been outstanding.

With many terms of board members expiring this year, I am beginning to recruit new board members. I am especially interested in recruiting scholars with expertise in Jewish and Muslim dynamics, as well as those with expertise in China. Willingness to respond quickly and provide detailed reviews is most appreciated. I also intend to stagger invitations to more evenly spread the terms of board members.

### **II. Manuscript Flow**

- 170 manuscripts in total (new and revised submissions) were processed on or after August 1, 2013. The total for the previous year was 145.
- 110 original (new) manuscripts with a submission date on or after August 1, 2013—an increase of 14 from the previous year.

- o Of the 110 that have editorial decisions, 90 were rejected (82%) and 10 were given “major revision” status (9%). Other than the Furfey Lecture, no manuscripts were accepted outright and no unsolicited manuscripts were given “minor revision” status outright (exceptions being Presidential Address and invited essays for Winter issue 75.4).
- 52 revised manuscripts with a submission date on or after August 1, 2013—an increase of 12 from the previous year.
  - o Of the 52 revised manuscripts that have decisions: 20 were accepted (39%), 6 were given “major revision” status—that is, a second “major revision” (12%), 16 were given “minor revision” status (31%), and 10 were rejected (19%).
- Of all manuscripts that received an editorial decision on or after August 1, 2013, **13% percent** (21/162) were accepted (this includes the Presidential Address).

### III. Editorial Lag

- Among new submissions, most editorial decisions are sent back to authors within 4 to 9 weeks of the submission date.
  - o Rejected manuscripts averaged 33 days from submission date to editorial decision date (this excludes 1 immediate rejection). This compares to 40 days last year.
  - o “Major revision” decisions averaged 51 days from submission date to decision. This compares to 68 days last year.
- Among revised submissions,
  - o “Accepted” decisions average 2 days (compared to 15 days last year) from submission to decision.
  - o “Minor revision” (a 2<sup>nd</sup> R&R or “conditional acceptance”) decisions average lag is 56 days (compared to 67 days last year).
  - o “Major revision” decisions (a 2<sup>nd</sup> R&R) average lag is 38 days ((compared to 85 days last year).
  - o “Reject” decisions average lag is 58 days ((compared to 52 days last year).
  - o Observing the overall increase in expediency of decisions, the particularly rapid processing of “accepted” manuscripts is due in part to my practice of asking authors to “finalize” their manuscript with suggestions/expectations for slight revisions that are quickly reviewed by me.
- The time from acceptance to publication online in Advance Access remains approximately 4 – 5 weeks; from Advance Access to print remains roughly 3 - 6 months.

### IV. Impact Factor

Summary of Impact: SOR had another solid bump in the impact factor over the past year **from 1.08 to 1.667**. This continues SOR surpassing the "1.0" level on the impact factor rating for a second year. Just to provide a familiar point of comparison, JSSR moved from 1.39 to 1.15 during that same period. In the impact factor ranking out of 134 sociology journals, **SOR moved from 52nd to 16th** (JSSR went from 33rd to 42<sup>nd</sup>; RRR went from 95th to 100th).

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

Now in 2013: SOR ranked 16th in sociology, (just behind Journal of Marriage and the Family and Work and Occupations). JSSR ranked 42nd (IF = 1.15) and Social Problems ranked 25th (IF = 1.36)

I am confident this upward movement indicates recognition of the quality, diversity, and importance of the scholarship published in the journal. And, like previous editors, I am also committed to do all that I can to see that this increased visibility and impact continues.

More detail: *Sociology of Religion* ranks 16 out of 134 in Impact Factor in the Sociology journals category of the ISI rankings. (Last year, *Sociology of Religion* ranked 52nd out of 137 in Impact Factor in the sociology journals category of the ISI rankings.) The **5-year Impact Factor is 1.678**, ranking *Sociology of Religion* 41 out of 134 sociology journals. (Last year, the 5-year impact factor was 1.333, ranking 58 out of 137 sociology journals. The previous year it was 1.09).

*Sociology of Religion* 2013 (latest) impact factor is 1.667 (A positive trend over the past few years):

2009 = .56  
2010 = .91  
2011 = .86  
2012 = 1.08

#### Comparison with JSSR:

The 2013 (latest) impact factor is 1.15

2009 = .92  
2010 = 1.34  
2011 = 1.34  
2012 = 1.39

#### Comparison with RRR:

The 2013 (latest) impact factor is .5

2009 = .29  
2010 = .47  
2011 = .45  
2012 = .34

Near future considerations: In honor of the 75th Volume of the journal, the Deputy Editors and I solicited eight essays from a range of scholars (younger to more established, various arenas of scholarly focus, gender and racial considerations, etc.) for a special Winter 2014 75.4 issue that all reflect upon a key question of interest to our readership and within our discipline more broadly: “Why should sociologists care about the study of religion, and how does the study of religion enrich the discipline as a whole?” The essays were reviewed by both Deputy Editors, and myself. I believe these essays will be well-received and broadly read. The essays are shorter, and there are more of them, which means that eight articles will appear instead of a typical five or six. To make room for this invited issue, and to prevent considerable lag of publication from regular submissions, it was decided to increase the number of articles in the first three issues by one.

Also, Scott Schieman published a “comment” and “reply” exchange in 2013 Winter issue 74.4 (his last issue), and this issue included an additional article as well.

In the near future, these additional articles could result in a “dip” in our impact factor, as the number of articles potentially is higher before the citations for those articles “catch up.” However, our trajectory and increased articles may well be positive for the calculation of future impact factor scores.

## **V. Final Considerations**

Page budget considerations: Observing the higher number of articles published over the current year provides opportunity to consider whether the journal may benefit from an overall increase in page budget. One of the challenges is how we attempt to constrain authors to 35 pages. This can be difficult to accomplish, particularly as authors respond to reviewer comments. A larger page budget would allow

slightly longer articles to accommodate data, tables, and/or discussions often demanded by reviewers. Also, the increase in submissions observed over the past two years (from 139 to 170) may indicate a need to provide the ability to publish more articles per year. Otherwise, the increased selectivity may discourage potential authors from submitting.

Efforts to improve the impact factor: “Featured articles” on the Sociology of Religion webpage; Greater promotion and visibility by OUP, especially Advance Access; Continue to select and solicit high quality articles with greater citation potential, timely subjects, and broader appeal.

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



## Membership Committee Report

August 14, 2014

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

FROM: Jim Cavendish and Membership Committee members Gabriel Acevedo (Chair) Paula Nesbit and Gerardo Marti

RE: Report to Council on the Membership of ASR during 2014

The members of the committee along with Chris Ellison, Jim Cavendish and Kevin Dougherty met at the 2013 annual meetings in New York to discuss strategies to increase membership, particularly increasing representation among graduate students.

Initially, it was agreed that a serious push to increase membership, particularly among grad students will take a commitment of more than one year but that the time invested would be an appropriate strategy to increase membership. Four main items were discussed as possible action items. After exploring issues such as appropriate procedures and following all approved by-laws, logistics, time constraints etc. two items were tabled and two major action items taken up for the year.

