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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our annual meeting in Rochester, New York was quite successful. This year's program chair, Keith Wulff, focused our attention on the topic of promoting cooperation between academic and denominational researchers. There were practical sessions devoted primarily to the needs of denominational researchers, such as a session that discussed the problems and advantages of collecting church statistics via the Web. There were sessions that encouraged academically-based researchers to shape their research, and the dissemination of their research, in ways that benefit religious leaders. There were sessions where academically-based researchers reported on issues of interest to denominational researchers and religious leaders, for example two sessions devoted to research on clergy, a session on studies of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, and a session on the theological education of Latinos. Finally, there were sessions of broad interest for both denominational researchers and academic researchers, such as a joint session with ASREC and SSSR on religious growth rates, a session on ethnographic methods in studying congregations, and an author-meets-critics session discussing Chris Smith's book *Soul Searching*—a major study of the religious attitudes and behavior of U.S. teenagers. Mark Chaves presented a much-discussed H. Paul Douglass lecture in which he argued that megachurches are getting bigger and more common primarily because underlying changes in the U.S. economy make it harder for small churches to offer the same levels of services that they were previously able to provide. His lecture will appear in a future issue of the *Review of Religious Research*.

Next year's program theme is Diversity Within Religious Organizations. Program chair Michael Emerson (moeRRA@rice.edu) is looking for sessions and papers that examine issues related to social, economic, racial, theological, and other types of diversity within denominations, congregations, and other religious organizations. As always, papers and sessions on any topic related to the study of religion are welcome.

RRA continues to experience a pattern of stability and slow growth both in members and in finances. Our membership hovers around 500, and our financial reserves stand at just over twice the annual budget. Steady improvements in our financial condition over the past several years have allowed us to increase the total amounts of money given out annually for the Constant Jacquet research awards from about \$8,000 in the late 1990s, to \$14,000 this past year, to \$17,000 next year. Details for next year's competition appear on the next page of this issue of *Context*—and on the RRA Website, <http://rra.hartsem.edu>.

As I stated in last year's Presidential message, RRA remains strong, and the future holds great potential. Please feel free to contact me, dolson@iusb.edu, with your concerns as well as your ideas for making the Religious Research Association even better.

Dan Olson
Indiana University South Bend

FUNDING

Constant H. Jacquet Research Awards

The RRA will make \$17,000 available this year on a competitive basis for applied and basic research. Priority is given to applied projects, and funding over \$3,000 to any one proposal is granted only in cases of exceptionally high merit and significance. In this competition, applied research is defined as a project that has an identifiable organizational or institutional client who will use the research results for specific goal-centered activities. The Committee especially encourages proposal submissions from scholars who are in the early stages of their careers, as well as proposals from students.

Funding may be used for research expenses and release time, but not for supplemental income or capital equipment. Because funds are limited, applicants are also encouraged to seek support from alternative sources of funding. Applicants are required to be members of the RRA. Full-time students may join the Association at the time of their application. All others must hold membership in the RRA for at least one full year prior to the application deadline.

Applications must include four copies of: (a) an Awards Application Form, completed and signed; (b) a narrative summary of the proposed project, no longer than five double-spaced, typed pages; and (c) a one-page detailed budget. Materials will not be returned.

The required Application Form can be obtained from the RRA website—<http://rra.hartsem.edu>. The site also provides the address information for submitting your materials. Your application must be received by 1 April 2006.

Applicants will be notified of the disposition of their applications within 60 days and will be asked to submit a written acceptance of their awards within two weeks of notification. Recipients should plan to expend the grant within one year after accepting the award and should note RRA support in all reports of the research for which they received the grant. Award recipients are encouraged to submit their research reports for possible publication in the Review of Religious Research, subject to editorial review. An account of the expenditure of the grant is required, and if an article is not submitted to the RRR, a narrative of the research and its findings will be expected as well.

2005 awardees were Nanlai Cao, Brian Calfano, D. Michael Lindsay, Marge Royle, and Jenny Trinitapoli.

Joseph H. Fichter Research Awards

The Association for the Sociology of Religion will make available \$12,500 this year for promising research in either of two areas, prioritized as follows: (1) gender issues, women and religion, and feminist perspectives on religion; (2) sociology of the parish. Applicants must have been members of the ASR in 2005 and be current members at the time of application. (This is a policy change for 2006 and following.) Dissertation research is included within the purview of the award. Those who have recently earned the doctorate are especially encouraged to apply.

A proposal of not more than five double-spaced, typed pages should outline the rationale and plan of research. A detailed budget should be attached, as should a vita. Deadline: 1 March postmark.

Send four copies of the proposal to: Barbara J. Denison, POB 211, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055. Further information is available on the ASR Web site <www.sociologyofreligion.com> or by writing: bjdeni@ship.edu.

