

Bulletin

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Société canadienne pour l'étude de la religion

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Mot du président / President's Update

It is a pleasure to begin my term at president of the CSSR / SCÉR in the current academic environment and I look forward to working closely with the executive and membership over the next two years. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of past executives and members towards making the Society what it is today.

The CSSR / SCÉR is, in many ways, stronger than it has ever been before. Over the past few years we have undergone a period of a renewal and, as I look at our current membership, I see active scholars at all levels, from the graduate students to that of professor emeritus. We have succeeded in overcoming what some have termed the generational divide of the 1990's and are emerging more active and diverse than ever before. The participation of graduate students in our executive and in the recent programs at annual meetings along side more seasoned scholars signals, in some measure, the positive health of the Society.

The field of Religious Studies is itself expanding and research in many new areas of study including fields of culture and religion, technology and religion, religion in North America, to mention a few, is very promising. Scholarship in these new areas, more often than not, compliments that of academic work in more traditional domains. New directions in our field are prompted, to some degree, by the pressure to interpret current national and international events. As Randi Warne once remarked, the relevance of religion for understanding the world around us has never been clearer than at the present moment.

Having said that, we ought not become complacent. There is much work to be done to consolidate our Society and strengthen our position in the academic world. We now need, for example, to focus our attention on expanding our membership and increasing the participation of members in our annual meeting. As in the past, the upcoming annual meeting of our society is an important intellectual event as well as a significant opportunity for us to make visible our discipline. This year, the theme of the Congress is "Paradoxes of Citizenship: Environments, Exclusions and Equities." The program committee of the CSSR / SCÉR is working hard on your behalf and I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to participate by delivering papers, chairing sessions, attending and generally offering up ideas and new directions that you think should be on our agenda. The well being of the society is dependent upon its members and I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting at the University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, May 28th – May 31st 2005.

As many of you are aware, SSHRC is in the process of transforming itself, instituting some important changes in its funding policies. Opinion on these changes and their potential to impact the humanities and social sciences is mixed. The CSSR/SCÉR executive is keenly interested in the new directions under discussion. We remain critical in this regard and will continue to monitor those changes and to respond when necessary.

In conclusion, we find ourselves today in a very different place than we were ten years ago. The current state of scholarly activity in Religious Studies is exciting, but it is also

challenging. The CSSR/SCÉR executive is committed to working on your behalf to coordinate and contribute to a professional environment that facilitates scholarly exchange. I encourage each of you to involve yourself in order that we might represent your interests better.

Leona Anderson

Word from the Editor / Mot du rédacteur

In this edition of the Bulletin you will find minutes from the Annual General Meeting in Winnipeg, the call for papers for next year's Annual Meeting in London, a description of the annual student essay contests, member and departmental news, a request for papers from *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*, and a note from the CSSR Student representative. You will also find a summary of the feedback we received on the Annual General meeting. We welcome further feedback on the Annual General meeting or any other aspects of how the CSSR/SCÉR is run.

If you have not yet renewed your 2004/2005 membership in the CSSR/SCÉR I would encourage you to do that. The various activities of the Society (e.g., running the annual meeting, publishing the *Bulletin*) are dependent on your membership dues. You will also note that we have redone our membership forms to indicate that we can now accept payment by VISA or Mastercard. Membership forms can also be downloaded from our website.

Some of you have come forward to volunteer your time with the CSSR/SCÉR. We welcome your involvement. As Leona Anderson has already noted, we always need volunteers to run the various aspects of the annual meeting. If you are interested in becoming involved with the executive please note the open positions in the Spring Bulletin and get several colleagues to nominate you at the AGM for the position for which you are interested. Individuals have been acclaimed to executive positions in the past several years and we would welcome the renewed interest in the CSSR/SCÉR that contested elections would indicate.

I appreciate that more of you are taking the opportunity to list your academic activities in the *Bulletin*. I would like to expand that section even further in the future. Please use the form at the end of the *Bulletin* or send me an email with the information or publication(s) you would like included in future editions of the *Bulletin*.

As always I welcome your comments on how this publication can be of more use to you.

Mark Chapman

**Procès-verbal du réunion du conseil (le 28 mai 2004) / Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes (May 28, 2004)
University of Manitoba, Winnipeg**

Present: André Couture, Randi Warne, Darlene Juschka, Kenneth MacKendrick, Aaron Hughes, Mark Chapman, Christopher Cutting, Terry Woo

Regrets: Faydra Shapiro

1. Welcome/Bienvenue André Couture

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

MOTION: to adopt agenda; Warne/Juschka carried

3. Adoption of the minutes of the May 27 2003 meeting of the Executive Committee/

Adoption du procès-verbal de la réunion du conseil exécutif du 27 mai 2004

MOTION: to adopt minutes; Couture/Warne carried

4. Business Arising From the Minutes/Suites au procès-verbal No business arising.

5. Reports/Rapports

a) President/Président

Couture noted that this is the end of his two-year term and that the dedication of the members is wonderful. He commented on how hard it is to attract people, and referred to particularly difficult areas in non-world, non-Buddhist, and non-West Asian religions. He suggested that established specialists do not attend because of a lack of good feedback noting that he was alone on a panel which was supposed to have two others from Ottawa. A lengthy discussion about this ensued.

Couture's point about feedback was reinforced. Limited funding was also brought up and it was suggested that this issue should be taken to the Congress. There was support for this idea; the funding should be dedicated to Canadian conferences.

It was also noted that the Congress needs to encourage attendance that is balanced for example, between larger and smaller departments, and theological and Religious Studies components. The Congress representative, Jackie Wright, should be targeted by David Seljak; it was noted that neither the CSSR nor Women Studies were consulted by the congress concerning special events relevant to them. It was suggested that more joint thematic sessions might garner better funding.

French remains another area of concern: for example, the quality of the website is compromised by weak expression in French; Couture hopes that the consideration for French representation will be encouraged.

Warne suggested that the president might write a letter requesting better information on Special Events for next year – Jackie Wright is the person to approach on this. Couture ended by saying that all suggestions for improving membership and diversity in panels should be sent to him.

MOTION: to accept President's Report; Mackendrick/ Chapman & Juschka carried

b) Treasurer/Trésorier

MacKendrick remarked that costs could be kept down if participants were to use slides instead of computers in their presentations because the former costs nothing while the latter costs \$25. Warne suggested that this information should be included in the call for papers.

Chapman was complimented for his effective cost control, the best in years, for the production of the Bulletin. It was pointed out that the SSHRC grant of \$4350 has not yet been deposited but there is, nevertheless, \$10,000 has been maintained from previous grants in case the Congress does not continue funding. Juschka suggested that graduate students and part-time faculty be encouraged to apply for travel funding instead of tenure-track people. It was suggested that MacKendrick write a short blurb in the Bulletin about this.

The IAHR has not yet billed the CSSR. Juschka will be representing the CSSR in Tokyo. \$800 has been dedicated to the website. Question was posed about interest from the savings: Should the \$300 from interest be directed for student awards?

MOTION: to adopt the Treasurer's Report; Chapman/Juschka carried

c) Membership Secretary/Secrétaire aux admissions

Chapman reported that there are conflicting reports in the number of members: 229 and 245. He noted that WLU Press has purged the membership of those who have not been paying dues. 18 to 20 names were deleted. Parameters have been set for a regular monitoring of membership: 18 months of non-payment of dues will result in the delisting of name.

New strategies for recruiting new members were tried. They included: a) U of T example of brochures in the Common Room where graduate students congregate; b) WLU where the Chair, Michel Desjardins distributed the brochures to the graduate students; c) staff booths at other member groups; d) get student representation. This brought forward the necessity to change the constitution for a position for an Ad-Hoc graduate student at the AGM. The proposed wording was: "The composition of the executive committee will be amended to add a position of student representative. The position is ex-officio, with a term of two years, renewable once."

Chapman also reported that WLU Press now accepts VISA/Mastercard for all payment of dues and that the membership forms should be changed to reflect this. Cutting asked if the secretary is apprised of new members. The answer was yes; Juschka noted that, the agreement with WLU Press was to provide new members with notification of membership at \$1 per name. The general trend for membership from 2001 to 2004 is one of decline with membership of graduate students as the only exception.

Two points were made about the Bulletin: First, it is posted electronically on the society website, copies were sent to members via email, and back copies will be archived at Mount St. Vincent; with the use of credit cards, personal information can be blacked out after five years. Second, the cost of the issue was approximately \$1,500.

MOTION: that 1) a change to the constitution to include an Ad-Hoc graduate student on the executive committee be brought to the AGM for approval, and that 2) the Membership secretary's report be accepted; Warne/Juschka carried

d) Nominations Committee/Comité pour les nominations

Warne, Juschka and Chapman were the members of the Nominations Committee. MacKendrick was re-nominated as Treasurer and accepted. Leona Anderson was nominated as President and has accepted the nomination although she was apprehensive of the fact that she is not bilingual; she believes diversity is good for the CSSR and accepted Francophone representation through Couture. Couture will present the nominations at the AGM as Chair.

Hughes expressed concern that he will be at Hebrew University in Israel from January 2005. He was assured that his absence from Canada during this time should not prove an impediment to his participation on the executive. In the past, executive members such as Roxanne Marcotte and Randi Warne served on the executive under similar circumstances.

A question was raised about how to keep track of members who express interest in serving the society by becoming members of the executive. The process of nomination and election is in the constitution. However, it is useful for members of the nominations committee to pass along information regarding those who have expressed interest in the past. Darlene Juschka volunteered to serve in that capacity for the upcoming year.'

MOTION: to accept the Nomination Committee's Report Couture/MacKendrick carried

e) Programme Chair/Responsable du programme

Shapiro's report was read by Woo. Shapiro noted in her report that there are papers being read by scholars from as far away as Australia and Brunei and as close as Winnipeg. There is a greater variety of papers being presented this year than there was last year.

The planning and execution worked more easily this year. There were fewer problems with last-minute cancellations; this might be due to the cancellation "deadline" presenters were given. "Suggested themes" in the call for papers also worked out very well.

Shapiro asked if the program chair ought to be a three-year position on the executive rather than a job given to a MAL? She noted that it would be extremely useful to have continuity.

Juschka volunteered to serve as the program chair for the upcoming year. In commenting about the idea of continuity for program chair, it was suggested that it needn't be too formal; an apprenticeship for one year can be served and then chairing for two. This consultation about the program and the selection of papers would be quite intensive, possibly to be carried out with the Past President who would have experience with senior members of the society.