Item 1: It was agreed that administering a survey to current members would be an appropriate strategy to assess the attitudes, overall satisfaction, and member priorities for the organization. Members of the membership committee along with Chris Ellison, Jim Cavendish, Melissa Wilde, and Fred Kniss communicated electronically to organize relevant questionnaire items. The survey was finalized and formatted for web based dissemination to the membership. This report will offer an overview of the data collection procedures and initial results of key variables of interest.

Item 2: The second discussion item involved professional opportunities for graduate students attending the annual conference. It was agreed that graduate student involvement would be enhanced by offering both scholarly and professionalization seminars at the annual conference. Kevin Dougherty agreed to volunteer organize one grad student professionalization session at the 2014 meeting. Along with Jeremy Uecker (Program Chair) Kevin has organized the session “Landing an Academic Job” (C1) for the 2014 conference which should interest graduate student participants.

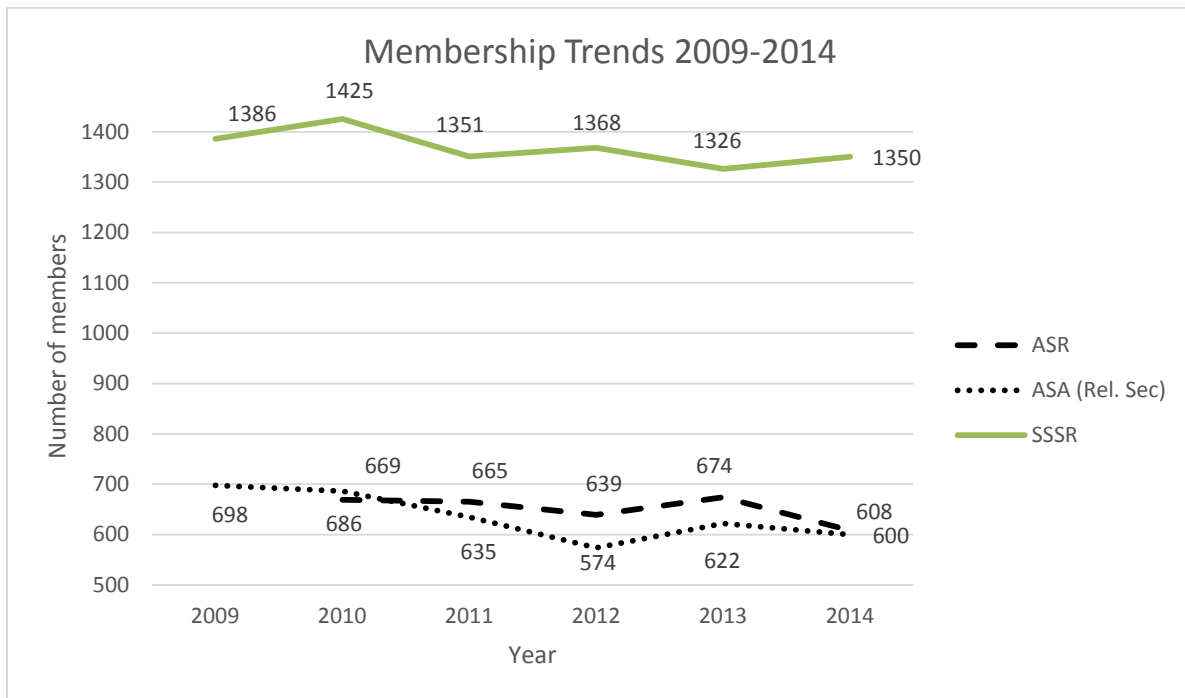
Item 3: The third major discussion item involved changing by-laws to allow for either a graduate student representative on the Council or a formal Graduate Student Advisory Committee. However, after consultation with Jim, it was agreed that an ad-hoc committee of current graduate students would be a more feasible option. The committee members would serve for a three-year term, requiring them to be graduate students at the time of appointment BUT allowing them to remain on the ad hoc committee after graduation. Work on this ad-hoc committee would commence after completion of the membership survey. The idea of changing by-laws to allow for either a student representative on the Council or a formal Graduate Student Advisory Committee was tabled to be reconsidered in the future.

Item 4: We tabled the idea of “An Evening with the ASR Presidents” since this will be a lot to add to the already crowded program. For future meetings, an ad hoc committee of graduate students could assist in organizing and informal get-togethers after organized conference events are over.

## ASR Membership Trends

Before considering results of the Membership Survey, we want to report the overall membership status of the organization. Current ASR membership is at 608. This includes 432 “constituent members” and 176 “student/ISA Category C” members.<sup>1</sup> This is a potential area of concern for the ASR Executive Leadership going into the future. Why is this an area of concern and 608 a low figure? When looking at membership figures shown as Figure 1, we can see that from previous years, this is a significant drop. Last year at this time, ASR had 674 members, in 2012 we had 639 members, in 2011 665 members, and in 2010 669 members. The current membership of 608 represents one of the lowest membership levels for the organization.

Figure 1. Membership Trends for the Major US Religion Organizations



What might account for this decrease in membership in 2014? We suspect it is due to a variety of factors, but the two most plausible explanations are that fewer people join the Association during years in which the conference is held out West (like San Francisco this year), and perhaps fewer people feel they need to be members of the Association in order to gain access to the content of the journal.

In respect to the first explanation, It seems that ASR membership numbers (and potentially also our conference attendance) was lower during the years when our conference was held in Denver (2012) or San Francisco (2014), but higher when our conference was held in Atlanta (2010) or New York (2013). Las Vegas (2011) saw a respectable size membership (665 members that year), but it was not as high as membership in either 2010 or 2013. Recall that, in keeping with changes made by the ASA, the 2011 ASR meeting was originally scheduled for Chicago before it was abruptly switched to Las Vegas.

<sup>1</sup> “ISA Category C” refers to members who currently reside in a country that is designated by the UN to be a low income country, and as a result these members pay the same membership dues as students. There are only a handful of ISA members, so most of the 176 people in this category are students.

In respect to the second possible explanation, anecdotal evidence from informal discussions with colleagues suggests a downward trend in Association memberships in general. It seems that many professional academic associations are suffering from membership loss as a result of the increasing ease with which people can access the content of academic journals without having to be a member of the Association that sponsors the journal. In terms of the ASR, *Sociology of Religion* can be accessed online through most major universities, which have rights to the content of SofR, without having to be a member of ASR. In fact, it's often easier to access content from academic journals online than via the traditional search through hard copies of the journal. If this is, in fact, contributing to membership decline in academic associations, then we could probably expect this trend to continue with the increasing popularity of Open Access whereby authors and funding agencies pay publishers for the publication of their articles up front with the guarantee that the article will be available to anyone surfing the web.

We limit our discussion of general membership trends to these remarks and move to an initial report of findings from our 2014 membership Survey.

### **ASR Membership Survey: Preliminary Findings**

Jim Cavendish prepared the survey for on-line use. The on-line version was initially activated on April 16, 2014. At that point 785 email invitations were sent to members and former members who are on ASR's contact lists. Reminder emails were sent once a week during the first month of the survey's activation, and every other week thereafter. In all, at least 6 email reminders were sent.

