

Context of Religious Research

Vol. X, No. 2 August 2000

FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear RRA Colleagues:

By now you should have received the preliminary program from the SSSR office for our annual meeting in Houston, October 18th - 22nd. Note carefully the change in starting day this year: sessions start on Thursday afternoon, in order to accommodate the continued growth of participants in the meeting. I hope you were already planning on attending, but if you were not, then I hope that seeing the program has changed your mind! As usual, the worst thing I can see about it is that there are so many good offerings that choice making will be a challenge. Our program chair, Paula Nesbitt, has been working hard to put together an excellent series of offerings. We also especially look forward to Ed Lehman's Presidential Address.

An important part of the summer issue of *Context* is the Nominating Committee's slate of officers. Paula Nesbitt and the nominating committee you elected have assembled an able list of candidates. This year's election includes a new chair for the Nominating Committee, as well as members of our Board of Directors and Nominating Committee. Your ballot must be postmarked by 11 September in order to be counted. Envelopes are provided for this purpose. 

Some of you are late in paying your 2000-2001 dues, about which please be attentive. A red mark on your label is your clue. We would also be greatly appreciative if you would use your influence wherever it can appropriately be employed to secure additional library subscriptions for the *Review*. Library subscriptions are crucial to our organizational health, and the *Review* is one of the best journal buys around. We are, of course, also always looking for new membership constituencies, and persons with ideas in that respect are encouraged to contact President-elect D. Paul Johnson.

Some of you are still corresponding with the Association at its Washington address. Please note that all operations of the RRA are located at 3520 Wiltshire Dr., Holiday, FL 34691-1239. The phone is 727-844-5990; fax, 727-844-7332; email William_Swatos@baylor.edu. The transition has taken more time and effort than we might have hoped, but our records now seem to be in fairly good order. By now, if you were a member for 1999-2000, you should have all your issues of the *Review of Religious Research*, and we anticipate that hence-forth the *Review* will arrive on schedule. Please alert the Executive Office to any missing issues, but also please double-check your holdings.

Bill Swatos

CONFERENCES

The BSA Sociology of Religion Study Group plans a Study Day 18 November 2000 (which does conflict with the AAR meeting in Nashville), at Birkbeck College, London. The theme is The Journey of Life: Ritual and Ceremony in the New Millennium. An attempt will be made to combine some site visits in London with this conference, so that attendees who choose to can make a weekend of it. Deadline for submissions is 15 September. Further information, including an abstract submission form, can be obtained from the SRSG's website: www.socrel.org.uk. 

INFORM (Information Network Focus on Religious Movements), UK, and CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions), Italy, in cooperation with a group of other related societies, principally in Europe, announce a 2001 International Conference, The Spiritual Supermarket: Religious Pluralism and

Globalisation in the 21st Century: The Expanding European Union and Beyond, to be held at the London School of Economics, 19-22 April 2001. Persons interested in presenting papers need to have abstracts and a short c.v. submitted as soon as possible and in no case later than 31 December 2000. For further information: inform@lse.ac.uk.

It's not too early to begin planning for the 2001 meetings of the ASR and SISR, which will follow each other (in that order), beginning 16 August in Anaheim, thence to Mexico. More in the next issue.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Dane S. Claussen, assistant professor of Communication and Mass Media at Southwest Missouri State University, has recently published two books related to the Promise Keepers organization. McFarland & Company has published an edited collection of chapters by Claussen and others entitled *The Promise Keepers: Essays on Masculinity and Christianity*, and Pilgrim Press has published *Standing on the Promises: The Promise Keepers and the Revival of Manhood*. Unrelated to these projects, Claussen has also received an SMSU Faculty Research Grant to assist in writing a coauthored book on the history of U.S. newspaper industry marketing, promotions, and public relations between 1920 and 1970, as well as a General Education Faculty Development Grant for an interdisciplinary capstone course on science, technology, and the mass media.

The Secularization Debate, a reprint edition of a *Sociology of Religion* issue on secularization, coedited by Dan Olson and Bill Swatos, has recently been issued by Rowman & Littlefield. The articles derive from a special session at the RRA meeting in 1997.

Pierre Hegy has published *Catholic Divorce: The Deception of Annulments* with Continuum. The book is coedited with Joseph Martos.

We regret to report the death of long-time RRA member Samuel A. (Sam) Mueller on 15 April. The last issue of *Context* noted that Sam had suffered a stroke last fall. Sam was an undergraduate student of the late Ross Scherer and taught for many years at the University of Akron, where at one point he and Margaret Poloma coedited the journal *Sociological Focus*. May he rest in peace. 

CANDIDATES FOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR

C. KIRK HADAWAY is Minister for Research and Evaluation at the Office of General Ministries, United Church of Christ, in Cleveland, Ohio. Kirk has authored seven applied books, including *Rerouting the Protestant Mainstream* (Abingdon Press 1995), and many articles on church trends, congregational studies, and the sociology of religion in books, journals, and magazines. He has served the RRA previously as a member of the Board of Directors.

ADAIR LUMMIS has been a member of RRA, SSSR, ASR, and the ASA Section on the Sociology of Religion, in all of which she has served on committees and been on panels at their annual meetings. She has a doctorate in sociology from Columbia University. She has co-authored five books, and has written book chapters, articles, and numerous research monographs during her years as Faculty Associate for Research, Hartford Institute for Religion Research, Hartford Seminary, most recently *Clergy Women: An Uphill Calling* (1998).

CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DEAN R. HOGE is Professor of Sociology at Catholic University of America. Since completing his Ph.D. in 1970, Dean has developed an extensive publications record of books, articles, and monographs. Two of his most recent, both coauthored with other RRA colleagues, are *Vanishing Boundaries*, on Protestant baby boomers, which won the SSSR 1994 distinguished book award, and *Money Matters*, a study of

giving patterns among Catholics and four Protestant denominations. Dean was President of the RRA in 1980 and has also been a Douglass lecturer.

DON LUIDENS, at Hope College since 1977, has been Sociology department chair since 1987. With Dean Hoge and Benton Johnson, he is coauthor of *Vanishing Boundaries*, and is also coeditor of *Rethinking Secularization and Reformed Vitality*. His articles have appeared in *RRR*, *JSSR*, and *Sociology of Religion*. Don has served as RRA's Nominating Committee Chair and as Secretary. 

JOHN P. (JACK) MARCUM has worked for twelve years as Associate for Survey Research with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Louisville. He has a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Texas, and previously taught at the University of Mississippi, the University of Iowa, and Southern Illinois University. Currently he serves as secretary-treasurer for the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies. From 1995-1996 he was president of the Southern Demographic Association.

SCOTT THUMMA is Faculty Associate of Religion and Society at the Hartford Institute for Religion Research, Hartford Seminary. In addition to teaching and research at the seminary, he administrates the HIRR web site. Most recently he has published a chapter on congregational research methods in *Studying Congregations* and previously articles on megachurches, religious authority, and homosexuality and religion. Scott manages the RRA web site and has served on the Jacquet Awards committee.

CANDIDATES FOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

JAMES C. CAVENDISH is Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of South Florida. He received his Ph.D. in 1997 from the University of Notre Dame, where he became increasingly interested in the role of religion and social change. He has published articles in the several journals in the field. He is currently investigating how a gay and lesbian Catholic movement, Dignity/USA, struggles both to emulate and change Roman Catholicism. He has also received a Louisville Institute grant for work in conjunction with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. 

LYNN SCHOFIELD CLARK is a Post-Doctoral Fellow and Instructor in Qualitative Research Methods at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Colorado. She is author of *From Angels to Aliens: Teens, the Media, and Beliefs in the Supernatural* and is coeditor with Stewart Hoover of *Practicing Religion in the Age of the Media* (both forthcoming), and has published numerous articles and book chapters on religion and the media, teens, and new media technologies in such places as the *RRR* and *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*.

RON LAWSON completed his Ph.D. in history and sociology at the University of Queensland (Australia) and the did postdoctoral work at the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University. He is a professor in the Department of Urban Studies at Queens College, CUNY. For the last 15 years he has been engaged in a study of international Seventh-day Adventism, the first comprehensive study of an international church, which he has researched in 56 countries. Ron has published widely in academic journals in the field, and is completing a book manuscript entitled, *Apocalypse Postponed: The Globalization of Seventh-day Adventism*.

CYNTHIA A. WOOLEVER conducts research for and about congregations in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Research Office. She has a Ph.D. in sociology from Indiana University and has been engaged in religious research for 18 years. She is currently principal investigator for a national study of worshipers in 6,500 U.S. congregations. She has served on the RRA Board for three years as the chair of the Research Planning Committee, principally as the result of her role as manager of RRX.

RRA OUTREACH

The Committee on the Future of the RRA is busy with efforts to reach related RRA constituencies. One effort has been to develop a new brochure for the organization that is both more up-to-date in its

information and more attractively designed. Craig This and Jim Wellman have been particularly working on this. We have also asked members to suggest related groups we might try to reach either through direct mailings or more one-on-one type contacts. The committee would be grateful for member input on these or other issues. The recent debate on the possibility of merger with the SSSR has made us aware of the importance of articulating RRA's uniqueness and its simultaneous complementarity to and difference from the SSSR. We hope that over the next few years this effort will pay dividends not only in member recruitment but also in a clearer sense of purpose and commitment toward advancing the goals of the RRA.