The delicate nature of a junior MAL rejecting the paper proposal of a senior scholar was noted. It was suggested that the MAL should work with the Past President in case of the need for intervention and further suggested that a template for the planning be taken from Shapiro.

MOTION: to adopt the report of the Program Chair; Woo/Chapman carried

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

Undergraduate Essay Contest/Concours d'essai pour les étudiant(e)s du 1er cycle

Hughes reported that a total of five essays were received: Two from Concordia, one from Wilfrid Laurier, another from York, and a final one from Dalhousie. The winner is Sohrob Nabatian from Concordia, "The Use of Eastern Spirituality in the Marketing of Tea." It was sponsored by Leslie Orr.

MOTION: to accept winner of contest; Hughes/MacKendrick carried

Graduate Essay Contest/Concours d'essai pour les étudiant(e) du 2e cycle

Juschka reported that there were three submissions. Sarah Parkes Ricker won; she will attend next year's Congress with the available travel funds. Bill Arnal and Yuan Ren also read the papers submitted.

MOTION: to accept the winner of competition; Juschka/MacKendrick carried

g) Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion/Corporation canadienne des sciences religieuses (CCSR)

Couture will email Peter Beyer for information.

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

Couture will meet with appropriate people in June. There was nothing to report.

i) Canadian Federation for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (CFHSS) /Fédération canadienne des sciences humaines (FCSH)

David Seljak was not present to make a report.

j) CSSR Web Site/Site Web de la SCÉR

Shapiro's report as read by Woo.

It was reported that the biggest holdup was trying to make the website bilingual, simple and aesthetically pleasing all at the same time. She thinks that the balance of these needs have been achieved.

Jeremy, the website designer, will teach Shapiro how to make updates to the site this summer and she will teach this to whomever will actually be responsible for maintaining the site in future.

Couture added that the website was only in English but that he has translated all of the content. MacKendrick indicated that he understood that Don Eldershaw is to maintain the website as before and that Jeremy should contact Don. Juschka then suggested that funds should be set aside in the budget for someone to translate the website content on a regular basis; she said that another society had paid \$1500 for a complete overhaul of their site. MacKendrick noted that there would be budget implications for this. Warne asked if a Francophone student can be brought in to do this.

Couture closed this portion of the discussion by noting that a letter should be written to Don Eldershaw informing him of the people from whom he should accept materials to post to the website.

- k) **Academic Freedom//Liberté académique**
No business to report from Warne.

6. Local arrangements rep Congress 2005

Possibilities from the various church-affiliated colleges at UWO and Cary Tagagaki, a U of T graduate now teaching Japanese history at UWO were discussed. MacKendrick advised all that forms are given out at the one and only planning meeting and that because UWO is only one hour away from Waterloo, someone from WLU which is just an hour away might also be a possibility for the local representative. It was suggested however that it would be better that there be a person who knows the campus and is a member of the CSSR.

7. Other business/ Varia

William Morrow's letter asking for support for an interdisciplinary forum on "Faith and Terror" was presented. There was unanimous support of the request for \$1450 from the CFHSS. A letter should be written to Morrow indicating this support.

Ron Grimes' letter about the COMMON CV site was brought forward. It was agreed that the CSSR is not the appropriate venue to deal with this issue and the CCSR would be a better one. Grimes, Couture, Juschka and Harold Remus will be working on this.

8. Adjournment/ Levée de l'assemblée

MOTION: to end the meeting; Couture/Juschka and Warne carried

**Annual General Meeting Minutes (May 29, 2004) / Procès-verbal du
assemblée annuelle (le 29 mai 2004)
University of Manitoba**

Present: André Couture, Randi Warne, Darlene Juschka, Kenneth MacKendrick, Mark Chapman, Aaron Hughes, Chris Cutting, Alec Soucy, Braj Sinha, Leona Anderson, David Seljak, Christopher Brittain, Laurie Lamoureux Scholes, Nathan Loewen, Nancy Senior, Brian Clarke, Nathaniel Morehouse, Nicole Goulet, Andrew Gemmell, Yuan Ren, Dana Sawchuk, Alison Marshall, Thom Parkhill, Roxanne Iavoschi, Peter Hordern, Terry Woo

Regrets: Faydra Shapiro

1. Welcome/Bienvenue

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

Motion: to adopt agenda Warne/Juschka carried

3. Adoption of the minutes of the 30 May, 2003 meeting of the Annual General Meeting/Adoption du procès-verbal de l'assemblée annuelle du 30 mai 2004:

Motion: to adopt minutes of May 30, 2003 MacKendrick/Chapman carried

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

Notice put forward by Braj Sinha that name of Vice-President to be changed to Past-President.

Motion: to adopt/effect name change; Seljak/Clark carried

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

Paul Ledwell and Noreen Golfman spoke.

Ledwell reported on that all the scholarly associations were involved in the SSHRC Transformation. The focus will be on the Wednesday, June 2 meeting with Marc Garneau. There will be an open plenary dealing with the question of where SSHRC is taking the associations; the occasion will be an opportunity for feedback. New programs will be announced during the summer and fall. Four points were brought up under the budget for SSHRC and advocacy.

- a) There is an 8.5% increase in the budget this year versus 6.5% for last year.
- b) Five other organizations were involved in advocacy work, among them the AUCC and CAUT. They are lobbying for investments to be ploughed back into universities; there is

\$9 billion available in total and only \$1 billion is earmarked for the Humanities and Social Sciences while H & SS faculty account for 50% of the professoriate and 60% of the entire student body.

- c) The Federation is trying to raise their profile through media coverage by being reported in the Globe and Mail, National Post, CBC, Radio Canada; and for the stay in Manitoba, inserts were added to the Free Press on Friday, May 28 and Le Devoir on Saturday, May 29.
- d) Next year, the CSSR will be held from May 28 (Saturday) -31 (Tuesday), 2005 at the University of Western Ontario. After that 2006 will be at York, 2007 at the University of Saskatchewan, 2008 at UBC, 2009 in Ottawa, and 2010 in Montreal.

Golfman reported on five points:

- a) The Task Force on New Scholars, chaired by Patricia Demers (U of A), examined and responded to issues facing new scholars, departments and universities; findings will be reported on Tuesday at 12:15 at the Alumni House.
- b) A survey of scholarly associations by a task force will be released later this year; the report will include a "best practices manual." Golfman remarked that the associations are good agents of dissemination.
- c) Feminist audit reveals that 18% of Research Chairs went to women.
- d) Endowments: Robert Merrett, Dept. of English at the U of A, has raised \$9 million of the goal of \$11.4 million. All present were asked to pledge and/or help identify others who might pledge.
- e) More travel funds have been made available.

Warne noted that scheduling this year made it difficult for her to book plane tickets. Golfman responded by saying that the Federation does work with the airlines to ensure or at least encourage better transportation planning. Juschka noted that funds need to have two foci: international conferences but also Canadian focus.

Seljak spoke briefly as the CSSR representative to the Federation.

Motion: to return Seljak as the rep to the Federation; Parkhill/Sinha carried

6. Reports/Rapports

a) **President/Président**

Couture thanked all in attendance and especially the executive who had met on Friday, the day before the meeting started.

Couture noted that there is a problem in attracting francophones but said that it is nevertheless very important that Society communications such as the Bulletin, brochures, and the new Website be as correct and attractive in French as in English.

There was also the observation that there is problem attracting members and presenters from specialized fields such as Hinduism, Islam, Chinese religions who would also participate in the discussion of more general issues such as Religion and Arts, Religion and Violence, Religion and Ecology, Religion and the Media, etc. Couture encouraged all present to promote the Society among friends and colleagues.

b) Treasurer/Trésorier

MacKendrick pointed out that the SSHRC grant of \$4350 has not yet been deposited but there is, nevertheless, \$10,000 in savings, maintained in case the Congress does not continue funding. Chapman was complimented for his effective cost control, the best in years, for the production of the Bulletin.

Graduate students and part-time faculty should be encouraged to apply for travel funding. The budget does not include all expenses because the IAHR has not yet billed the CSSR. Juschka will be representing the CSSR in Tokyo.

It was noted that \$800 has been dedicated to the website. There were two questions:

- i. Braj Sinha suggested that the funds allocated for IAHR need to be clarified as does the \$944.70 for AGM Income and Expenses. For example, the number of attendees at the Congress might be highlighted.

Motion: to break the line items into finer details; MacKendrick/Beyer carried

- ii. Alison Marshall wondered if there might be funds set aside in the budget to encourage the participation of areas not well represented in the current mix of papers – for example in South and East Asian religions.

It was noted that there is a historical awareness of the lack but added that the impetus to raise the profile of non-western religions should come from the membership and that an email should be sent out. Marshall's idea was lauded and the budget implications will be discussed within the executive.

Motion: to adopt the Treasurer's report; Sinha/Beyer carried

c) Membership Secretary/Secrétaire aux admissions

Chapman reported that there are conflicting reports in the number of members and further noted that WLU Press has purged the names of those who have not been paying dues. 18 months of non-payment of dues have been set as a point at which a name will be delisted.

New strategies for attracting new members were tried. Chapman also reported that WLU Press now accepts VISA/Mastercard for all payment of dues and that the membership forms will be changed to reflect this.

The general trend for membership from 2001 to 2004 is one of decline with membership of graduate students as the only exception.

Chapman noted that The Bulletin is posted electronically on the society website and that copies were sent to members via email; back copies will be archived at Mount St. Vincent. The cost of the issue was approximately \$1,500.

Iavoschi commented that she had received no receipt acknowledging her payment of dues. Chapman answered that WLU Press has agreed to issue a receipt to new members for \$1 per person. He will ensure that this procedure is followed.

In order to encourage more members, Scholes suggested that email lists can be collected for graduate students from Chairs, Advisors or Secretaries from the various universities. Juschka noted that the Society now has a student MAL. Loewen mentioned

the AAR Student Liaison group and recommended an association with graduate students, which will be a source for a graduate list.

Motion: to adopt the Membership Secretary's report; Coward/Sinha carried

d) 2004 Programme Chair/ Responsable du programme 2004

Shapiro's report was read by Woo:

There were papers from as far away as Australia and Brunei; a greater variety than there was last year; and more actual papers and sessions. 'Suggested themes' in the call for papers worked out very well

Generally speaking, things seemed to work much easier this year with fewer problems of last-minute cancellations. This might be due to the cancellation "deadline" presenters were given.