Of the initial 785 separate email invitations sent, 23 were bounced emails. 561 (or 71%) of the 785 email invitations sent were opened, and of the 561 people who opened the email invitations, 439 (or 78%) started the survey. Of the 439 respondents who started the survey, 373 (or 84%) completed the survey. After cleaning up the data and adjusting for data entry errors, the final data include 430 respondents.

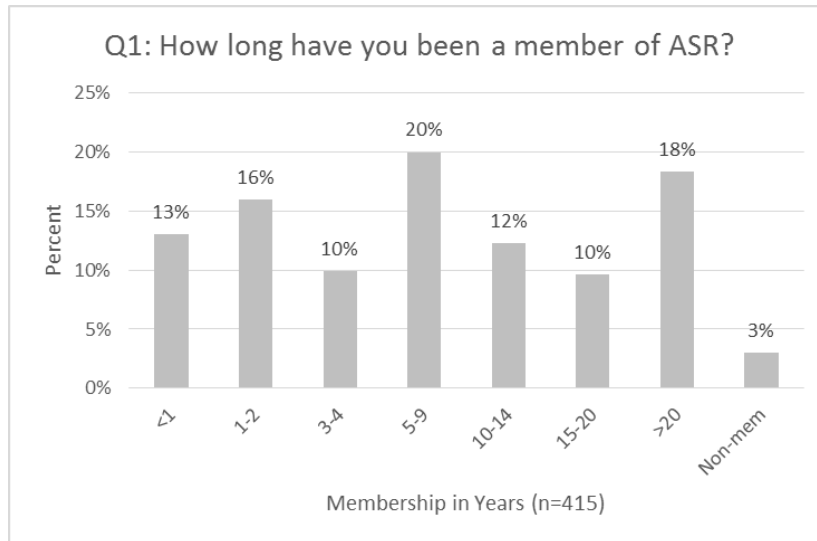
Table 1 shows descriptive data for the sample. The majority of respondents are male, with a median age of 47 for the total sample. In terms of academic rank, most respondents are Full Professors and Graduate students followed closely by Associate Professors. We also see from the data that while a majority of respondents are currently living in the US, almost 15% of responses came from overseas members. Below we consider some of the broader trends followed by results of bivariate statistical analysis.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics ASR membership Survey (n=430)

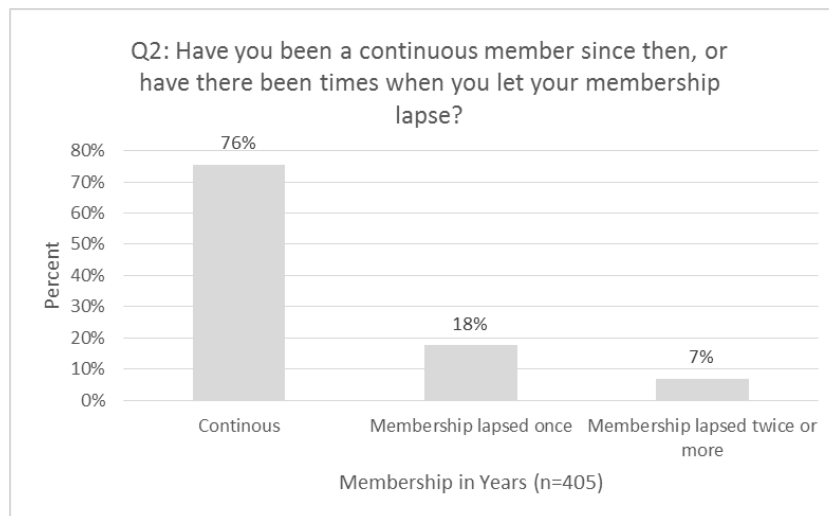
<i>Gender</i> (n=368)		%
Male		59%
Female		41%
Transexual/Inter-sexed		0.3%
<i>Age</i> (n=314)		
Mean = 48; Median = 47; Std Dev = 14.10; Min/Max=17/88		
<i>Professional/Academic Status</i> (n=367)		
Full Professor		25%
Graduate student		18%
Associate Professor		16%
Assistant Professor		12%
Non-tenure track faculty (e.g., researcher, lecturer, or instructor)		10%
Other (please write in):		10%
Retired of Emeritus faculty		7%
Post-doctoral fellow		2%
Undergraduate student		0.3%
<i>Academic Discipline</i> (n=369)		
Sociology		70%
Religious Studies		14%
Theology		4%
Psychology		1%
Political Science		1%
History		1%
Economics		0.3%
Communications		1%
Other (please write in):		8%
<i>Country of Origin</i> (n=370)		
United States of America		74%
United Kingdom		4%
Canada		4%
Italy		2%
Australia		1%
Germany		2%
Israel		0.5%
France		0.8%
Japan		0.3%
Mexico		0.3%
Other		11%
<i>Institutional Type</i> (n=360)		
4-year institution, PhD granting		61%
4-year institution, MA granting		14%
4-year institution, undergraduate only		10%
2-year institution or community college		1%
Other		14%

Looking at Figure 2 below, most respondents have been members of the Association for either moderate spans of time (5-9 years) or have been regular members for extended periods (over 20 years). This is in keeping with the distribution for membership lapses shown as Figure 3. A large majority of respondents have not allowed their memberships to lapse and less than 10% have allowed their memberships to lapse more than once. This presents both data reflecting the stability of membership over time but also the opportunity to reach out to new members. Efforts can be made towards increasing membership representation among graduate students and new faculty as well as disciplines outside sociology. One goal of the organization might be increasing the representation in the “less than 5 year” range.

**Figure 2: Membership Duration in ASR**



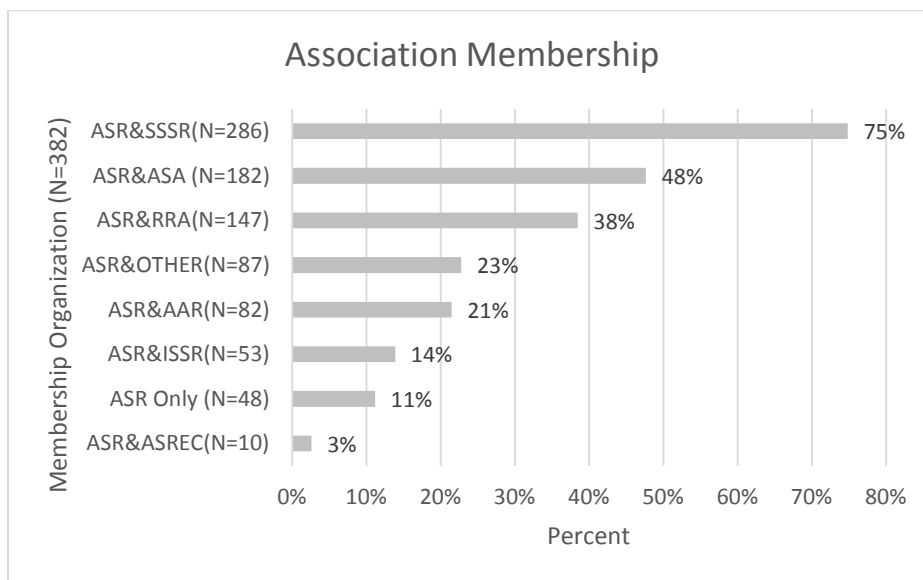
**Figure 3: Membership Lapses While an ASR Member**



Last year’s membership Committee Report noted succinctly that, “Some individuals in recent years have raised questions about whether ASR serves a distinct purpose and constituency that differentiates it from comparable scholarly associations such as SSSR, RRA, the ASA Religion Section, and AAR.” We decided to continue this line of investigation and present results based on the survey data. These results are shown as Figure 4.

As illustrated in this figure, of the 382 ASR respondents who are members of multiple associations (48 are members of ASR only), 75% are also members of SSSR, 48% are also members of ASA’s Religion Section, 38% are also members of RRA, and 21% are also members of AAR. Interestingly only 11% of all respondents (N=430) report being only members of ASR. This would indicate that the large majority of ASR members find specific advantages from ASR membership that compliments what other organizations offer. We also find that multiple membership influences the likelihood of renewing membership in a positive direction. We ran a simple bivariate correlation between the number of memberships in comparable organizations and an increased level of renewing their 2015 membership. The moderate but highly significant correlation between these two variables ( $r = .172$   $p < .001$ ,  $n = 373$ ) indicates that multiple memberships may in fact influence continued renewal. And while the effects of multiple membership fail to reach statistical significance in multivariate models, we can be quite certain that multiple memberships do not negatively impact odds of renewal.

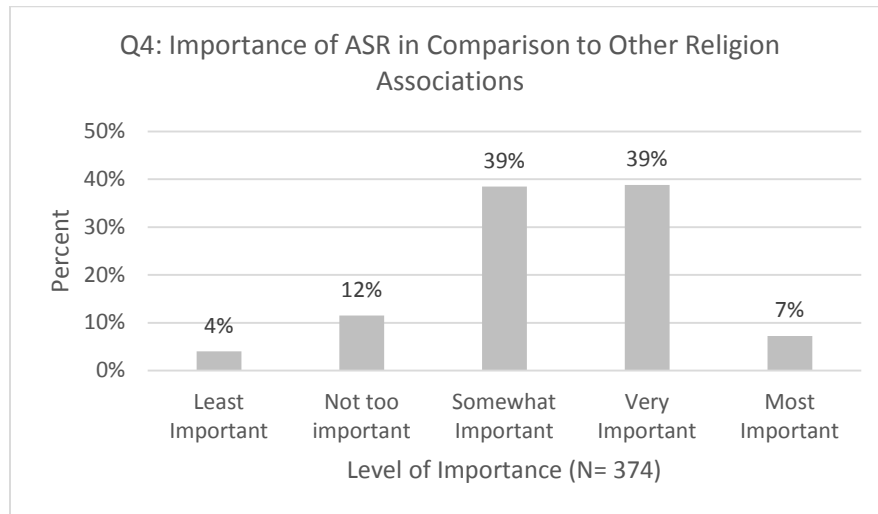
**Figure 4: Membership in Professional Organizations Focusing on Religion <sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Percentages based on the 382 members with multiple affiliations. The 11% ASR only membership is based on the total sample of 430.

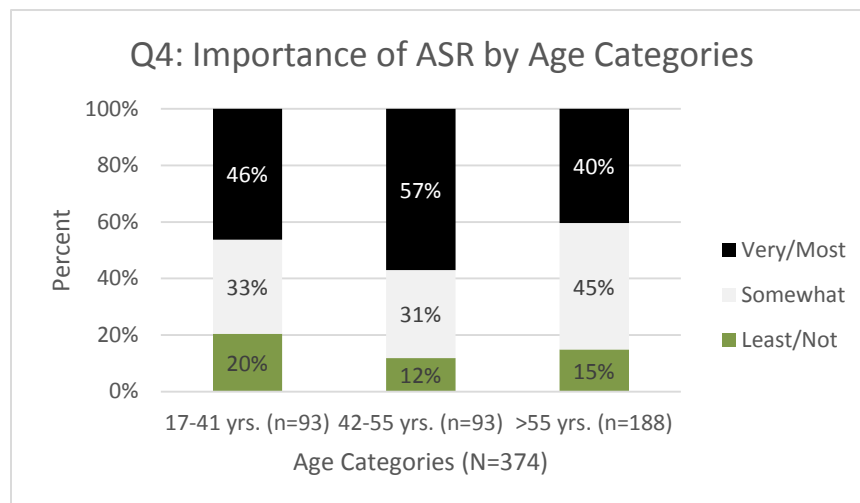
In light of multiple association membership it seemed relevant to ascertain that importance of ASR membership in comparison to other associations that focus on religion. As shown by Figure 5 below, responses to this question follow a relatively normal distribution. That is to say, the majority of respondents rate the ASR as either “somewhat” or “very important.” The lowest percentages report ASR membership as the “least” important while a similar percent rates ASR as the “most” important. This would indicate that the importance of ASR membership is largely incorporated into the participation with similar organizations.

**Figure 5: Importance of Membership ASR and Other Professional Organizations Focusing on Religion**



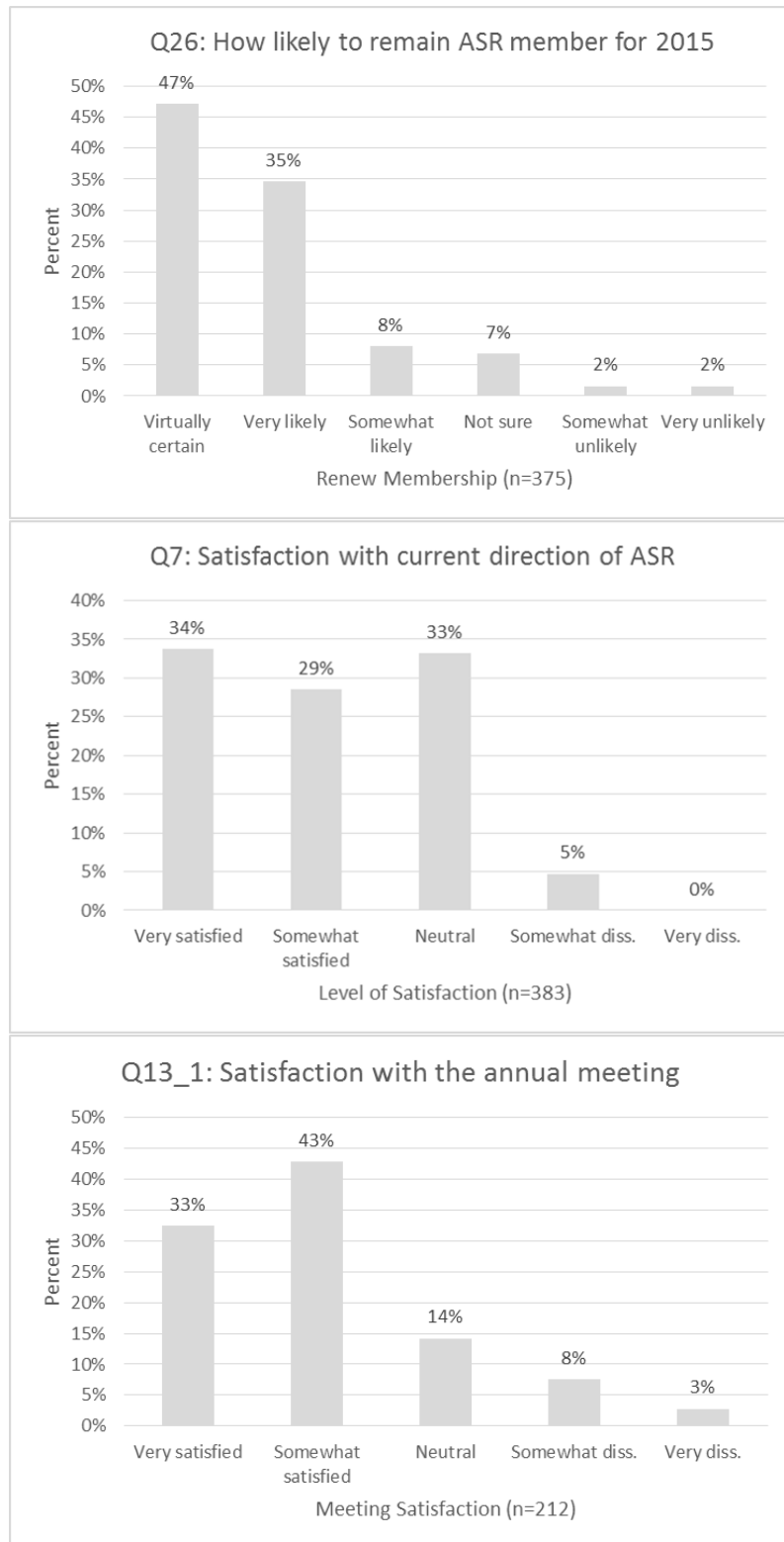
The results of Figure 5 led us to consider the role that age would play in impacting where it is that ASR members rank the association in relation to other organizations that focus on religious scholarship. Figure 5 below indicates a significant effect that was confirmed by a simple chi-square test showing a significant relationship between responses to this question and age ( $X^2 = 9.83, p < .05$ ). As indicated by Figure 5, ASR members in the middle age categories (42-55 yrs.) are most inclined to identify ASR as either “very” or “most” important while older members tend to see ASR membership as “somewhat” important. It is also important to note that while the overall percentage of members who see ASR membership as unimportant is relatively low (see Figure 4 above) the highest percentage is found among the younger age groups. This suggests a need to continue reaching out to graduate students and other scholars at earlier stages of their careers and to continue tailoring services aimed at that constituency.

**Figure 5: Importance of Membership ASR and Other Professional Organizations Focusing on Religion**



**Figure 6: Membership Retention and Satisfaction**

Members of the Executive Committee were interested in the level of overall satisfaction with specific aspects of the services and benefits provided by the ASR. Later analysis will explore these areas in detail. For this report we look at several broader areas starting with the potential that members will be retained for the upcoming year. One can expect that individuals planning to renew their membership to be generally satisfied with the benefits of membership as well as the overall direction of the organization. Figure 6 captures three dimensions of overall membership satisfaction. The first graph indicates that a clear majority of current members intend on renewing their membership. Over 80% of respondents are either “virtually certain” or “very likely” to remain ASR members while less than 5% are either “somewhat” or “very” unlikely to renew their memberships. We would then expect this high level of retention to translate to high levels of satisfaction with two key measures of organizational capacity. First, level of satisfaction is generally quite high with most respondents (63%) indicating that they are either “very” or “somewhat” satisfied with the current direction of ASR, while approximately 5% are somewhat dissatisfied. However, it is just as important to consider the 33% of individuals who are “neutral” and the factors that influence this view. Future reports will consider these questions in greater detail. Finally, since the annual meeting represents a major event and benefit to ASR members, we explore level of satisfaction with the meeting. Once again, levels of satisfaction are quite high with 76% reporting that they are either “very” or “somewhat” satisfied with the annual meeting. However, the level of “satisfaction intensity” (e.g. percent “very” satisfied) is lower than average satisfaction (e.g. “somewhat” satisfied).

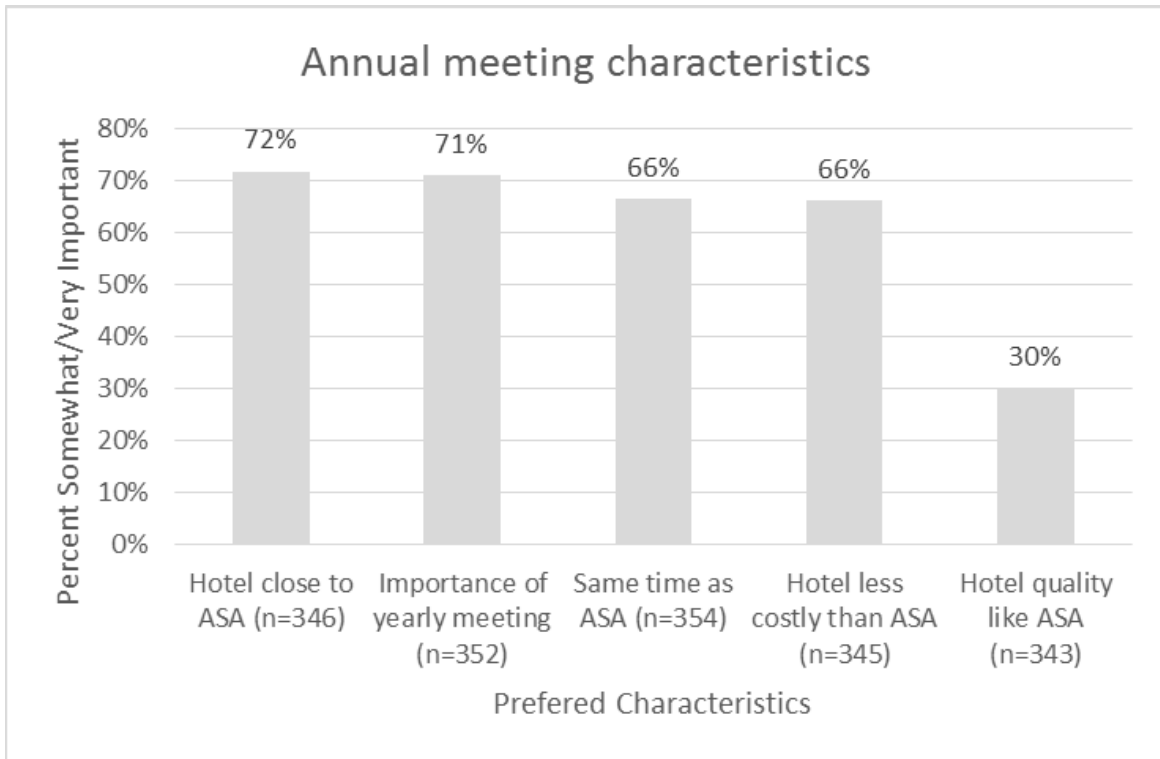


The ASR annual meeting represents one of the principal benefits offered to members of the association. The ASR Executive Committee is interested in the salience of specific features that are associated with the overall annual meeting experience. Respondents were asked to indicate the level of importance they



place on a series of items having to do with the annual conference. Figure 7 below shows the percentages who ranked a series of annual meeting characteristics as either “somewhat” or “very” important, ranked from highest to lowest. Looking at this trend it seems clear that the annual meeting is valued by the majority of ASR members.

Figure 7: Importance of Annual Meeting Characteristics



### ASR Membership Survey: Channeling Resources

One important issue we felt required further consideration has to do with the allocation of ASR resources. The Membership Survey asks respondents to indicate their level of preference for channeling resources towards some of the major ASR is involved in: (a) the annual meeting, (b) The Sociology of Religion journal, (c) research grants (d) travel grants and (e) “Honors” given to members for their contributions in research and teaching. The prompt reads as follows:

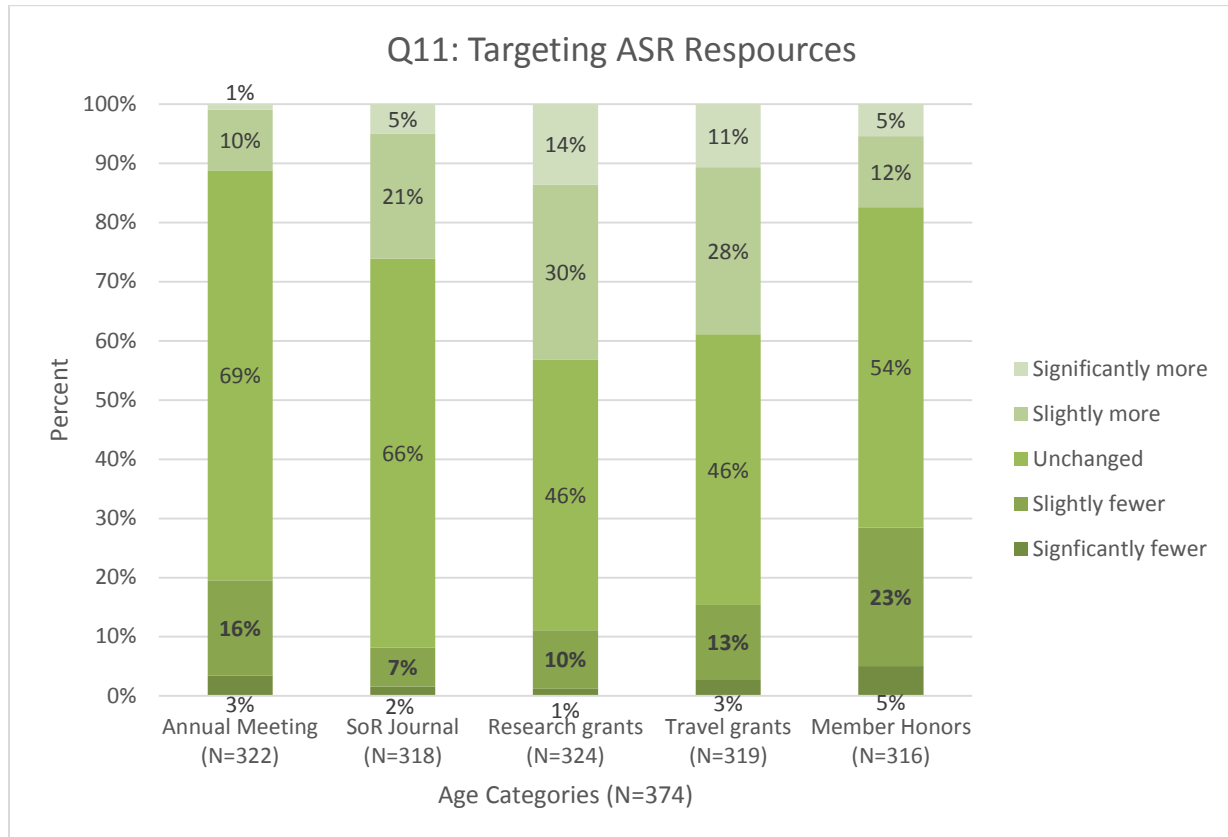
*In 2013, over a third of ASR’s expenses went to our Annual Meeting, approximately a quarter went to the production and mailing of the journal, and another quarter went to paying for members’ grants and awards. If it were possible in the future for ASR to adjust the proportion of resources it allocates to these endeavors, what would be your preferences? Indicate the level of allocation you would prefer next to each of the following ways that ASR fulfills its mission.*

Figure 8 examines this question and provides distributions for each possible category. The lighter bars indicate a greater level of allocation for that given area. Figure 8 sheds light on several noteworthy patterns that can be summed up as follows:

- While most ASR members do not see that any changes need to be made to the amounts spent on the Annual Meeting and the SoR journal, about 20% do feel that fewer resources should be directed at the Annual Meeting.

- Members seem to prefer research and travel grants as areas of enhanced resource allocation.
- Very few members seem interested in increasing resources aimed at honoring members for achievement. This area also boasts the highest percentage who feel less resources should be directed at this area.

