

**Annual General Meeting Minutes / Procès-verbal de l'assemblée annuelle
University of Western Ontario, London
Le 30 mai 2005 / May 30, 2005**

Present: Leona Anderson, Paul Bramadat, Paul Bowlby, Susan Brown, Mark Chapman, André Couture, Chris Cutting, Barb Davy, Pamela Dickey Young, David Feltmate, Bill James, Ken MacKendrick, Thom Parkhill, Rubina Ramji, Dana Sawchuk, David Seljak, Braj Sinha, Randi Warne, Terry Woo
Regrets: Darlene Juschka, Aaron Hughes, Faydra Shapiro

1. Welcome/Bienvenue

Leona Anderson welcomed those present.

2. Adoption of the Agenda/Adoption de l'ordre du jour

Thom Parkhill/Randi Warne

3. Adoption of the minutes of the May 29, 2004 meeting of the Annual General Meeting/Adoption du procès-verbal de l'assemblée annuelle du 29 mai 2004

Randi Warne/André Couture

4. Business Arising from the Minutes/Suites au procès-verbal

Members voted on the motions to amend the constitution passed at the 2004 AGM as follows:

Motion: The composition of the executive committee will be amended to add a position of student representative to be elected for a two year term. (Coward/Beyer)

CARRIED

Motion: that the name of the Vice-President be changed to Past President (Seljak/Clark)

CARRIED

5. Canadian Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences Representative/ Représentant de la Fédération canadienne des sciences humaines et sociales

Doug Owram (past president, CFHS/FCSH) and Paul Ledwell (executive director, CFHS/FCSH) presented an update on the activities of the CFHS/FCSH including current issues of research quality, research capacity and research access.

Their update included :

- a) Focus on encouraging first time publications and bringing in new scholars
- b) Standard Research Grants to be increased
- c) Collaborative cluster grants are under-represented in the humanities
- d) The maintenance of continuity given the departure of Mark Renaud
- e) Janice Halliwell renewed AUCC and student groups' meetings in late November so that the focus on post-secondary education in government was not lost. Attention continues to be paid to issues of quality, capacity and access

f) Future Congresses

2006 at York

2007 at Saskatchewan

2008 at UBC

Tentatively: 2009 in Carleton and 2010 in Montreal

g) Issues of copyright and Open Access

- In response, a variety of concerns were raised by members and a lively discussion on copyright and open access issues ensued. Members stressed the negative impact of increasingly stringent copyright legislation on teaching and scholarship. Members also noted that SR, for example, has been available online for the past two years.
- Several members noted that much of the copyright lobbying is driven by U.S. interests and suggested that academic concerns will be subsumed under entertainment interests.
- MacKendrick picked up the issue of Tri-Council Ethical Issues, and noted that if the legislation passes as it is there will be repercussions. For example, when a journalist photographs a crowd, she would be compelled to get clearance from everyone. Seljak reinforced this when he said that if SSHRC were to be held to the same rules as Health and NSERC, researchers will need to get certificates from medical practitioners as well as psychologists for interviews.

h) Women's and equity issues will be reported online on the CFHS website

i) Rob Merritt has raised \$700,000 for Federation's Canadian Endowment for the Humanities and Social Sciences for long-term activities.

- Members also voiced concern regarding the withdrawal of Metropolis funding especially in view of the fact that the Atlantic contingent was established only two years ago.
- Members indicated concern over the study of religion as an enterprise in the humanities, stressing the need to fund religion as the multidisciplinary study that it is, Members suggested that adjudication of multidisciplinary projects ought to be carried out by multidisciplinary committees that understand the nature of the area. There was discussion of the manner in which adjudicators are selected.
- David Seljak (CSSR/SCÉR representative to the CFHS) noted that the Federation, under the leadership of Don Fisher and Doug Owsram, have become increasingly effective in lobbying the government to understand the importance of research in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

6. Reports/Rapports

a) President/Président

Anderson remarked that this year's program represented a wide spectrum of academic interest and commended the program chair for producing such a stimulating set of offerings. The program chair was also responsible for setting up the three special panels on Ritual. Susan Sered who was invited to speak as a part of the panels on Ritual was especially welcomed.

Anderson went on to comment on the increase in Graduate Student membership and participation in panels and presentations; she congratulated them and encouraged them in this regard.

b) Treasurer/Trésorier

MacKendrick was pleased to report a surplus of \$2,709.36. We receive income from membership dues, interest on investments, and AGM registration (we also receive a SSHRC grant that supports the cost of membership travel and participation in the Society). All sources are relatively stable. MacKendrick was contacted by the IAHR this year and discovered that they do not mail out an invoice to their membership, which is why we haven't received an invoice since 1999. In order to catch up with our membership dues, we paid for the years 2000-2004 this year. It will be the responsibility of the Treasurer to contact the IAHR on an annual basis. Also on the expense side, we sent a representative to the IAHR this year. Publication and office expenses remain low because of the generosity and frugal wisdom of the executive membership. MacKendrick concluded: "Our budgets have been very close to their targets, and our anticipated income has been fairly predictable. For the last several years we have managed to generate a moderate but healthy surplus. In light of this I have made very few changes to the budget."