The question was put forward as to whether the program chair ought to be a three-year position on the exec rather than a job given to a MAL because continuity in this position is important.

Juschka thanked Shapiro. Scholes wondered if a motion is needed to do something about Shapiro's concerns. Warne suggested an executive discussion and pointed out that the next Program Chair, Juschka, will be working with the Past President, Couture, next year. Sinha concurred that the arrangement is a good idea.

Motion: to adopt the Program Chair's report; Parkhill/Loewen carried

e) Nominations Committee/Comité pour les nominations

Leona Anderson and Kenneth MacKendrick were brought forward as nominees for President and Treasurer respectively.

Hordern asked for an explanation of the process. Warne welcomed Anderson and Anderson remarked that she was sorry that Warne was leaving. A 'marketing campaign' of sorts was suggested to encourage participation; Scholes followed up by suggesting that particular people at particular schools might be targeted.

Motion: to appoint both nominees by acclamation; Clarke/Arnal carried

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

A total of five essays were received: two from Concordia; and one each from WLU, York and Dalhousie. The winner was Sohrob Nabatian from Concordia for "The Use of Eastern Spirituality in the Marketing of Tea;" it was sponsored by Leslie Orr.

This essay was clearly the best in terms of writing style, methodological sophistication, and creativity. It is an interdisciplinary essay that examines the various ways that North American tea companies unconsciously use orientalist imagery and various Eastern stereotypes to market tea to an increasingly suburban and "yuppified" consumer. The author showed a clear understanding of the theoretical implications of the study.

Second place went to Leila Paper, "Rave Culture as a Microcosm: Ritual Synthesis and Synthetic Spirituality" which was sponsored by James Rives. This essay

uses ritual and anthropological literature in order to illumine the ritual components of raves. The author argues that raves represent a spirituality that embodies electronic technology. Raves are able to tap into an amorphous spirituality among disaffected young people by providing ecstatic experiences in a communal ritual setting.

g) CSSR Web Site/Site Web de la SCÉR

Shapiro's report was read by Woo.

The new site will be ready for the end of May. The biggest holdup was trying to make the site bilingual, simple and aesthetically pleasing all at the same time. Jeremy will teach Shapiro how to make updates to the site this summer

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

Peter Beyer, the President of the CCSR, was in attendance. He said that the Corporation is doing well. He noted that the journal SR will be published on time for the first time in living memory. However, he added that the corporation is not doing well financially, and that members will be asked to pay more dues though not in the coming year of 2005.

Coward reported that the book series managed by Peter Richardson is doing well and will not be financially threatened; he also reminded the audience of endowment investments; when he asked Beyer if there is a subsidy for SR, Beyer answered "yes."

i) Allied Associations

No news.

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

Couture reported that there was no news.

k) Academic Freedom/Liberté académique

Warne reported no news.

8. Other Business/ Varia

a) Addition of a position on the executive for a student MAL

Couture read the proposal of the wording for the intension of creating a graduate student MAL: "The composition of the executive committee will be amended to add a position of student representative. The position is ex-officio, with a term of two years, renewable once." Sinha asked what the meaning of "ex-officio" meant and remarked that the terminology is not correct and that "non-voting member" should be more appropriate.

Beyer suggested that "appointed by the executive committee" should be added. Soucy jumped in and asked why "non-voting." Couture answered that the constitution does not allow for it. Warne then adds that it has been the target to get student representation. Senior pressed the question of the reason for "non-voting." Chapman interjected that the practice of the committee has been consensus even if the graduate student may formally be "non-voting." Juschka explained that this is simply a first step.

Sinha asked if that meant that a constitutional amendment is required later; Juschka affirmed this.

Beyer then asked if the Society should have the students vote on the position. Juschka repeated that the process can begin and then developed; she further commented on the history of limiting graduate student participation. Coward joined the conversation by suggesting a change in the by-law to support selection by nomination by executive committee and then open it up for other nominations. In that case, Sinha said, why not simply take “not-voting” out?

At this point, Coward suggested the following wording to be put forward as a motion: “The composition of the executive committee will be amended to add an ex officio position of student representative, with a term of two years, renewable once.”

Motion: that the above amendment be brought to the AGM for its approval; Warne/Couture carried

After some discussion, a further amendment was put forward: “The composition of the executive committee will be amended to add a position of student representative to be elected for a two year term.”

Motion: to amend the former amendment to the constitution by the wording above; □
Coward/Beyer carried.

Sinha then suggested that the executive should have the authority to appoint the student MAL for 2004-2005; he suggested the wording as follows: “The provision to have a student member on the executive is to be effective in 2005. For 2004-5 the executive is authorized to appoint a student representative for a one year term.” He concluded that the matter should be brought up to Anderson for next year.

Motion: To authorize the executive to appoint a student MAL; Sinha/Clarke carried

b) Guest speaker for next year

Juschka began by speaking to the success of Yvonne Haddad’s lecture in Toronto. She asked all in attendance to email her with suggestions for a guest speaker; topics of interest include racism and fundamentalism. Jean Francois Mayer and Bruce Lincoln were suggested as possibilities. Coward noted that the person should be able to speak about an area of broad interest to other societies.