SSSR Research Awards

The Society for the Scientific Study of Religion has authorized several thousand dollars for its 2006 research awards competition. At least a one-fourth of the grants will go to persons who are graduate students or have held the doctorate for less than five years. Awards are intended to cover research expenses, travel, student assistance, and up to \$1,500 in stipend.

Applicants must have been SSSR members for at least one year at the time they submit their proposals, which are limited in length to a maximum of five double-spaced, typed pages, including abstract and budget. The budget should include a rationale for expenditures. In addition, applicants should enclose a brief curriculum vitae listing their research and publications. Grant recipients have two years to spend their awards and are expected to submit a brief report on their research.

Three copies of the complete application should be sent to R. Stephen Warner, Sociology M/C 312, University of Illinois Chicago, 1007 W Harrison St., Chicago, IL 60607 by 1 March 2006. For further information: rswarner@uic.edu.

ELECTIONS AND NOMINATIONS

Results of the 2005 RRA general elections are: President Elect, C. Kirk Hadaway; Secretary, John P. (Jack) Marcum; Publications Chair, Joseph B. Tamney; Directors-at-Large, Anthony J. Blasi and Keith Wulff; Nominating Committee, Ida Smith-Williams and Charles Zech. The amendment to the by-laws on the ballot passed overwhelmingly.

The 2006 Nominating Committee seeks member input. This year a new nominating committee chair, two board members, and two nominating committee members will be elected. If you wish to offer a name (including your own), contact Dean Hoge at Sociology, Catholic University, Washington, DC 20064; hoge@cua.edu. The Committee will be happiest to hear from you as close after the start of 2006 as possible.

MEETINGS

A one-day conference, Encountering the Other: Religious Tolerance and Hospitality, will be held at the University of Notre Dame, 24 April 2006. Persons interested in learning more about the conference or presenting a paper should contact Sarah MacMillen (smacmill@nd.edu) or check the Website, www.nd/~jsmith37/other.html.

The Association for the Sociology of Religion will meet 10-12 August in Montréal. The theme is Intersections: History Meets the Sociology of Religion ... Again. The session proposal deadline is 15 January; papers, 15 February. ASR membership is required for program participation. Contact Program Chair Peter Kivisto at ASR2006@augustana.edu. See also the ASR Website: www.sociologyofreligion.com.

For those who really think ahead, there will be an inaugural conference for the Centre for the Study of Sport and Spirituality at York St John College, York, England in August/September 2007. Contact: sportspirituality@yorksja.ac.uk.

MEMBER NEWS

We congratulate Jim Davidson and Steve Warner on their elections to the presidencies of, respectively, ASR and SSSR. Jim is also a past-president of RRA. Each will serve a one-year term and give his presidential address in 2007.

The January 2006 (35/1) issue of Exchange, a journal for intercultural theology centered at the University of Utrecht (Netherlands) and published by Brill, is a thematic issue devoted entirely to the topic Conversion and the Religious Market. The articles often give special attention to Pentecostalism and are written by Erik Sengers, Anton Houtepen, Henri Gooren, Bernice and David Martin, Allan Anderson, Cecília Mariz, and Vitória Peres de Oliveira. Copies to Western hemisphere addresses may be ordered via email to cs@brillusa.com.

Three of our colleagues have been recognized recently by awards from the Louisville Institute. They are Joseph Reiff in the Religious Institutions program, Nancy Eiesland and Kevin Dougherty in the Summer Stipends program.

Fenggang Yang and Joe Tamney have recently published the edited collection State, Market, and Religions in Chinese Societies in the ASR's "Religion and the Social Order" series, now published by Brill.

It is with regret that we note the death of K. Peter Takayama, for many years a member of the sociology faculty of the University of Memphis (aka Memphis State) and of the RRA. Peter's work focused primarily upon church structures (denominationalism) and upon the interface between Japanese traditions/culture and Protestant Christianity. Peter died early this summer after fighting cancer for over a decade, in Knoxville, where he moved to be closer to his daughter, a medical doctor.

AMERICAN RELIGION DATA ARCHIVE

The American Religion Data Archive (ARDA) is an Internet-based data archive that offers researchers free access to downloadable versions of more than 300 data files on American religion. It also offers a variety of features useful for educators, students, members of the media, and others. Sponsored by the Lilly Endowment and housed at Penn State, all services of the ARDA are free of charge and advertisements. Some of the most popular features available at ARDA include:

- Online reports on church membership for any county, urban area, or state in the nation
- Interactive mapping features which provide state (by county) or U.S. (by state) maps of church membership, crime and voting measures, and select U.S. census variables.
- Online graphics and tables for the surveys included in the archive.
- Learning modules designed to serve as coursework assignments or to familiarize users with the datasets and features available at the ARDA.
- Denominational trends and heritage are charted using data from the Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches