

## 2021 Report of the Publications Committee

This report outlines the main activities of the ASR Publications Committee during 2020-21. Although it was a quiet year for the most part, we briefly review three main issues here: (1) changes and updates to committee members' terms; (2) concerns about the diversity of authors in *Sociology of Religion* and other ASR publications; and (3) the upcoming search for a new *SoR* editor. [We wish to thank Jim Cavendish all his help and input this year, and especially for providing the text for a significant portion of this report. His notes and recollections on some of these matters are far more precise than ours!]

On the first issue: Due to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, in July, 2020 ASR's Executive Officers asked the members of the Publications Committee if they would be willing to serve an additional year to provide continuity during this period of uncertainty. All of the members agreed to continue, which extends their terms as follows:

\*John Bartkowski, University of Texas at San Antonio (cycling off committee in 2021)

\*Christopher Ellison, University of Texas at San Antonio (Committee Chair, 2019-2021; cycling off committee in 2022)

\*Solange Lefebvre, University of Montreal (Committee Chair, 2021-2022; cycling off committee in 2023)

With regard to the second matter noted above: On September 16, 2020, President Jim Cavendish contacted the members of the Publications Committee to notify us that during ASR's Council Meeting on August 20, 2020, and also during the Business Meeting on September 10, 2020, ASR's Secretary, Tia Noelle Pratt, raised a concern about the lack of diversity among the authors whose articles were featured in the Autumn 2020 issue of *Sociology of Religion*, and asked what mechanisms could be established to ensure and enhance the diversity of scholars and topics featured in the journal. In his email of September 16, Jim stated that soon after the Business Meeting, the outgoing and incoming editors of the journal (i.e., Gerardo Marti and Joseph Baker, respectively) "... discussed this issue and recommended that I, as the current President of ASR, formally ask the Publications Committee to assess the diversity concerns that were raised, and based on that assessment, advise them/us on specific actionable items." By actionable items, he was referring to things that are within the power/scope of the editorial team and/or ASR's leadership to control or accomplish. Specifically, Jim asked if we could discuss how, and through what mechanisms, we can ensure or increase: (1) the representation of minority scholars (women and people of color) and international scholars among the authors published in our journal; and (2) the diversity of topics presented in the journal so that they will appeal to, and attract, a diverse readership, and ultimately encourage even more minority and international scholars to consider *Sociology of Religion* as their preferred publication outlet. Jim stated: "It is an issue that all of us in leadership of the Association and the journal take seriously, and in order to address it thoroughly, I'd like to ask you to consider the issue in its complexity and offer your recommendations."

At Jim's request, we convened a Zoom meeting at which the members of the Publications Committee, the outgoing and incoming editors of the journal (i.e., Gerardo Marti and Joseph Baker, respectively), and the Executive Officers of the Association discussed a number of possible strategies that could be adopted by the editorial team and the Association more generally. Among the strategies discussed were the following:

- 1) Continue to ensure that the editorial boards of our journal and our book series (i.e., *Religion and the Social Order*) represent a diverse community of scholars.

- 2) Solicit proposals for special issues of the journal, similar to the special issue focused on multiracial churches and their leaders, and for new volumes of the *Religion and the Social Order* book series, that would feature minority scholars (women and people of color) and international scholars. [It was noted that of the 14 scholars featured in the most recently released volume of the *Religion and the Social Order* book series (i.e., Volume 27), 7 are women and 13 are international scholars representing 5 different countries.]
- 3) Recognizing that the articles published in each issue of the journal depend on the pool of manuscripts received and accepted within a particular time period, all members of the Association, particularly members of the Editorial Boards and Executive Officers, should encourage minority scholars and international scholars to submit their manuscripts to the journal and their book proposals to the *Religion and the Social Order* book series on a regular basis to ensure diversity in the submission pipeline.
- 4) Recognizing that submissions to the journal and to the book series spring largely from ASR's membership, all members of the Association should encourage minority scholars, particularly graduate students and those in the early stages of their careers, to join the Association. The Membership Committee might consider launching a membership campaign aimed at increasing the diversity of ASR's membership.

As you can see, these strategies entail efforts by all members of the Association, including the editorial teams and leaders, to invite minority scholars (women and people of color) and international scholars to join our Association and submit their scholarship to the ASR's publication outlets.

During the Zoom meeting we also discussed the possibility of collecting whatever data may exist regarding the characteristics of the authors and the topics represented in ASR publications over time. Because such data have not been systematically gathered internally, Jim Cavendish subsequently reached out to David Smilde and Matthew May, who have compiled a wealth of information on articles published in various religion journals, including *Sociology of Religion*. They graciously shared their rich and variegated dataset. However, because they did not incorporate information on author characteristics, their otherwise valuable database cannot be used to examine patterns or trends in the representation of diverse authors.

It was clear at this meeting that everyone present was committed to fostering the representation of minority scholars and international scholars among the authors of ASR's publications. We appreciate that the issue was raised so that we could have a fruitful discussion about strategies going forward, and we invite Council to consider how best to implement the recommendations we offer above, so that scholars of diverse backgrounds are invited, encouraged, and recognized.

The third and final matter to come before the Publications Committee involves the selection of a new editor for *Sociology of Religion*. Just a few weeks ago, Joseph Baker communicated to us and ASR's Executive Officers that because of his current professional and family commitments, he prefers to have a 2-year (rather than a 3-year) term as editor of the journal. Thus, we need to begin a search for a new editor as soon as possible. At this writing the Publications Committee, Executive Officers, and current and past editors are preparing a Call for Applications and a timeline for the search process, and hope to have a final version of the Call ready for circulation by the time of this year's ASR annual meeting. In the meantime, we appreciate the excellent work that Joseph has done, and we're glad we will have him in the editor's seat until his successor is chosen.

## ASR EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT 2021

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

FROM: Rachel Kraus, Executive Officer

RE: Report on the State of ASR

What I've been working on this past year:

- 1) Working with lawyers to add a 501c3 entity to accept donations
- 2) Working on our website updating and implementing cosmetic changes. Thanks to Jim Spickard for reviewing the website for needed updates.
- 3) Secured a hotel for our Los Angeles and Philadelphia conferences
- 4) Helped facilitate a refund for our Chicago hotel.
- 5) Assisted with work on diversity issues in the journal.
- 6) Renewed contract with Oxford University Press.
- 7) Worked with what would have been our Los Angeles hotel regarding the cancellation of our contract for 2021.
- 8) Working on transferring website from Bill Swatos
- 9) Working on getting certified to save on sales tax.
- 10) Worked on setting up and participating in our first virtual conference.