9. Adjournment/ Levée de l’assemblée

Motion: to adjourn the meeting; Beyer/Senior and Iavoschi carried

Commentaire sur l'assemblée annuelle / Feedback on the Annual General Meeting in Winnipeg

The executive welcomes your input. Last year, some of you suggested interesting panels for our next annual meeting including:

- a. Ecology
- b. "Engaged religion" (as in engaged Buddhism and liberation theology)
- c. Teaching strategies on religion courses (e.g., drawing on members with teaching awards)
- d. Religious tradition specialists on the state of current research (helpful to those who teach World Religions courses)

You also expressed some concern that more time be allocated to discussion groups and workshops. The program committee would be happy to facilitate the organization of these sessions, so please forward your plans to the program chair. Suggestions about scheduling and advertising the AGM have been forwarded to the Program chair for consideration in the planning of next year's meeting.

The executive and the program committee would like at this juncture to encourage all members to participate in the annual meeting by submitting papers and panels in all traditions which we represent.

Call for Papers Canadian Society for the Study of Religion Annual Meeting May 28 to May 31, 2005 University of Western Ontario

The Programme Committee invites submissions for the 2005 Annual Meeting of the CSSR, to be held in conjunction with the Congress of the Humanities and the Social Sciences on the campus of the University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, May 28 – May 31st 2005.

The Board of the Federation has adopted the following as the major theme for Congress 2005:

Paradoxes of Citizenship: Environments, Exclusions and Equities

The Board of the Federation encourages associations to adopt this theme and to develop sessions related to the topic within their own programs. To this end, we are eager to consider papers that deal with such topics as:

**Religion and Globalization
Religion and Nation States
Religion and the World Wide Web
Religion and Social Change**

We also seek to encourage papers that deal with religious traditions that have recently been under-represented at the CSSR annual meetings, including **Judaism, Islam, Taoism and**

Confucianism. As always, the CSSR welcomes papers and proposals on all aspects of religion, from various academic perspectives.

The deadline for all submissions (special papers and abstracts of regular papers, panels and roundtables) is January 14, 2005. Abstracts are to be no more than 150 words. Those greatly exceeding this limit will not be printed in the programme.

Chaired sessions are an integral part of an effective program. Please indicate if you would be willing to chair a session at the annual meeting.

Completed special papers, abstracts of regular papers, panels and roundtables, are to be sent to:

*Darlene Juschka
Religious Studies
3737 Wascana Parkway
University of Regina
Regina, SK S4S 0A2
Fax: (306) 585-4815
Darlene.Juschka@uregina.ca*

** Please include the following information with your submission: institutional affiliation, mailing address, phone number(s), fax number, and e-mail address. Submission via email attachment is preferred.

Submissions for the CSSR Annual Meeting may be of four types.

a. Special Papers

In order to effect a more full discussion of complete studies by Society members, blocks of time may be set aside for the presentation of, responses to, and discussion of “special” or “major” papers. A special paper may be grounded in a special field, but it should address matters important to all students of religion. In order to be considered, a complete version of the paper together with an abstract is to be submitted by January 14, 2005.

b. Regular Papers

The Committee invites proposals for presentations of works in progress and shorter scholarly papers for presentation. Normally, the time for actual delivery is twenty minutes, with ten minutes for questions and discussion. A 150 (maximum) word abstract should be submitted by January 14, 2005. All audio-visual needs must be clearly noted with your initial submission. Abstracts should include some background to the topic you are proposing, a statement of methodology and an indication of your argument.

c. Panels

The Committee encourages proposals for panels, workshops and seminars. The organiser is responsible for setting the topic and involving the participants in a maximum three hour block of time (two sessions of an hour and a half each). An abstract(s) as above, together with the names and institutional affiliations of the participants, audio-visual needs, and the name of a **chair** (who should not be making a presentation) is to be submitted by January 14, 2005. Panel organizers

should submit both the panel abstract and the individual paper abstracts as one package. Panel organizers are expected to coordinate communication between members of the panel(s) and the Programme Chair.

d. Roundtables

The Roundtable format usually focuses on a particular issue, book, or the body of work of an individual. It consists of four (or more) short presentations followed by discussion, both with the roundtable members and audience members. As with the panel, the organiser is responsible for submitting an abstract for the Roundtable which includes the names and institutional affiliations of the participants, equipment needs, and chair (who may also be a participant).

Important Notes:

1. *The CSSR strongly discourages panel presentations of more than three papers as it inhibits discussion. Presentations of more than 3 papers should use the Roundtable format.*
2. *Requests to present on specific dates MUST accompany the initial proposal.*
3. *Joint proposals (two societies combining their efforts) should be submitted to both societies for approval.*
4. *Acceptance of proposals will be done via e-mail, and Panel/Roundtable organizers will be responsible for informing their presenters. Members who require a 'hard copy' acceptance of their proposal for funding purposes may request one from the Programme Chair.*
5. *Multiple presentations are not permitted. However, a participant is permitted to present both a regular paper/panel presentation and a roundtable presentation.*

**Invitation à proposer une communication
La Société canadienne pour l'étude de la religion (SCÉR)
Conférence annuelle, du 28 mai au 31^{er} mai 2005
University of Western Ontario**

Le comité de programme de la Société canadienne pour l'étude de la religion vous invite à lui envoyer des propositions de communication pour sa prochaine conférence annuelle qui se tiendra sur le campus de University of Western Ontario à London, Ontario, du 28 mai au 31^{er} mai 2005, dans le cadre du Congrès des sciences sociales et humaines.

