

Context of Religious Research

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our standing ovation at the completion of the 2003 H. Paul Douglass Lecture, delivered by Otto Maduro, encapsulates for me the tone of our meetings in Norfolk, Virginia. It was a challenging, carefully crafted address, offered in Otto's unique blend of scholarship and personal passion. Like many, I will be waiting with much anticipation for it to appear in print in our own *Review of Religious Research*.

Norfolk was a very pleasant location for our meetings, even if it was a bit difficult to get there and back. The hotel had good facilities, and nearby restaurants offered a range of cuisine. Some of us even chose to have a meal in an elegant, refurbished abbey, where our conversations bounced off walls that had many of their own stories to tell.

At our board meeting, we recognized our past-president, D. Paul Johnson, for his many years of exemplary service, both as editor of the journal, and most recently, as president. As I presented him with a Jamaican hand-crafted serving tray, I thanked Paul for the years he has served our organization so well in a variety of capacities.

Next year our meetings will be held in Kansas City at the Marriott Country Club Plaza. Mark the dates-October 22-24, 2004-on your calendar and plan to attend. Better yet, begin by noting the January 16 in your mind as the date to send John Bartkowski your session proposal. For those who like to wait 'til Spring, the deadline for the receipt of paper proposals is March 15.

The theme of the Kansas City meetings will be ***Linking Social Action and Religious Research***. As you will see, the call for papers is included in this newsletter. Place it on your bulletin board and be sure to come together with your colleagues to discuss the role of religious research in the pursuit of a more just and humane world.

For those of you about to make New Years' Resolutions, remember to send Pat Wittberg, the editor of the *Review of Religious Research*, a manuscript in 2004. Also, remember to encourage graduate students and others interested in religious research to apply to the Awards Committee for a Jacquet Grant, if they have an interesting project that could use some funds.

Finally, thanks to the fine team of people-our editor, executive officer, board members, committee members, colleagues who referee manuscripts, and authors of articles in the *RRR*-for all they do to make it possible for our professional organization to offer interesting and stimulating interchange on matters of religious research. And, before you turn the page, may I take this opportunity to thank each of you also for the privilege of serving as your President.

Nancy Nason-Clark

University of New Brunswick

FUNDING

Constant H. Jacquet Research Awards

The RRA will make \$12,000 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) a requested *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>-or by writing: Edward C. Lehman, 372 Campbell Road, Brockport, NY 14420; email, edlehman@frontiernet.net. *Your application must be received by 1 April 2003.*

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.

2003 awardees were Lori Beaman, Stephen Krauss, Lanette Ruff, Keli Rugenstein, and Jim Wellman. The full amount was awarded.

Joseph H. Fichter Research Awards

The *Association for the Sociology of Religion* will make available \$10,000 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) *new religious movements*. Applicants must be members of the ASR at the time of application. 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: Paula D. Nesbitt, Department of Sociology, University of California, 410 Barrows Hall #1980, Berkeley, CA 94720-0659. Further information is available on the ASR Web site <www.sociologyofreligion.com> or by writing: pnesbitt@uclink.berkeley.edu.

SSSR Research Awards

The *Society for the Scientific Study of Religion* has authorized several thousand dollars for its 2004 research awards competition (with a maximum of \$2,000 for a single grant). 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 Nancy T. Ammerman, Boston University School of Theology, 745 Commonwealth, Boston, MA 02215 by *1 March 2004*. For further information: nta@bu.edu.

MEETINGS

The *British Sociological Association Sociology of Religion Study Group's* 2004 annual conference will be held *29 March - 1 April* at Clifton Hill House, University of Bristol. Several previous meetings have been held at this venue, and it is an attractive venue. The theme is ***A Sociology of Spirituality***. The BSASRSG's Web site is: www.socrel.org.uk. Abstracts (150 words) are due 31 January to kieran.flanagan@bristol.ac.uk.

The *Henry Institute for the Study of Christianity and Politics* invites papers for its second biennial ***Symposium on Religion and Politics***, to be held *29 April - 1 May* at Calvin College, Grand Rapids. Deadline for a one-page proposal is 15 February. Contact smid@calvin.edu.

The *Association for the Study of Esotericism* will hold its first North American conference, ***Esotericism: From Europe to North America***, at Michigan State University, *3-5 June*. Send an abstract of no more than one single-spaced page and a brief c.v. by 31 December to ase@aseweb.org.