Upcoming Conferences

- 1) 2022 meeting information:
  - a. Sheraton Grand Los Angeles: \$239 room rate, \$20,000 food and beverage minimum
  - b. August 6 (set up, first council meeting, opening reception) – August 9 (second council meeting)
  - c. ASA: August 5 – August 9; Religion section August 6
- 2) 2023 meeting information:
  - a. Bellevue Hotel Philadelphia: \$219 room rate, \$20,000 food and beverage minimum
  - b. August 19 (set up, first council meeting, opening reception) – August 22 (second council meeting)
  - c. ASA: August 18-21; Religion section August 19
- 3) 2024 Montreal; ASA: August 10-13
- 4) 2025 San Francisco; ASA: August 9-12
- 5) 2026 New York; ASA: August 8-11
- 6) 2027 Chicago; ASA: August 7-10

## ASR EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S BUDGET 2021

The Association is in excellent financial shape. ASR's assets at the current time are summarized below:

<i>Banking Accounts</i>	<i>Value as of 7/16/2021</i>
ASR's Checking Account at Forum and Chase	\$45,940 (forum) \$44,681 (Chase)
ASR's Savings Account at Forum Credit Union	\$1.80
PayPal Account	\$11,572
<b>Total Value of Banking Accounts</b>	<b>\$102,195</b>
<i>American Funds Accounts</i>	<i>Value as of 12/31/2020</i>
American Funds Money Market Fund-A (Fund #59)	\$11,661
American High-Income Trust-A (Fund #21)	\$132,981
The Bond Fund of America-A (Fund #08)	\$127,428
Capital World Growth and Income Fund-A (Fund #33)	\$156,509
SMALLCAP World Fund-A (Fund #35)	\$214,119
Washington Mutual Investors Fund-A (Fund #01)	\$166,657
<b>Total Value of American Funds Portfolio</b>	<b>\$809,355</b>

**TOTAL ASSETS****\$911,550**

**PREVIOUS YEARS' BUDGETS AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2022  
ASSOCIATION FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION**

	<b>2018 Philadelphia</b>	<b>2019 New York</b>	<b>2020 No conference</b>	<b># are as of July 8 2021 2021 Chicago/ Virtual Conference</b>	<b>2022 Los Angeles</b>
<b>Contributions, Gifts Total</b>	<b>23,897</b>	<b>21,494</b>	<b>21,023</b>	<b>13,338</b>	<b>21,000</b>
Memberships	23,897	21,494	21,023	13,338	21,000
<b>Program Service Revenue Total</b>	<b>93,485</b>	<b>101,461</b>	<b>105,114</b>	<b>93,765</b>	<b>79,093</b>
<b>Publications Total</b>	<b>71,690</b>	<b>71,621</b>	<b>71,085</b>	<b>71,450</b>	<b>53,343</b>
Journal submis fee	743	810	274	639	550
Oxford Royalties	55,000	55,000	55,000	55,000	35,982 (estimate)
Oxford Stipend for Editorial Support	15,135	15,000	15,000	15,000	16,000
Brill Royalties	412	412	412	412	412
EBSCO Royalties	186	185	185	185	185
Cengage	130	130	130	130	130
Copyright Clearance	84	84	84	84	84
<b>Annual Meeting Total</b>	<b>21,795</b>	<b>29,840</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22,315</b>	<b>25,750</b>
Registrations	15,245	21,440	0	3,369	20,000
Professional		17,976	0	4,619	17,000
Student		3,464	0	1,750	3,000
NYU	1,050	950	0	50	250
Scholar's Choice				50	250
Pew				50	250
Program Ads	200	200	0	0	0
OUP Co-sponsor Reception	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	1,000
Brill Co-sponsor Reception	1,000	1,000	0	50	1,000
Louisville Instit. Co-sponsor Reception	2,000	2,000	0	3,000	3,000
Other Reception Sponsors	1,300 (memorial)	3,000 (ASA- Relig) \$500 USC	0	0	0
Session Sponsors		250 (Religion and Science group)	0	0	0
			10K refund from Nikko	<b>8,377.25</b> Chicago hotel refund	
<b>Investment Income Total (dividends, interest)</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>31,596</b>	<b>24,029</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>

<b>Total Revenue/Income</b>	<b>134,311</b>	<b>154,551</b>	<b>150,166</b>	<b>140,480</b>	<b>125,093</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
<b>Virtual Platforms</b>				<b>30,215</b>	
EventPilot				13,089.00	
Lunchpool				11,385.50	
SD Meetings				5,740	
<b>Grants Total</b>	<b>22,124</b>	<b>17,903</b>	<b>12,500</b>	<b>13,500</b>	<b>23,500</b>
McNamara	500	500	500	500	500
SoR Article	500	0	0	0	0
Lifetime Achievement	500	0	0	0	0
Gallagher	5,266 (23 nights)	4,403 (20 nights)	0	0	10,000
Fichter	14,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Furfey	1,358 (358 from 2-17 payment)	1,000	0	1,000	1,000
<b>Salary/Stipends Total</b>	<b>28,500</b>	<b>32,500</b>	<b>33,000</b>	<b>32,000</b>	<b>32,000</b>
Executive Officer	12,000	12,000	12,000	13,000	13,000
EO Course Buyout	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
Executive Officer Office Help	500	500	0	0	0
Soc of Relig Editor	12,500	12,500	12,500	10,500	10,500
Editor Elect			1,000	1,000	1,000
SoR Book Review Editor	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
<b>Other Expenses Miscellaneous Total</b>	<b>85,611</b>		<b>1,773</b>	<b>6,688</b>	<b>1,500</b>
<b>Management/Website &amp; podcasts Total</b>	<b>3,883</b>	<b>1,708</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>
<b>Office Total</b>	<b>4,579</b>	<b>4,094</b>	<b>1,114</b>	<b>2,344</b>	<b>1,844</b>
Constant Contact	540 (45/mo)	540 (45/mo)	360	540	540
Wordpress	200	200	200	200	200
American Express Fee	179	179	179	179	179
Articles of Incorp. Renew	50	50	50	50	50
Indiana business				50	50
Office Expenses and Supplies (BSU)	290 (PayPal reader)	200	200	200	200
Consulting Fees (501c6, 501c3)	294	300	0	1,000	500
Taxes	125	125	125	125	125
Social Media	2,500	2,500	0	0	0

Partnership					
<b>Travel Total/EO Site Select</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0 (virtual tour)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0 (virtual tour)</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Conference Consultant</b>		0	0	0	0
<b>Conference/Ann Meet Total</b>	<b>76,432</b>	<b>70,101</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>63,702</b>
AV	7,025	7,000	0	0	11,000
AV Shipment	500	352	0	0	750
Food and Beverage	55,769	45,000	0	0	35,000
Room Costs (Officers, Furfey, Program Chair)	4,081	5,958 President: comped Pres-E: (\$1065, 5 nights) EO (1,278 6 nights) Furfey (424 for 2 nights) SoR (6 nights for 1,278) PC (5 nights 1065) FPC (848 for 4 nights)	0	0	5,700 (300/night) President: comped Pres-E: (1,200, 4 nights) EO 1,500 ( 5 nights) Furfey (600 for 2 nights) PC (4 nights 1,200) FPC (1,200 for 4 nights)
Registration workers	1,120	600	0	0	700
Furfey dinner	550	463	0	0	500
Awards	202	195	200	200	200
Name tags, ribbons	178	AM Express points	0	0	200
Standard supplies	242	0	0	0	250
Program Assistant	840	500	0	0	500
Program Printing	752	1,000	0	0	1,000
Sign Language		2,762	0	0	0
<b>Meet Travel Reimbursement</b>					<b>8,100</b>
President	858	498	0	0	1,000
President - Elect	498	500	0	0	500
EO	843	370	0	0	1,000
Furfey	595	478	0	0	600
Lifetime Achievement	727	500	0	0	500
Journal Editor	494	1736	0	0	2,000
Program Chair	622	838	0	0	1,000
Future Program Chair	536	684	0	0	1,000
Secretary		500	0	0	500
<b>Other Journal Expenses Total</b>	<b>16,810</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>16,500</b>	<b>14,380</b>	<b>15,500</b>