Comme principal thème du congrès de 2005, le Conseil de la Fédération a adopté:

Les paradoxes de la citoyenneté: environnement, exclusion, équité

Il encourage donc les différentes sociétés à proposer ce thème à leurs membres et à promouvoir à ce sujet des sessions à l'intérieur de leur programme. Compte tenu de cette orientation, il nous fera plaisir de prendre en considération des communications portant sur des sujets comme:

Religion et Globalization
Religion et États Nation
Religion et le World Wide Web
Religion et Changement Social

Nous souhaitons vivement recevoir des communications traitant de traditions religieuses jusqu'ici sous-représentées à nos réunions annuelles, comme par exemple **le judaïsme, l'islam, le taoïsme et le confucianisme**. Vous noterez que, conformément à sa politique habituelle, la SCÉR accepte des propositions de communication portant *sur n'importe quel aspect de la religion, mais uniquement à visée académique*.

Président ou présidente de session: Nous avons grand besoin de personnes qui accepteraient de présider l'un ou l'autre session de cette rencontre. Vous voudrez bien nous indiquer si vous êtes disposé à le faire.

Vous voudrez bien envoyer le texte complet de votre proposition de conférence, le résumé de votre communication, d'un séminaire ou d'une table ronde à :

*Darlene Juschka
Religious Studies
3737 Wascana Parkway
University of Regina
Regina, SK S4S 0A2
Fax: (306) 585-4815
Darlene.Juschka@uregina.ca*

** Avec toute proposition, veuillez inclure les informations suivantes: affiliation institutionnelle, adresse postale, numéro(s) de téléphone, de télécopieur, courrier électronique. On vous encourage à envoyer votre proposition en document attaché par courrier électronique.

Quatre types de propositions sont recevables lors de ce congrès:

a) La conférence:

Afin de permettre un débat plus en profondeur concernant des recherches d'envergure réalisées par nos membres, des périodes peuvent être réservées à la présentation de communications plus longues avec répondants et discussion. Bien qu'appuyé sur une expertise précise, ce type de communication devrait éviter une trop grande spécialisation et déboucher sur des questions générales susceptibles d'intéresser une plus large audience. Pour qu'une telle conférence puisse être organisée, il faut que le texte complet de la conférence nous soit soumis avant le 14 janvier 2005, de même qu'un résumé de cette conférence.

b) La communication ordinaire:

Le comité vous invite à proposer une brève communication faisant état de travaux en voie de réalisation ou portant sur tout autre sujet spécialisé. L'exposé est normalement de vingt minutes, et est suivi de dix minutes de questions et discussions. Il faut à cet effet soumettre un résumé de 150 mots (maximum) avant le 14 janvier 2005. Ce résumé doit préciser le thème abordé, inclure

des éléments de méthodologie et donner une première idée de votre argumentation. *Vous devez immédiatement signaler si vous aurez besoin d'appareils audio-visuels.*

c) Le séminaire ou l'atelier:

Le comité encourage à faire des propositions de séminaires, d'ateliers, etc. À de telles activités, on alloue au maximum trois heures, soit deux sessions d'une heure et demie. C'est à l'organisateur ou à l'organisatrice de tels séminaires de décider de son thème, de choisir et de contacter ceux ou celles qui y participeront. C'est à lui ou elle à soumettre avant le 14 janvier 2005 un résumé de cette activité, y compris le nom, l'affiliation institutionnelle, les besoins audio-visuels de chacun des participants, ainsi que le nom d'un président ou d'une présidente (qui ne devrait pas normalement faire de communication). La personne qui organise cette activité doit soumettre *ensemble* le résumé global et les résumés provenant de chacun et chacune des membres du groupe. C'est à cette personne d'assurer la coordination entre les membres du séminaire et le président du comité du programme.

d) La table ronde:

Le format de table ronde est habituellement réservé à une question particulière, à un livre ou à l'œuvre d'un auteur. Il consiste en quatre présentations (ou davantage), suivies de discussions entre les membres de la table ronde autant qu'avec l'audience. Comme pour le séminaire, c'est à l'organisateur ou à l'organisatrice de soumettre un résumé de cette activité, y compris le nom, l'affiliation institutionnelle, les besoins audio-visuels des participants, ainsi que le nom d'un président ou d'une présidente (qui peut lui-même participer à la table ronde).