Figure 8: Preferences for ASR Resource Allocation



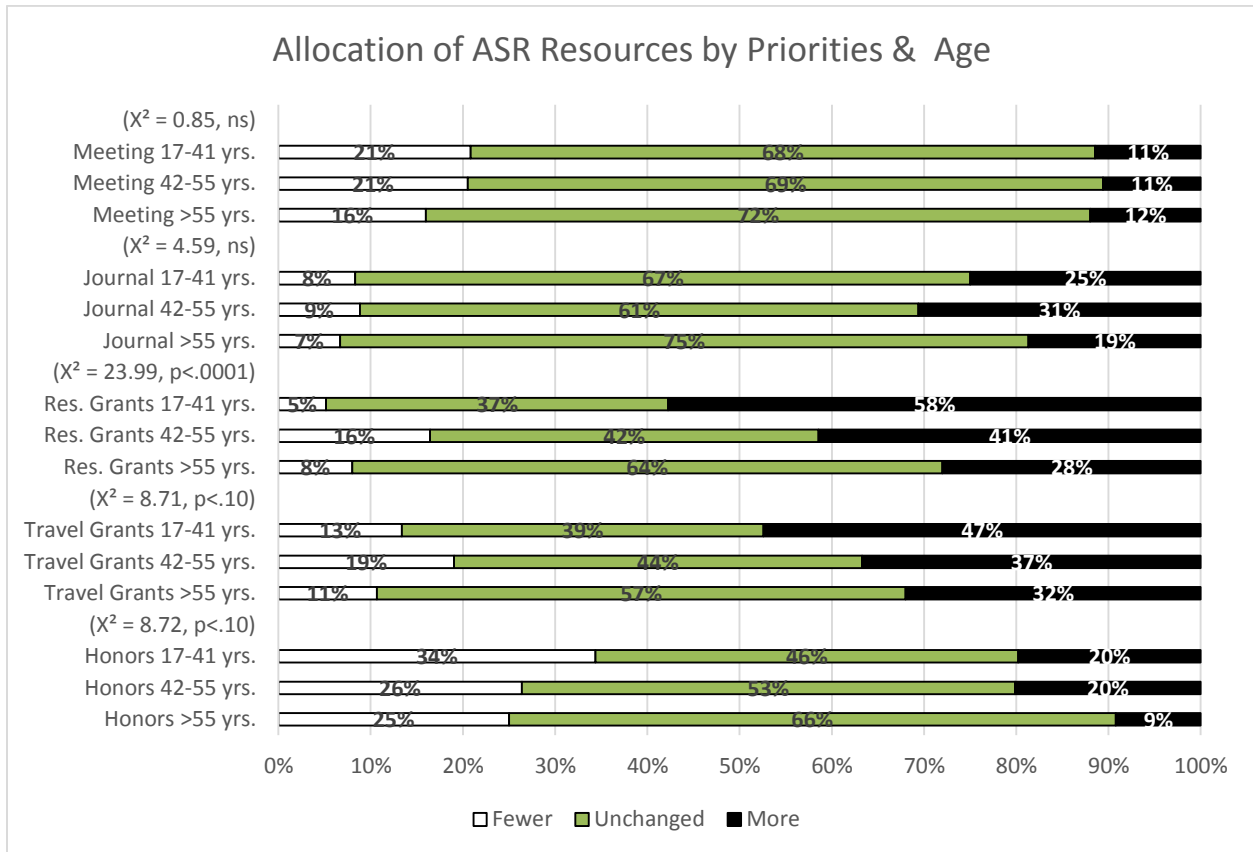
Keeping in mind the importance of resource allocation for our membership, we thought one area of interest would be to consider the effects of age on individual perceptions of ASR resources and priorities that members place on specific endeavors ASR is engaged in. In order to explore this issue in greater detail, we collapsed the categories with the least representation to create a three level measure where “significantly less”/ “slightly less” are combined, “unchanged” is retained as one category, and “significantly more” / “slightly more” are combined.

Figure 9 shows the distribution of responses to this item by age and by the specific area of interest. The darker portion of the bar indicates a greater level of desired location. A Chi-square analysis was performed to explore statistically significant differences based on age and are shown above each item.

While there is not a significant age effect on views of resource allocation aimed at the annual meeting or ASR journal, age does seem to impact the other three areas. In particular, the effect of age is most pronounced when considering views towards ASR sponsored research grant funding. This is an area where younger members (ages 17-41) are most supportive of greater support for research grants, followed

by the middle range age category (42-55). A similar but less significant pattern is present for travel funding where younger age members prefer more resources in those areas. Finally, while across age groups support for Honors for members is low, older members seem the least inclined to favor greater resources for this. It is quite plausible that overall, members favor resources that they perceive as offering the most immediate benefit at their particular career stages.

Figure 9: Preferences for ASR Resource Allocation by Priorities and Age



## **International Liaison Committee's Report 2014**

July 2014

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

FROM: Prema A. Kurien, chair

RE: Report to Council on the activity of the International Liaison Committee for 2013-2014

The International Liaison Committee was comprised this year of Giuseppe Giordan, Rachel Rinaldo, and Prema A. Kurien (chair).

### **Background**

The primary task of the International Liaison Committee has been to provide input into selecting the international scholars and graduate students who receive the Ralph A. Gallagher Travel funds (total amount of \$ 6000). In 2013 we had an unexpectedly large number of applicants (24) and we found it difficult to make decisions regarding who should be given the funding since all we had was the short abstract that they had submitted to the meeting, turned in for the regular ASR meeting deadline. As a result there was no time to get the input of the International Liaison Committee. Again, in the past, many international scholars were not able to attend the conference due to insufficient funds (the maximum allocated was \$ 500, allocated toward hotel costs) or due to their being denied a visa for travel and there was no time to reallocate the money. This meant that much of the funds remained unused.

For all these reasons, last year the International Committee recommended several changes in the procedure. These included an earlier deadline (March 1<sup>st</sup>), asking the candidates to submit a CV and a presentation length paper (10 double-spaced pages) and included language in the call for the awards indicating that the criteria for evaluation would be based on the quality and contribution of the papers. For international applicants we indicated that we would give priority to those who had a research and publication record (since we had received several applications from graduate students in the past). For domestic graduate students we indicated that priority would be given to those coming from further away.

### **2014 Experience**

Since we only received 2 applications by the deadline of March 1<sup>st</sup>, we ended up extending the deadline to April 15. In the end, the committee received 5 applications for the award. One person (from New Zealand) did not submit a paper at the time of the application but did so subsequently. One of the 5 applications was from a US graduate student who was in Paris doing archival research. Two others were from US graduate students based in the US. A final application was from a person in Mumbai, India who we discovered was not a member of ASR and had not submitted an abstract (though he had submitted a longer paper to the award committee). This person did not respond to follow-up emails so we were unable to award him the funds. The paper by the graduate student in Paris was not viewed as acceptable for the funding since it was not sociological (he is a history student).

While 3 individuals (2 US graduate students and the scholar from New Zealand) were given awards covering the cost of 3 nights at the ASR hotel, a value of over \$ 750, the New Zealand scholar notified us that he could not afford the cost of the conference because of the high cost of travel from New Zealand. Since the award announcement only indicated that we would cover hotel costs, we did not want to create a precedent that we may not be able to honor in the future by covering travel for an applicant. We thought that this should be a council decision if we want to make this change for the future. Consequently, we

ended up only funding the two US graduate students. We were not able to make an award to an international scholar this year. Much of the funding was again not used this year.

We would like to get the input of Council on how we should make changes to the criteria, procedure, and how the money is allocated (e.g. should we also allocate some of the money toward travel), so that we can use the funds to bring in some international scholars.

### **Recommendations**

Based on our experience this year, the committee makes following recommendations:

- 1) Cut down the length requirements of the paper to an extended abstract of 1000-1500 words. We feel that the length of 10 double-spaced pages may have been the primary reason that we did not receive many applications in 2014 when compared to the previous year.
- 2) Have a later deadline than March 1<sup>st</sup> (perhaps April 1 or April 15).
- 3) Discuss whether we should reimburse at least some of the travel costs for international scholars coming from further away and from the Global South. This of course means that we will be able to fund fewer people.

Respectfully submitted,

Prema Kurien  
Chair, International Liaison Committee  
Professor of Sociology  
Syracuse University  
Syracuse, NY 13244

## Fichter Award Committee's Report

June 16, 2014

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

From: Helen A. Berger, chair of Fichter Research Grant Committee

Regarding: Report to Council on the activity of the Fichter Research Grant Committee for 2014

### 2014 Activity

The Fichter Research Grant Committee was comprised this year of, Mary Ellen Konieczny, Jeremy Thomas, and Helen A. Berger (chair).