Payment to OUP for member subscriptions	16,265	16,500	16,500	9,380	10,000
Editor's Budget (research assistant)	0	0	0	5,000	5,000
Reimburse Editor's Expenses (journal related gatherings at annual meeting)	545	500	0	0	500
<b>Depreciation Total</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>600</b>
<b>Future Hotel Payments</b>	<b>19,749</b>	<b>16,000</b>		<b>11,750</b>	<b>11,750</b>
Park Central NYC	9739	0			
Hotel Nikko SF	10,010				
Chicago		16,000			
Los Angeles				6,750	6,750
Philadelphia				5,000	5,000
<b>Insurance (Gen liability, D&amp;O)</b>		<b>1,843</b>	<b>1,843</b>	<b>1,843</b>	<b>1,843</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>141,521</b>	<b>161,749</b>	<b>66,416</b>	<b>115,520</b>	<b>163,339</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>134,311</b>	<b>154,551</b>	<b>150,166</b>	<b>140,480</b>	<b>125,093</b>
<b>Total Income - Expenses</b>	<b>-7,216</b>	<b>-7,198</b>	<b>83,750</b>	<b>24,960</b>	<b>-38,246</b>

Regarding our membership: As of July 31, 2021, we have 368 active members.

I am also very grateful to our Council Members, Committee Chairs, and Committee Members. Without their hard work and dedication, the conference and the work of the ASR would not be possible. Thanks so much!

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

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

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Acceptable levels of food and beverage throughout the conference
  - o Morning coffee/tea? No other food/drink except receptions? Only two rather three receptions?
- Thoughts about where to cut costs in the budget (Income from OUP decreases substantially)?
- Approve budget.
- Go ahead for 2024 Montreal hotel?

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachel Kraus

The McNamara Student Paper Award Committee consisted of myself (Todd Nicholas Fuist) as chair, along with Suzie Macaluso and Rachael Shillitoe. The contest had a relatively small number of entries this year (only six), perhaps not surprisingly given everything going on in the world, but the entries were, nonetheless, quite strong. We were happy to select Feyza Akova of the University of Notre Dame as the winner, for her paper "Treating Religion as a Personal Choice: Opportunities and Dilemmas Involved in the Religious Identity Constructions of Turkish Muslim Immigrants."



The Membership Committee's typical duties are 1) outreach to scholars local to the conference area (~200 miles from the site) whose interests align with that of ASR's and 2) if able, to greet returning and, especially, new members at the welcome breakfast. Given the virtual nature of the conference, we did not engage in these. We look forward to supporting new and current members in 2022!

Respectfully submitted,  
Maureen Day

**Nominations Committee**  
**2020-21 Annual Report**  
Association for the Sociology of Religion  
August 2021 Council Meeting  
July 29, 2021

**Committee members:** Joy Charlton, Kevin Dougherty, Paula Nesbitt (Chair).

Since the Presidential rotation did not occur in 2020 because of the Constitutional amendment passed to allow a year's delay for extraordinary circumstances (such as a pandemic),<sup>1</sup> two effects were evident on the nominations process.

First, the 2021 election would consist of only nominees for Council positions, rather than also including nominees for President. Because of the delayed rotation, the presidential nominee elected in 2020 will take office as President-elect at the end of the 2021 Annual Meeting.

Second, the Past President served as Chair of the Nominations Committee for a second consecutive year. Both members of the 2019-20 Nominations Committee agreed to serve a second year.

To minimize potential bias for serving two consecutive years, names to consider for Council nominations were solicited from sources beyond those that had been contacted the previous year and an effort was made to consider a wider range of potential candidates. Otherwise, the committee agreed to use the same process used for the 2020 election.

### **Committee's process**

Referring to a list of names suggested by sources outside the committee as well as those they had identified, each member individually developed a priority-list of 10 potential nominees. The lists were compiled and the names rank-ordered by the number of times they appeared on each respective list.

Committee members then individually rank-ordered the compiled list for their top six preferences for Council nominees. These lists in turn were compiled and the rank-ordering was tallied to create an invitation list. The remaining names served as a working list in cases where a potential nominee declined.

At each step, committee members were informed about acceptances and declines, and agreement was reached on any names moved forward from the working list.

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<sup>1</sup> Wording for an amendment to Article IV of the Constitution in the May 18, 2020, Council Meeting Agenda. Council approved a wording amendment that substituted "extraordinary circumstances" for similar wording in the proposed constitutional amendment, which was subsequently approved and then voted on by the membership.

All potential nominees were asked to affirm in writing the following:

1. You review and agree to fulfill the duties of the position, which can be found under "Duties of Officers," <https://www.sociologyofreligion.com/about/duties-of-officers/>
2. You agree that you anticipate having the time available to fulfill these duties, and that during your term you will be able to attend the two Council meetings held just before and just after the ASR annual meeting. You also affirm that you will read and respond to emails throughout the year, related to your responsibilities.
3. You agree to keep your ASR membership current throughout your term of office.
4. You agree that you have recently read and agree to abide by the ASA code of ethics <http://www.asanet.org/code-ethics> (Article 2 of the ASR Constitution and bylaws, <https://www.sociologyofreligion.com/about/constitution-and-by-laws/>).
5. You affirm that you know of no personal issue or impediment to serving as an officer for ASR that could compromise the integrity of ASR.

All nominees affirmed these statements via email communications. No questions or concerns were raised. All nominees provided biographical statements, which were sent to EO Rachel Kraus. The slate of Council nominees was completed in early February, 2021.

The slate consisted of the following names, with those elected marked with an asterisk (\*).

#### **Council**

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- \* Katie E. Corcoran
- Laurel Kearns
- Brandon Martinez
- Lina Molokotos-Liederman
- \* Samuel L. Perry
- \* Richard N. Pitt

All nominees were notified of the results immediately following the election.

On behalf of our committee, I want to express my appreciation to Council and others for submitting names, and for all the nominees who were willing to serve the Association in this leadership capacity if elected. Their commitment to ASR was especially gratifying given additional challenges that the pandemic has wrought.