The *Association for the Sociology of Religion* will meet *13-15 August* in San Francisco. The theme is ***The Causes and Consequences of Contemporary Moralities***. Plenary events include the Presidential Address of Joe Tamney and the Paul Hanly Furfey lecture by Immanuel Wallerstein. Contact: Fenggang Yang, Program Chair: ASR2004@soc.purdue.edu. The call for papers is also on the ASR Website: www.sociologyofreligion.com. Deadlines: 15 January for session proposals, 15 February for paper abstracts. The *ASA Sociology of Religion Section* also meets in San Francisco at this time, as does the *Society for the Study of Social Problems*. For up-to-date information on these organizations' activities, consult their respective sites: www.asanet.org/section34/index.html and <http://www.sssp1.org>.

ELECTIONS AND NOMINATIONS

Results of the 2003 RRA general elections are: President Elect, Daniel V.A. Olson; Secretary, Keith A. Roberts; Directors-at-Large, Adair T. Lummis and Charles Zech; Nominating Committee, Ralph W. Hood and Cynthia Woolever. Both amendments to the by-laws on the ballot passed overwhelmingly.

The 2004 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 Tony Blasi at Sociology, Tennessee State University, 3500 John Merritt Blvd., Nashville, TN 37209-1561; blasi3610@cs.com. The Committee will be happiest to hear from you as close after the start of 2004 as possible.

MEMBER NEWS

Members' book publications since the last issue include:

Jim Richardson's edited volume, *Regulating Religion: Case Studies from Around the Globe* (Kluwer/Plenum), which includes contributions, in addition, by members **Jim Beckford, Gary Bouma, Roger Finke, Alejandro Frigerio, and Massimio Introvigne.**

Beau Weston's two books, *Called to Teach: The Vocation of the Presbyterian Educator* (edited with Duncan Ferguson) and *Leading from the Center: Strengthening the Pillars of the Church* (both Geneva Press).

Religious Congregations and Membership in the United States 2000 is now available from Glenmary. RRA members **Dale Jones, Rich Houseal, and Jack Marcum** are among the nine authors of the study, which includes a CD-ROM containing these and previous data.

Other achievements: **Nancy T. Ammerman** has been elected President of the SSSR for 2005. **Jim Beckford and Doug Cowan** have been elected to the ASR Council. **Kraig Beyerlein** has been elected as a student representative to the council of the ASA Sociology of Religion Section. **Tony Blasi** has been elected as one of two representatives from North America to the Board of ISA Research Committee 22 (sociology of religion). **Timothy Clydesdale, Kathleen Garces-Foley, Paul Numrich, and Dan Olson** have each received grants from the Louisville Institute in its most recently announced competitions. Congratulations to all.

Finally, we regret to announce the death of **Bruce Hunsberger**, professor of psychology at Wilfrid Laurier University, and a frequent contributor to our literature, October 9, 2003, as the result of complications from chronic leukemia. May he rest in peace.

STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION

The *Mormon Social Science Association* is sponsoring a student paper competition for papers employing social scientific perspectives in the analysis of Mormon social life and culture. The three top winners will receive \$300 each toward expenses to attend the 2004 RRA/SSSR meeting in Kansas City, with an additional \$100 to the first place winner. A 250 word abstract is due 31 December, with the final paper required by March 1. See: www.genesoc.com/mssa.

NEWS FROM HARTFORD INSTITUTE

In addition to hosting the RRA Web site and renewed RRX discussion group, the Hartford Institute for Religion Research continues to increase its extensive resources for religious research scholars at www.hartfordinstitute.org/sociology/sociology.html.

The site now includes:

- The entire content of *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Society* (AltaMira), edited by Bill Swatos.
- Thousands of links to several hundred on-line articles, research summaries, syllabi, and research resources.
- A listing of academics from the sociology of religion and other disciplines who engage in religion research, with links to their Web pages.
- A 17,000 entry searchable database of nearly all major works in the sociology of religion, compiled by Tony Blasi.

RRA is grateful to Research Planning and Publicity Chair **Scott Thumma** for making much of this possible.

NEH SUMMER SEMINAR

The *National Endowment for the Humanities* is sponsoring a summer seminar for college and university teachers at Clare Hall, University of Cambridge, 12 July - 13 August 2004, on *The Seven Deadly Sins as Cultural Constructions in the Middle Ages*. If this fits into your calendar and interests, more information is available at www.trinity.edu/rnewhaus/NEH2004.html. The application deadline is March 1.