In 2014 we continued the practices institutionalized in previous years to announce the Fichter Grant competition in the *News & Announcements* that now appears in our journal, and on the ASR website. This year we received twenty applications, which can be compared with last year when we received twenty-five. We believe the decrease of applications is not significant but is part of the natural ebb and flow of applications. Of those that applied we funded five:

Name	Institutional Affiliation	Project	Amount Awarded
Lisa Swartz	PhD Candidate, Notre Dame	"Sisters and Brothers Exploring the Gendered lenses of Evangelical Seminaries	\$1380
Lisa Pearce	Associate Professor, UNC, Chapel Hill	Girls' occupational aspirations	\$2176
Laura Stark	Assistant Professor, Vanderbilt University	Gender equality in Post-War Anabaptist services	\$3081
Dawne Moon	Assistant Professor, Marquette University	reconciliation between Evangelical Protestants and lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender people	\$2863
Rachel Ellis	PhD Candidate, University of Pennsylvania	Conviction Behind Bars: Religion and Faith among Incarcerated Women	\$2500

On the whole we were pleased with the quality of the applications and see it as an indication that there is good quality work in the area of sociology of religion that focuses on issues of gender and sexuality. The changes that were instituted in the call for proposals this past year:

1. A statement that we do not support indirect costs, such as salaries or tuition for the PI, expenses

for the purpose of attending conferences to disseminate the data collected, nor for items such as computers or books that one can responsibly expect to find at a University

2. a requirement that budgets be submitted in US dollars
3. a requirement that all proposal have a substantive title

has resulted in more projects being fundable. We would suggest an additional change. Currently the website states: “An itemized budget is necessary in case the Fichter Committee decides to provide funding for some items but not others.” In addition to using the itemization for decisions concerning partial funding it is also necessary for the committee to determine if the amount is reasonable. For example, in one application I thought the amount itemized for a flight was too high, when I checked I found it reasonable. We would suggest that that sentence be changed to “an itemized budget is necessary to enable the committee to determine if the budget is reasonable and for decisions concerning partial funding.”

We would also recommend that a fourth person be chosen to serve as “alternative” member of the committee to ensure the smooth working of the committee in cases when one of the members has to withdraw, either because they decided to apply for the grant or because of personal or family issues.

The decrease in funds this year over the last two made the Committee’s decisions particularly difficult. There were more applications that deserved funding and several that we would have wanted to fund at a higher level than we were able too. We realize that the Association has limited funds but hope in the future more money is allotted to this grant as it is one way in which the association helps to assure our future as a sub-discipline.

This is my third year as a member and second as chair of the Fichter Award Committee. As each person’s term is three years I will now be cycling off the committee. I appreciate this opportunity to serve my colleagues and am grateful to the trust put in me by three presidents of the Association. Jim Cavendish has kept on top of all the procedures and was there to work with me as each issue or problem arose. The committee was good spirited, hardworking, and cooperative as we worked to find what we felt were the proposal that were best presented, had clear budgets and goals, and would contribute to the continued vibrancy of our sub-discipline.

Yours,  
Helen A. Berger, PhD  
Chair of the Fichter Award

Resident Scholar  
Women’s Studies Research Center  
Brandeis University

## McNamara Award Committee Report

July 15, 2014

### **This year's competition:**

We received 14 submissions this year.

Each member of the committee read all papers and ranked them using the following system: a 4-point scale (1=not worthy of award, 2=probably not worthy of award, 3=probably worthy of award, 4=definitely worthy of award). Our scores led us to consider four papers as finalists. We then had exchanges via email regarding three papers with similar scores.

The award was given to Graham Hill's, "Giving and Receiving Testimony: Self-discipline and the Supernatural in the Case of the Hombres de Negocios." Graham Hill is a graduate student at the University of California Berkeley. Given the high quality of the finalists, we decided to give an honorable mention this year. Honorable mention went to Courtney Ann Irby, whose paper, "Dating in the Light of Christ: Young Evangelicals Negotiating Gender in the Context of Religious and Secular American Culture," was published in February in *Sociology of Religion*.

### **Suggestions for the Future:**

The clarifications made last year to the website were helpful. I would suggest adding that authors submit their papers in **one** Microsoft word or PDF document. Some submit papers with separate documents for title page and supporting materials. It is easier for the committee to manage one document.

Any changes should also be indicated in distribution of award information through RRA/SSSR.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen E. Jenkins  
Associate Professor and Chair  
Department of Sociology  
The College of William and Mary



## **Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR) Distinguished Article Award Committee Report**

The Distinguished Article Award was established in 2014 to recognize the most outstanding journal article published by an ASR member(s) between January 1, 2012 and April 30, 2014. The award was intended to identify an article that offered an exceptional contribution to the sociological study of religion.

Nominations were accepted from an article's author or co-author, another ASR member, or the editor of the journal in which the article was published. Any nominated article was required to have been published in a journal that uses a refereed (peer-review) process. The article must have been published in a print (hard-copy) journal between the dates specified above. Articles published in online-only journals and those published only in an anthology were not eligible for nomination.

Electronic (PDF) copies of ten nominated articles were received by all committee members by the Thursday, May 1, 2014 deadline, accompanied (as required) by a brief justification for the nomination. Justifications generally focused on the significance of the article being nominated (novel empirical insights, theoretical innovations, advancement of the field, or other significant elements). Because this year was the first offering of this award, a spreadsheet was created featuring all of the nominated articles as well as every religion article published in *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Social Forces*, and *Qualitative Sociology* during the eligible publication period. (*Qualitative Sociology* was included in an experimental fashion to determine if methodological balance was needed. It was a useful though not absolutely crucial addition.) The committee members also reviewed *Sociology of Religion* and *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* for articles to consider beyond those nominated.

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

We present to you the article to which the inaugural ASR Distinguished Article Award will be given at the 76th Annual Meetings of the Association for the Sociology of Religion in San Francisco: Woodberry, Robert D. 2012. The Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy. *American Political Science Review* 106(2): 244-274.

The committee viewed this article as highly deserving of this honor. It significantly advances theoretical and empirical knowledge in the sociology of religion while enlisting data and methods that are also very impressive. The article illuminates historical and comparative processes quite capably, and religion really is at the center of the analysis. The prodigious amount of work invested in this scholarship, as well as its projected impact, set this article apart from a strong field. As you may recall, the award includes a certificate of honor and \$500.

We have some recommendations going forward. First, next year's committee members have a call for nominations available from this inaugural effort, though they should feel free to revise as they see fit. Our experience was that this call worked well in attracting a sufficient number of high-quality nominations. Second, as this award continues to gain momentum, there will be less of a need to scour journals for articles over and above those that are nominated. The creation of a database of religion articles from leading general and specialty journals proved to be a worthwhile investment, but was quite time-consuming. We leave it to next year's committee to determine whether or not that practice should be continued. We end by congratulating Dr. Woodberry on this award!

2014 Distinguished Article Award Committee: John Bartkowski, Chair, [john.bartkowski@utsa.edu](mailto:john.bartkowski@utsa.edu); Alex Bierman, [aebierma@ucalgary.ca](mailto:aebierma@ucalgary.ca); Nicolette Manglos-Weber, [Nicolette.D.Manglos.1@nd.edu](mailto:Nicolette.D.Manglos.1@nd.edu)