Respectfully submitted,  
Paula Nesbitt, Chair

**Association for the Sociology of Religion  
Development (Finance) Committee  
2021 Report**

Committee Members:

Chair: Warren Goldstein, Center for Critical Research on Religion (2023), [goldstein@criticaltheoryofreligion.org](mailto:goldstein@criticaltheoryofreligion.org)

Laurel Kearns, Drew University (2022), [lkearns@drew.edu](mailto:lkearns@drew.edu)

David Voas, UCL Social Research Institute (2023), [d.voas@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:d.voas@ucl.ac.uk)

The development (finance) committee met several times during the fall and winter of 2020-2021 to discuss developing a socially responsible investment policy for ASR's endowment. ASR's \$700,000+ endowment is currently invested in American Funds, which does not have ESG (Environment, Sustainability, Governance) mutual funds. So, to invest in ESGs would most likely entail transferring the funds to another financial services firm. Committee members did some research on ESG funds and reached out to other professional associations (e.g., SSSR) as well as investment managers. The committee is currently at an impasse over the best policy to pursue: whether to pick some top rated ESG funds and leave them there or to have a professionally managed account, the later which would entail some fees.

## **ASR Fichter Committee Report, 2021**

Committee members included: (1) Sabrina Danielsen, Chair, Creighton University; (2) Tia Noelle Pratt, Villanova University; and (3) Alpha Possamai-Inesedy, Western Sydney University.

We received 10 submissions requesting a total of \$41,570. Our process to determine funding was similar recent past years on the committee. We each considered the three most relevant categories (such as being sociologically sound, inclusion and diversity, and innovation). Each committee member evaluated all 10 candidates on each of their three chosen relevant categories, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest number of points, for a total of 9 categories ranked for each submission. We then had a Zoom meeting in which we holistically discussed how best to distribute the limited funding given our rankings. There was significant agreement among all three committee members that the top three ranked submissions merited funding. The winners were contacted on May 28th. Although the website for the Fichter award says that only winners would be contacted, we decided to also email those who did not receive funding so they would know with certainty that they were not funded.

### **2021 Winners - Totaling \$12,000**

(In the order that we selected them)

1. Yaghoob Foroutan - "Women's Dress Codes in the Islamic Republic: Presentations vs Perceptions" - \$5,000
2. Kate Gleeson - "Faith after disbelief: A study of female Catholic mass-attendees and their experiences of faith and religious community in the aftermath of the Australian Royal Commission into institutional responses to child sexual abuse" - \$4,068
3. Stephanie House-Niamke - "The Sociocultural Effects of a White Jesus on Black Christians" - \$2,932

### **Action Item:**

The Committee decided last year that we wanted to move the timeline up a little for the Fichter award decisions. Making decisions between May 1 and June 1, during a hectic time for those on an academic calendar, can be challenging. We also thought it would be helpful for people to know they are getting funding before summer, which is a common time that those on the academic calendar do travel for research. We discussed having a February 1 deadline to receive submissions and announce decisions by April 1.

We were not successful in moving up the timeline this year, but we expect this was more about the chaos of a continued pandemic and hope to move up the schedule next year.

**2021 ASR President's Report**  
**James Cavendish**  
**August, 2021**

2021 has been another eventful year for ASR. Because the COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of ASA's physical conference in Chicago, our Council decided to cancel ASR's physical conference as well, and Rachel Kraus and I, for a second year in a row, negotiated with the hotel to cancel our hotel contract.

After Council decided that our 2021 conference would be delivered entirely online, our Program Committee (i.e., Brian Starks, Rachel Kraus, and I) began working with our Ad-Hoc Virtual Conference Planning Committee, which consisted of Jim Spickard (facilitator), Tricia Bruce, and Basheer Mohammed. I owe a debt of gratitude to Brian and Rachel for managing the submissions of session proposals and abstracts, Brian for organizing the abstract submissions into sessions, Tricia Bruce, who did all of the organizing work with LunchPool, and Jim Spickard, our new President, who did all of the organizing work with EventPilot, as well as Basheer Mohammed. I would also like to thank Gerardo Marti, our incoming President Elect, who as Chair of the ASA Religion Section, served as the Coordinator of our jointly sponsored ASA-ASR Mentoring Panels.

Although Brian Starks and I asked those who had submitted session proposals last year to consider resubmitting their proposals for the 2021 Annual Meeting, not all of them did. One of our Council members, Kraig Beyerlein did volunteer to organize a stand-alone, virtual Author-Meets-Critics session on Robert Braun's book *Protectors of Pluralism* back in April, and I thought that it was a very successful session. Thank you, Kraig.

As you will see in looking at the Publications Committee's report, the Executive Officers and Editors met with the Publications Committee in the Fall to discuss ways to foster greater diversity in authors and topics represented in the journal. Their report contains their recommendations.

I am also happy to report that ASR has established a separate 501(c) entity for the purpose of receiving tax-deductible contributions from our members.

Lastly, I want to thank all of the committee members and chairs for their hard work during this trying year.

**REPORT of the LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting of the Executive Council**  
**Association for the Sociology of Religion**  
**(Friday, August 6, 2021)**

Kevin J. Christiano  
[Chair, 2022]  
Sociology and  
Labor Studies  
University of Notre Dame  
U. S. A.

Peter F. Beyer  
[2021]  
Classics and  
Religious Studies  
University of Ottawa  
CANADA

Inger Furseth  
[2023]  
Sociology and  
Human Geography  
University of Oslo  
NORWAY

During 2020-2021, neither the Executive Office nor the members of the selection committee for the **Lifetime Achievement Award for Contributions to the Sociology of Religion** received any new nominations for this honor. However, because nominations remain active for five years after the time when they are first submitted, the committee had a list of ten prospects from which to choose this year's recipient.

The members had access to files concerning each nominee that were deposited in a central storage facility online. They conferred several times by e-mail during June and July, and on July 12 they reached consensus that the 2021 award should be presented to

**Nancy Nason-Clark, Professor *Emerita* of Sociology and former director of the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research at the University of New Brunswick [Canada].**

Professor Nason-Clark was nominated for this recognition by Marion Goldman, Professor *Emerita* of Sociology and Religious Studies at the University of Oregon and Scholar-in-Residence at the Portland [Ore.] Center for Public Humanities.

Professor Nason-Clark served the Association as its president from 1998 to 2000 and as editor of its scholarly journal, *Sociology of Religion*, between 2000 and 2006. We recognize Nason-Clark as a pioneer of studies that probe the connections between religious ideas and the incidence of domestic violence. Her intellectual drive and personal courage combined to uncover dramatic evidence of religion's role in abuse that mars relations between partners and within families. The committee was moved to honor Professor Nason-Clark for her extensive body of distinguished publications, for her record of collaboration in research with colleagues and students, and for her tireless activism outside the academic community to promote awareness of, and solutions to, problems of intimate violence.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee

## **Distinguished *Sociology of Religion* Journal Article Award**

**2021**

### **Committee:**

Chair: Scott Desmond, Indianapolis University  
Purdue University – Columbus  
Adair Lummis, Hartford Seminary  
Korie Edwards, Ohio State University

### **Committee Purpose and Procedure:**

The 2021 ASR Distinguished *Sociology of Religion* Journal Article Award committee (Scott Desmond, Adair Lummis, and Korie Edwards) selected the most outstanding article published in *Sociology of Religion* last year. Articles published in volume 81 (2020) of *Sociology of Religion* were eligible for the award (book reviews were not considered). There were 15 articles considered for the award.