Comments and discussion:

- MacKendrick indicated that further clarifications were going to be made to the itemization of the budget as a means of making the AGM income and AGM expenses more apparent.
- Members noted that increase in the cost of on-site registration for our meetings, and asked how the additional monies were going to be spent. Warne reminded the members that the increase was implemented for two reasons: 1) to bring the CSSR in line with the registration charged by other societies and 2) to fund the travel of the new Student member of the CSSR Exec. The Treasurer confirmed the success of these measures.
- Members asked if there was a plan for the slow surplus that has been accumulating, and some suggestions were discussed, such as increasing the prize money for the student essay contests.
- Parkhill and Bowlby expressed concern that SSHR funding may be cut off but the Treasurer indicated that we are, at least, covered until 2006.

Motion: to receive the report: MacKendrick/Sawchuk
CARRIED

Motion: to approve the report: Dickey-Young/Feltmate
CARRIED

c) Membership Secretary/Secrétaire aux admissions

Chapman reported that it is now possible to pay membership dues by credit card. Online application, however, would not be prudent because it is prohibitively

expensive. There have been some delays working with WLU Press, as Cheryl Beaupre, our primary contact, has left, and the information they provided to us was difficult to use, as members were listed by postal code rather than alphabetically, making it difficult to pin down who had paid fees and who had not. Approximately \$1500 was spent on two issues of The Bulletin.

Chapman noted that faculty membership is down while student membership is up.

Comments and discussion:

- James said that there should be a mechanism to ensure that presenters are paid up members He also expressed concern that Regional AAR meetings are scheduled so close to the time of the Congress, and wondered if that had an impact on student withdrawals from the CSSR program. Feltmate suggested that a table be set up at the Congress to facilitate the payment of membership fees. Sinha emphasized that membership should be encouraged regardless of whether a person is presenting or not.
- Bowlby said that availability of addresses on the web site subjects members to SPAM and suggested that they be put in a PDF format that could be easily downloaded but not easily harvested by spammers.
- On the subject of mailing costs, James reminded the Executive that the schools in Ontario can take advantage of the IUTS (a free inter-university postal service)

d) 2005 Programme Chair/ Responsable du programme 2005

Mark Chapman summarized the Programme Chair's report. The amount of work that is required to put the program together was highlighted.

- Regular Paper Submissions: total of 65 regular paper submissions, 3 were rejected
- Panel Submissions: total of 11 panel submissions.
- Roundtable Submissions: total of 4 roundtables.
- Joint Sessions: total of 3 joint sessions
 - i) 2 with CSSR and the Environmental Studies Association of Canada (ESAC), sponsored by the Canadian Forum on Religion and Ecology (CFORE)
 - ii) 1 between the CSSR and ACTR.(Association for Canadian Theatre Research)
- Special Symposium on Ritual: organized by Juschka, with the assistance of Anderson. Session chairs Ken MacKendrick, Donna Seamone, and Thomas Parkhill, put the panels together under the topics of ritual and fundamentalism, ritual and politics and ritual and power respectively. As much as possible they were asked to keep in mind a mix of systems of belief. The resulting panels were excellent.
- Special Speakers:
 - i) The ritual symposium culminated in the keynote address "Synergy, Syncretism, and Appropriation: Ritual healing in the Contemporary United States" by Dr. Susan Sered (research director of the Religion,

Health and Healing Initiative at Harvard University's Center for the Study of World Religions, and Associate Professor of Anthropology at Bar Ilan University in Israel), the CSSR's special speaker.

ii) The second special speaker was Professor Mark Juergensmeyer (director of Global and International Studies and Professor of Sociology and Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara) whose address was entitled "Religion, Terror, and Globalization." This session was organized by William Morrow.

- Withdrawals from the Programme: 12 submissions withdrawn from the programme after its posting.
- Further, the Programme chair mailed out a chair's guide to all chairs of panels this year.

On behalf of the programme chair and the executive, Chapman thanked Susan Brown, the Local Coordinator, for her efforts in coordinating room assignments, etc.

Finally, Chapman raised the question of the increasingly onerous amount of work required of the Programme Chair, particularly given the large number of submissions. He noted that the executive committee was considering ways of reducing the workload.