The committee used the established criteria for evaluating the articles (from the ASR website, “The committee will evaluate the quality of scholarship exhibited in the article, which may include (but is not limited to) theoretical, empirical, and methodological considerations. Additional consideration will be given to the significance of the article’s contribution to the sociological study of religion and to broader societal understandings of religion”). Committee members ranked their top ten articles. Although there was some variation in the rankings, there was a clear winner (ranked first by two of the committee members and in the top three by the third member). The executive officer, Rachel Kraus, was notified that the Distinguished Article Award should go to:

**Timothy L. O’Brien and Shiri Noy**

“Political Identity and Confidence in Science and Religion in the United States”

*Sociology of Religion*, 81(4): 439-461



Editor's Report August 2020– August 2021  
Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review

August 1, 2021

Prepared by: Joseph O. Baker (East Tennessee State University)

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

(Institution/date term ends)

Editor in Chief:

Joseph O. Baker (East Tennessee State University/December 2022)

Consulting Editor:

Gerardo Marti (Davidson College/December 2021)

Book Review Editor:

Jaime Kucinkas (Hamilton College/December 2023)

Associate Editors:

Ruth Braunstein (University of Connecticut/December 2022)

Grace Yukich (Quinnipiac University/December 2022)

Andrew Whitehead (Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis//December 2022)

Editorial Board Members:

Gary Adler (Pennsylvania State University/December 2022)

Nancy Ammerman (Boston University/December 2023)

Orit Avishai (Fordham University/December 2023)

John Bartkowski (University of Texas at San Antonio/December 2023)

Alex Bierman (University of Calgary/December 2023)

Joseph Blankholm (University of California, Santa Barbara/December 2021)

Philip Brenner (University of Massachusetts, Boston/December 2021)

R. Khari Brown (Wayne State/December 2023)

Kelsey Burke (University of Nebraska, Lincoln/December 2022)

Wendy Cadge (Brandeis University/December 2023)

Ryan M. Calder (Johns Hopkins University/December 2023)

Nanlai Cao (Remin University of China/December 2022)

James Cavendish (University of South Florida/August 2021)

Katie Corcoran (West Virginia University/December 2023)

Jack Delehanty (Clark University/December 2023)

Brad R. Fulton (Indiana University/December 2023)

Jeff Guhin (UCLA/December 2023)

Conrad Hackett (Pew Research Center/December 2023)

Jonathan Hill (Calvin College/December 2023)

John Hoffmann (Brigham Young University/December 2021)

Courtney Irby (Illinois Wesleyan University/December 2023)

Amy Jonason (Furman University/December 2021)

Isabella Kasselstrand (University of Aberdeen/December 2023)  
Rachel Kraus (Ball State University/December 2023)  
Nicolette Manglos-Weber (Boston University/December 2021)  
Brandon Martinez (Providence College/December 2023)  
Damon Mayrl (Colby College/December 2023)  
Dawne Moon (Marquette University/December 2021)  
Olaf Müller (University of Münster/December 2021)  
Agata S. Nalborczyk (University of Warsaw/December 2021)  
Samuel L. Perry (University of Oklahoma/December 2021)  
Richard Petts (Ball State University/December 2021)  
Richard N. Pitt (Vanderbilt University/December 2021)  
Daniel V.A. Olson (Purdue University/December 2021)  
Rachel Rinaldo, (University of Colorado/December 2023)  
Philip Schwadel (University of Nebraska, Lincoln/December 2021)  
Darren E. Sherkat (Southern Illinois University/December 2021)  
Jörg Stolz (University of Lausanne/December 2023)  
Iddo Tavory (New York University/December 2022)  
Jeremy Uecker (Baylor University/December 2023)

Editorial Transition: I have decided to serve a two-year term as editor, meaning that we will soon need to issue a call for applicants to be the next editor of the journal. I have been in communication with the Publications Committee and the current and future Presidents of ASR about the timeline for the transition. Below is the proposed timeline we are working with:

September 2021 – Place call for new editor

January 2022 – Evaluate applications and announce new editor

February - March 2022 – Editor-elect selects new editorial team

April – December 2022 – Orientation, training, and apprenticeship as EIC

January 2023 – New editor begins regular term

Associate Editors: The current Associate Editors are now fully integrated into the journal processes, and have helped turnaround rapid reviews, help adjudicate difficult decisions, and other tasks related to the journal. They were especially instrumental in organizing the special issue on the COVID pandemic and religion, helping to author the editors' note on the topic, write the call for submissions, and evaluate many of the manuscripts submitted. In terms of responsibilities, Andrew Whitehead has taken over the role of managing the publicity, running the social media accounts for the journal and creating new podcasts with the authors of articles. All of the associate editors have been excellent in their roles, and are a crucial component of the upward trajectory of the journal.

Consulting Editor: Gerardo Marti has been serving as Consulting Editor, and he has been extremely helpful in this position. His extensive knowledge of the journal, production processes at OUP, and the wide range of issues and decisions faced as Editor have made him an invaluable consultant on many issues. ASR is fortunate to have him in the role of President-Elect, so that the integrated and supportive relationship between ASR and *Sociology of Religion* can continue going forward.

Book Review Editor: Jaime Kucinkas is now the book review editor, and has done a remarkable job in this role over the past year. We are continuing the previous strategy of having a review essay each issue, along with shorter, standard reviews as well. We have also transitioned the submissions, evaluation, and production of book reviews into the Manuscript Central system, per the request of OUP. Jaime has been superb in this role, and has consistently selected books and reviewers that showcase the latest and most interesting work in the field. In addition, she is incredibly responsive to author queries, very organized with selecting reviews to feature in each issue, and always punctual with timelines.

Editorial Board: Once again, more than any other qualities, the willingness to respond quickly and provide detailed reviews and recommendations for other reviewers are most appreciated from Editorial Board members. Our board members continue to be responsive and helpful. Following Gerardo's strategy during his terms as editor, I sought to recruit board members who had already demonstrated excellence in reviewing for the journal: timely in responding to invitations, timely in turning in reviews, and substantive in their reviews with evidence of detail, rigor, and careful reading of manuscripts. I also sought to recruit scholars that help diversify ethnic and gender representation, and who complement the expertise of the existing board.

New board members that were added this year include: Orit Avishai, R. Khari Brown, Wendy Cadge, Jack Delehanty, and Jeff Guhin. In addition, Nancy Ammerman, John Bartkowski, Alex Bierman, Jonathan Hill, Rachel Rinaldo, and Jeremy Uecker all agreed to serve another term on the board.

Michael Emerson, Jenny Trinitapoli, and Steve Warner all cycled off of the editorial board at the end of their terms in 2020.

Overall, we have an excellent set of scholars in place on the board who represent a diverse range of substantive, methodological, and regional specialties.

ASR Executive Officer: Rachel Kraus continues to be an incredibly effective EO for ASR. She is always responsive to queries, organizes all of ASR's activities, and always keeps things running as efficiently as possible. She also responds helpfully and efficiently to all queries regarding the journal, such as issues with submissions fees and access for members. It is a pleasure working with Rachel, and she truly vital to the organization and the journal.

Publisher Relationships: Communication between myself and OUP has been fine, although it is worth mentioning that there has been a high degree of turnover, both at OUP and their outsourced production group NewGen. Thankfully Trish Thomas, our main point of contact for OUP, remains in place and is generally very helpful resolving bureaucratic issues as they inevitably arise. Unfortunately, the turnover, particularly at NewGen, has led to some issues with getting proofs turned around in a timely manner, as well as with the quality of the proofs after copyediting. At present, the quality and responsiveness from NewGen has been decreasing. I am hopeful that the new person who is currently training as our point of contact for NewGen will improve these issues, although that remains to be seen.

## II. Manuscript Flow

The journal continues to be highly selective in accepting manuscripts. The overall selectivity of the journal remains very high, with an acceptance rate of **11.4%**. This is essentially steady from the previous year (12.8%); however, given that the submission rate is increasing, we may have to push the acceptance rate down even further, in order to avoid having too many articles in a long queue to be assigned to an issue. Articles in this online “holding queue” have expanded in the last year, so I am working actively on both very deliberate use of the page budget and being slightly more selective to stem the expansion of the article queue.

- 205 manuscripts in total (new and revised article submissions; not including book reviews) were processed on or after August 1, 2020. The total for the previous year was 192, so overall submissions have increased by about 7% over last year.
- 162 original (new) manuscripts with a submission date on or after August 1, 2020. This is stable compared to last year (161).
  - Focusing on the 152 that have editorial decisions, 134 were rejected (88%), 15 were given “major revision” status (10%), and 3 were given “minor revision” status (2%).
- 41 revised manuscripts with a submission date on or after August 1, 2020—an increase of 10 from the previous year.
  - Focusing on the revised manuscripts that have decisions: 22 were accepted (53%), 3 were given a second “major revision” (7%), 13 were given “minor revision” status (32%), and 3 were rejected (7%).
- Of all manuscripts that received an editorial decision on or after August 1, 2020, **11.4% (22/193) were accepted.**

## III. Decision Times

Since becoming editor, I have given the role top priority, even above my faculty position. I do work for the journal every day, and keep all processes running as smoothly and efficiently as possible. Because of this, I believe we are processing manuscripts as quickly as we can, especially under current conditions with the pandemic.

As always, the lag times in decisions on manuscripts are primarily due to waiting for reviewers to respond to invitations, finding enough qualified reviewers willing to evaluate submissions, and then waiting for reviewers to turn in their evaluations of manuscripts. I continue to expand the reviewer database with scholars whose expertise would benefit the journal. I also try to be mindful about burning out our competent and reliable reviewers.

This issue has become even more pertinent during the COVID pandemic. Potential reviewers regularly cited concerns related to the pandemic—ranging from personal illness to childcare issues—as reasons for declining to review manuscripts.

Nonetheless, decision times continue to be very fast, and all but one decision was made within three months. The longest time to decision was 161 days, due to unusual difficulties finding reviewers for a particular topic, then delayed reviews, and eventually never returned reviews. The second longest wait time this year was a much more reasonable 91 days.

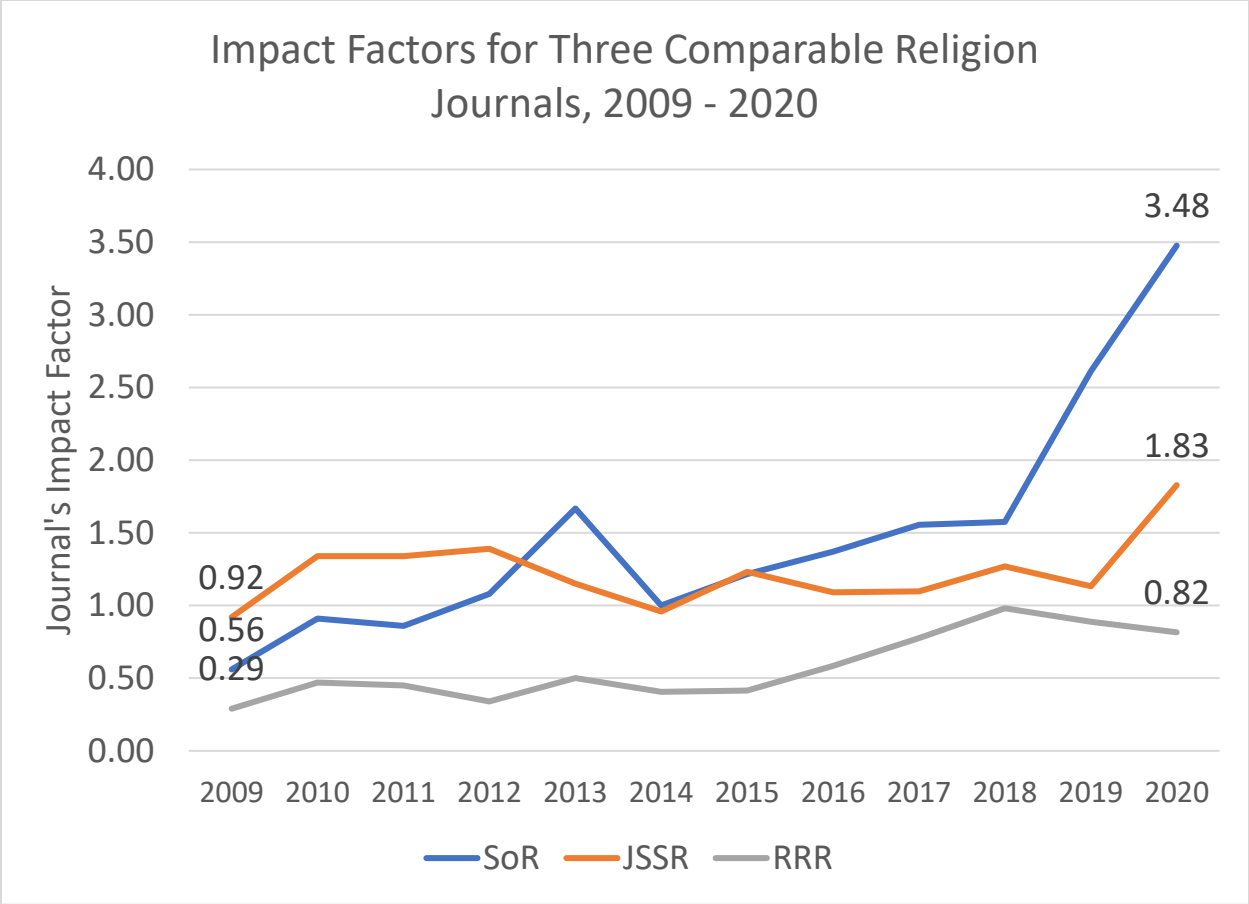
- o The overall average for all manuscripts for time from submission to decision was 27 days.
- o Rejected manuscripts (aside from inappropriate submissions which are rejected very quickly) averaged 26 days from submission date to editorial decision date, down slightly from 29 days last year.
  - This average combines both desk rejections and submissions that are rejected after external peer review. The manuscript central platform does not distinguish between these two types of rejection in generating reports, but my general rule of thumb is to process desk rejections within 2 weeks of submission.
- o “Major revision” decisions averaged 49 days from submission date to decision, down slightly from 52 days last year.
- o “Minor revision” decisions averaged 41 days, up slightly from 38 days last year.
- Among revised submissions,
  - o “Accepted” decisions average 10 days (basically the same last year) from submission to decision. This number, however, averages some longer times (major revisions) and many very short times (minor revisions). Still, even with longer times, many manuscripts receive very quick decisions based on internal review of minor revisions.
  - o “Minor revision” average lag is 33 days.
- The time from acceptance to publication online in Advance Access remains about 8 – 12 weeks. Once there, the wait time to be assigned to an issue have been increasing recently, for two reasons. First, because we have had increased submissions, the Advance Access queue has grown, even though the acceptance rate for the journal has remained stable. Because we have a fixed page budget OUP due continuing to have a print version of the journal, we are unable to “clear to queue” by including more articles per issue. Second, due to issues of timeliness, we are moving the special issue on religion and COVID up to be the final issue of the year. This will keep the current queue on hold a little longer, but our goal is to get the special issue out as soon as possible, given that the pandemic remains ongoing.

#### IV. Impact Factor

Summary of Impact: The impact factor went up again this past year from 2.611 to 3.476, ranking SOR as a “top 25” journal in Sociology. The 5-year Impact Factor is now 3.362, a significant increase. The impact factor of SOR remains highly favorable in relation to our comparison journals.

**SOR ranks 25 out of 149 in Impact Factor in the Sociology journals category of the ISI rankings.** In comparison, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* now ranks 81 and *Review of Religious Research* is ranked 125. The figure below shows the Impact Factors for all three journals from 2009 until 2020. Sociology of Religion has now emerged as the clear-cut leading journal in the sociology of religion, and has become a highly-regarded journal sociology more generally. In addition, *Sociology of Religion* is also listed as the top journal in the religious studies.

Andrew Whitehead in particular has done a great deal aid in the increased visibility of the journal by virtue of running the journal’s social media accounts, hosting and producing the journal’s podcast, and by regularly interacting with various staff at OUP about rotating the articles that made freely available. Andrew and I have also worked with OUP to make sure the journal’s webpage is up to date and prominently features recent, popular, and highly-cited articles.

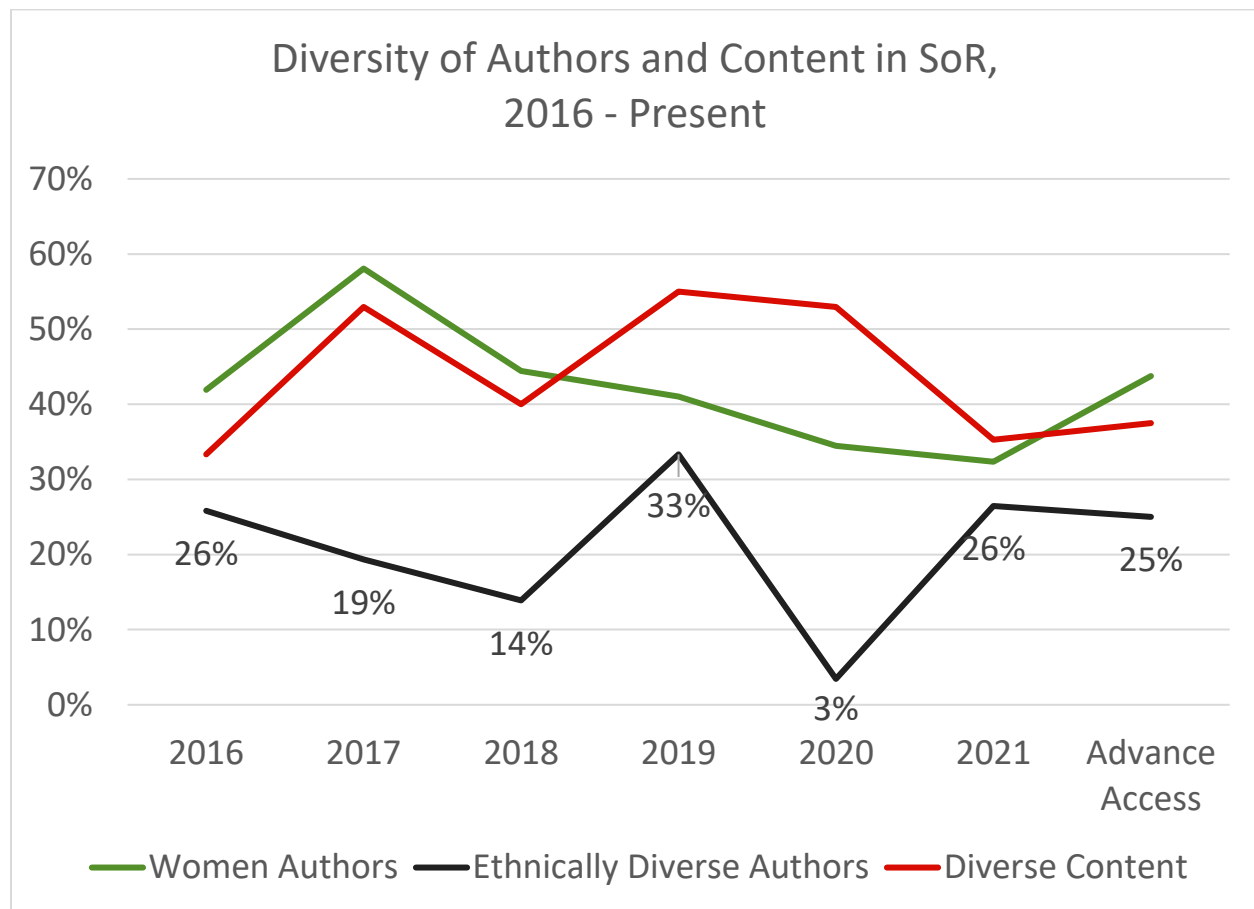


A word of warning about the increase in Impact Factor is necessary. For the last two years, the overall Impact Factor has been disproportionately affected by an outlier in terms of citation. Specifically, the article “Make American Christian Again” had 42 citations that counted toward the impact factor in 2020, with the next highest article at 9 citations. With only 42 total citable items in the past two years (the window for calculating the Impact Factor), this article is solely responsible for a full one-point increase in the Impact Factor. Because this article will cycle off from being counted for next year’s Impact Factor, there may well be a corresponding decrease in the overall citation average. Although we certainly hope this will not be the case, it is nonetheless important to look more closely at the calculations behind this influential citation metric to see what is occurring from year-to-year. This is especially important for our journal because we publish a smaller number of articles per year than many outlets. Because the Impact Factor is a measure of the average number of citations per article, journals with fewer citable items are more strongly influenced by outliers.

This important caveat notwithstanding, the journal is clearly trending a very positive direction. Even without this single citation, the Impact Factor has remained on an upward trajectory, with a noticeable gap between SoR and comparable journals. Our goal is to maintain this positive momentum through continued attention to detail in terms of efficiency of process, high-quality content, and maximum visibility through promotion.

## V. Diversity of Authors

To provide information on the diversity of (article) authors in the journal over the past five years, I coded all authors since 2016 into categories for white/minority and men/women. I also coded the content of the articles for whether or not they were focused on issues of race, ethnicity, and/or gender (or not). In addition to coding through the year 2020, I also coded for the year 2021, since we know what articles will be in all of those issues. I also coded the current “Advance Access” articles, because this gives us a better look at the current state of authorship diversity. These codes are admittedly crude, and are often based on publicly available photos, since authors in the journal do not provide self-identification information about race/ethnicity or gender. Still, this assessment provides some baseline information about the demographics of authors in the journal that can be used to make more informed decisions about diversity going forward.



The figure shows the results for authorship diversity based on these codes. The percentages for ethnic diversity are displayed on the graph, since this was the primary question of interest in the discussion at last year’s council meeting, as well as in the follow-up meeting specifically about diversity.

Notably, the ethnic diversity of authorship in 2020 was much lower than all the other years, with only one minority author that year (3% of the total). This is precisely what prompted initial discussions at the 2020 council meeting. A second thing to note is that the higher percentage of ethnically diverse authors in 2019 was driven primarily by the special issue Gerardo put together on racially diverse congregations. Indeed, 6 of the 13 minority authors in 2019 published articles in the special issue. If we take that issue out of the calculations, the percentage of ethnically diverse authors in 2019 would drop to 23%, which is more in

line with the previous years. This shows that the proportion of ethnically diverse authors from 2016 to 2019 in the journal overall—not including that special issue—was around 20%. This also provides a clear example of how special issues on topics involving diversity are an effective way to increase diverse representation in authorship.

While 2020 was clearly a negative aberration from previous trends, diverse authorship has thankfully increased since then, to around 25% in both 2021 and the Advance Access articles. On the editorial end, I have tried to help increase diverse authorship by pushing some submissions that were borderline between R&R/reject toward publication with multiple rounds of revision.

Ultimately, however, it is increasing diversity numbers for submission rates that will make the biggest difference in authorship diversity for the articles published. One important thing to for the Publications Committee to consider is the extent to which these rates are in line with or diverge from the diversity rates in ASR (or SSSR). This would provide important reference information on the field itself, and let us know whether we are ahead, behind, or part of broader trends in the field more generally. If we do not already collect this information on organization members, we should discuss beginning to do so.

Another noticeable trend on the graph is declining authorship for women, particularly in 2020 and 2021. This is most likely due to the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on working women. The declines are in step with similar declines in other academic fields.<sup>1</sup> I suspect that this will continue to be an issue in publishing for the next 2 – 3 years, given that the pandemic is ongoing, and also considering the lag time between conducting research and then moving it through the submission, peer review, and production processes. Thankfully authorship by women has rebounded some in our Advance Access articles (44%), which is a good sign. Still, this is something we will need to monitor closely going forward.

Finally, the content in *Sociology of Religion* has addressed issues of race, ethnicity, and gender at varying rates over the years. In 2019 and 2020, over half of the articles published directly addressed issues involving these aspects of diversity. In 2019, this was again driven by the special issue on multiracial congregations. Removing those articles from the calculations, 36% of the articles that year focused on substantive topics about diversity. Interestingly, the content of journal was still heavily focused on diversity in 2020—with 53% of the articles directly addressing race, ethnicity, and/or gender—even though there was also the steep decline in diverse authorship that occurred that year. The percentage of articles focused on race, ethnicity, and/or gender has declined some in 2021 (35%), as well as in our Advanced Access (38%) articles. Overall, however, the content featured in journal has regularly in the past and continues to feature research about issues involving race, ethnicity, and gender.

It is important to remember that there is high variability in these numbers by year because we only publish 20 articles annually, but they do still provide some useful information. As a policy suggestion, we should discuss adding gender and ethnicity, and any other category of interest, to member profiles in both ASR and Manuscript Central, so that we can track this data formally and with self-identification rather than crude second-hand classification. This would also allow us to gather diversity data about the diversity of all submitters rather than just published authors, as well as gather information about reviewers. I assume this can be done through OUP making the requested changes to the Manuscript Central platform. This is something the Publications Committee should consider. If they decide to move forward with creating additional categories for profiles, we can contact OUP about making the requested changes.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example: Kibbe, Melina R. 2020. “Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Manuscript Submissions by Women.” *JAMA Surgery* 155(9): 803–804. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamasurgery/fullarticle/2769186>



## VI. Final Considerations

Data Transparency Practices: In my application to be editor, I noted that a goal was to introduce some data transparency practices for the journal. To this end, Andrew Whitehead and I attended an online symposium about data transparency that was hosted by and the Data Preservation Alliance for the Social Sciences (Data-PASS) and the Journal Editors' Discussion Interface (JEDI). These initiatives are funded by the NSF and brought together editors from a wide range of fields to discuss best practices for data transparency. After the symposium, I have continued to be active in JEDI discussion groups. My goal is to begin discussion about and implementation of some baseline data transparency practices for the journal by the end of next year.

Special Issue on COVID-19 and Religion: We received 40 submissions for the special issue on religion and the pandemic. Ultimately, we ended up with five very interesting articles, covering a range of methods (3 quantitative, 2 qualitative) and regional foci (3 on the U.S., 2 on international cases). The associate editors were instrumental in putting together the call for papers and helping review the manuscripts we received. The special issue is scheduled to be the final issue this year 82(4). We are hopeful that the special issue will be influential in setting the agenda for research in the wake of the pandemic. It was inspiring to see the creativity of colleagues in our field, and their commitment to conducting high-quality, interesting research, even during the difficulties of the COVID pandemic.

Thank you: I want to express my gratitude with all the members of the editorial team, the Executive Officer, members of the Publications Committee, and the past, current, and future Presidents, as well as our wider scholastic community. The past year has been challenging in a number of ways, but with the steadfast support of ASR and the hard work of many generous people, the journal continues to be on a positive trajectory, and is well-positioned for the future.