Comments and discussion:

- Members commented on the excellence of the sessions including the ritual panels and the keynote address and commended the programme chair for her success in making the program interesting and engaging. Members also noted that the thematic arrangement of the program, which had been suggested at the 2003 AGM, made several sessions stimulating. Some members voiced a preference for a more traditional model and Chapman responded that there were several panels at the conference this year that followed this pattern.
- Members discussed ways in which the work load of the programme chair might be reduced to a manageable task and suggested, for example, that MALs might be able to assist the programme chair and that a student be hired to do some of the administrative duties.
- Members expressed some concern regarding withdrawals from the program and a general discussion ensued with members suggesting various reasons for withdrawals. Members also noted that withdrawal rates this year seem to be consistent with withdrawal rates in previous years. They encouraged the executive to explore ways in which they could motivate presenters to alert the program chair as well as the session chair of their inability to attend.
- The timing of the AGM was raised as was the issue of attendance at the AGM in light of the concurrent scheduling of other CSSR sessions. Members also raised the question of poor attendance at some sessions.
- A discussion was undertaken about how best to address these various concerns. There was general agreement that in future the AGM should be held in a timeslot in which no other CSSR sessions are scheduled. Some members noted

that in the past attendance at the AGM was encouraged by linking it to a social event, such as a Wine and Cheese reception and/or the Society dinner. General approval was expressed at this suggestion.

- Some members suggested that reducing the number of concurrent sessions from 3 to 2 might help to increase attendance at sessions.

Motion: The AGM should always be scheduled independent of any other program of the Society on either day one or two during the conference.

Sinha/James

CARRIED

e) Nominations Committee/Comité pour les nominations

The Nominations Committee put forward the following nominations:

MAL Program Chair – Alain Bouchard

MAL Essay competition – Francis Landy

Recording Secretary – Christopher Brittain

Student Representative – Christopher Cutting

Nominations were then invited from the floor

- Rubina Ramji was nominated for the position of MAL by Bramadat/Sinha. Sinha introduced her as a scholar of Islam. He also mentioned her involvement with Citizenship Canada, that she had been a representative on the University of Ottawa Board of Governors and Chair of the AAR Committee for Religion and Film.
- No other nominations from the floor were forthcoming. Bouchard, Brittain and Cutting were acclaimed by Anderson. Voting by secret ballot was undertaken; Ramji was elected

f) Student Essay Awards/Prix pour les essais des étudiant(e)s

Anderson summarized the MAL reports

- The undergraduate essays were judged by Aaron Hughes. He received 12 submissions this year, all of which were of high quality. Adriana Woodburn, University of Toronto, won the award with “Women in Early Eastern Christian Asceticism.” The runner-up was Deborah Stanbury, Wilfrid Laurier, with “Ground Zero As Sacred Space.”
- The graduate essays were judged by Faydra Shapiro. She received 23 essays this year, an increase from previous years. Karen Cheatham, University of Toronto, won the award with “Bodily Barriers Conceptualized: Rupert of Deutz and the Virginal Male Body.”

g) CSSR Web Site/Site Web de la SCÉR

In response to a query, the executive noted that Don Eldershaw is still the Webmaster and that the executive was working on implementing a new website.

Comments and discussion:

- It was suggested that Fedcan emails can be put on the CSSR/SCER website for easy access rather than having to be downloaded from the Fedcan site.

h) Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion/ Corporation canadienne des sciences religieuses

Anderson reported that the Corporation is in general good financial health and is continuing its work.

i) Allied Associations

No reports.

j) Société québécoise pour l'étude de la religion (SQÉR)

The meeting was held in Chicoutimi. André Couture's report noted that there was a decrease in representation attendance from previous years.

k) Academic Freedom/Liberté académique

No business.

7. Other Business/Varia

a) Possible Local Coordinators for the 2006 conference

Becky Lee and Tony Michael at York

b) IAHR December application for Canada to host the conference:

Juschka's report on the XIXth quinquennial IAHR conference is included on p. 17 below. The executive reported that sites are now being considered for the next quinquennial IAHR Congress, specifically, Canada, Denmark and Turkey.

Comments and discussion:

- Members noted the importance of the IAHR as a venue for international academic linkages in the study of religion and discussed the desirability of hosting the IAHR and, although the membership was not generally opposed to the idea, they noted that there were difficulties.

c) Increasing regional representation and faculty participation:

Woo raised the issue that larger schools like UBC, U of T and McGill that have large graduate student populations need to be encouraged to participate more in the CSSR/SCÉR

Members discussed the possibility of increasing the number of MAL positions and Warne reminded them that originally there were six MAL positions. The number was reduced to three when infra-structure funding to society executives was cut back, and the Treasurer at the time argued that the CSSR could not afford to pay for travel and accommodation for six MALs. She commented further that while there is no more infra-structure funding for society executives; executive members are eligible to compete for travel funds on the same basis as every other member of the society, and receive a modest sum (\$45) to help defray the cost of an additional day's accommodation in order to attend the executive meeting. Since there would be a minimal additional cost to the society (\$135 per year), and

since the duties of the MALs are proving onerous, she suggested it makes sense to consider expanding the number of MALs again. This would further help with ensuring appropriate representation by region, gender, area of specialization, etc..

MacKendrick suggested that society members should be encouraged to initiate conversations regarding participation in the society and welcomed initiatives in this regard.

d) Suggestions from members:

Woo noted that suggestions that had been received in previous AGM's had been implemented in this years program including an emphasis on thematic sessions, meet the authors sessions, and the participation of John Biles as a non-academic speaker.

9. Adjournment/ Levée de l'assemblée

Motion: to adjourn the annual meeting – Chapman/Warne

CARRIED