Remarques importantes:

1. *La SCÉR n'encourage pas les séminaires ou ateliers de plus de trois communications, car ils ne laissent pas suffisamment de temps à la discussion. Les présentations de plus de trois communications devraient plutôt utiliser le format de « table ronde ».*
 2. *Le comité accepte d'analyser une demande de communication faite à une journée précise, à la condition expresse que cette demande accompagne la proposition initiale.*
 3. *Toute proposition de communication conjointe (i.e., impliquant la participation de membres de deux sociétés) doit être soumise et approuvée par les deux sociétés concernées.*
 4. *Les personnes dont les propositions de communication sont acceptées sont avisées par courrier électronique, mais ce sont les personnes en charge de séminaire ou de table ronde qui sont responsables d'aviser les membres de leur groupe. Toute personne ayant besoin d'une lettre officielle d'acceptation de sa communication, en raison de subventions par exemple, n'ont qu'à le demander au président du comité.*
 5. *On ne permet pas à la même personne de présenter plusieurs communications ordinaires. Cependant, il est permis de présenter à la fois une communication ordinaire et une communication à un séminaire ou à une table ronde.*
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-

Student Essay Contests / Concours d'essai pour étudiant et étudiante

Undergraduate Student Essay Contest

Subject: Any topic in the general field of religious studies

Length: 10-15 pages, typed and double-spaced

Eligibility: Any undergraduate currently registered in a Canadian university or college

Prize: 1st prize: \$200 / 2nd prize: \$100

Deadline: One copy of the completed essay, with the accompanying letter, must be submitted ELECTRONICALLY (hard copies will not be accepted this year) no later than April 18, 2005

Essays do not need to be written specifically for this contest. They may be assignments from a religious studies course. Essays must be accompanied by a letter from a member of the sponsoring religious studies department, indicating that the student is an undergraduate in good standing in that university or college.

Students entering the contest should send an ELECTRONIC copy of her/his essay, their full mailing address on the first page of the essay, and a letter of certification, to:

Dr. Aaron Hughes
Dept. of Religious Studies
University of Calgary
hughesa@ucalgary.ca

Étudiants et étudiantes du 1^{er} cycle concours d'essai

Sujet: Un thème relevant du domaine des sciences religieuses

Longueur: 10 à 15 pages dactylographiées à double interligne

Personne éligible: Toute personne inscrite dans un programme du premier cycle dans une université ou un collège canadien

Prix: 1^{er} prix: 200\$ / 2^e prix: 100\$

Echéance: L'essai et l'attestation d'inscription doivent me parvenir au plus tard le 18 avril 2005.

Les textes présentés dans le cadre du concours peuvent avoir été rédigés pour répondre aux exigences d'un cours de sciences religieuses. Une attestation d'inscription, rédigée par un professeur du département de sciences religieuses de l'institution, doit accompagner l'essai.

L'essai doit comporter sur la première page l'adresse postale complète de l'étudiant et être accompagné d'une lettre certifiant son inscription. On doit m'envoyer une copie de tout cela sur support électronique (les copies-papier ne seront pas acceptées cette année) à l'adresse suivante:

Dr. Aaron Hughes
Dept. of Religious Studies
University of Calgary
hughesa@ucalgary.ca

Graduate Student Essay Contest

Subject: A theme in the general field of religious studies.

Language: English or French

Length: 3000-5000 words

Eligibility: Full-time M.A. or PhD student status in a Canadian university.

Prize: \$300

Deadline: 26 March 2005

The winner will be invited to read her/his paper at the next annual meeting. Submissions must include the full mailing address of the candidate and a letter from the chairperson of the department certifying the degree and programme status of the candidate.

Students entering the contest should send a hard copy of her/his essay, their full mailing address on the first page of the essay and a letter of certification, to:

Dr. Faydra L. Shapiro
Department of Religion & Culture
Wilfrid Laurier University
Waterloo, ON N2L 3C5
fshapiro@wlu.ca

Étudiants et étudiantes diplômé(e)s Concours d'essai

Sujet: Un thème relevant du champ général des sciences religieuses.

Langue: anglais ou français

Longueur: 3000-5000 mots

Personne éligible: Tout étudiant présentement inscrit à temps plein dans un programme de maîtrise ou de doctorat dans une université ou un collège canadien.

Prix: \$300

Echéance: 26 mars 2005

Le gagnant ou la gagnante sera invité(e) à présenter son texte à la prochaine réunion annuelle. Les essais doivent être accompagnés d'une lettre rédigée par le directeur ou la directrice du programme de l'institution attestant que leur auteur est bien un étudiant ou une étudiante présentement inscrit(e) à temps plein dans un programme d'études supérieures.

Envoyer une copie de la version finale de l'essai, accompagnée de la lettre d'attestation, à l'attention de:

Dr. Faydra L. Shapiro
Department of Religion & Culture
Wilfrid Laurier University
Waterloo, ON N2L 3C5
fshapiro@wlu.ca

Information en provenance des membres / News and Notes from Members

Fund in Memory of Professor Willard Gurdon Oxtoby (1933–2003)

Willard Gurdon Oxtoby was born on July 29, 1933, in Kentfield, which is in Marin County, California. In 1955, Will graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a BA in philosophy from Stanford University. He then moved on to Princeton University to do graduate work. In 1958, Will married Layla Jurji. They spent the next two years in Jerusalem and the Middle East, where he did research with the American School of Oriental Research. He earned his MA in 1961, and his PhD in 1962 from Princeton's Department of Oriental Studies. He was ordained as a minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA) in 1963. On their return from the Middle East, Will taught at McGill University for four years (1960–1964). He was then at Harvard University for two years (1964–1966), before moving on to five years at Yale University (1966–1971). In 1971 Will returned to Canada to take a position at Trinity College in the University of Toronto. On July 1, 1976, he became the founding director of the university's newly created Graduate Centre for Religious Studies. Will directed the Centre until 1981, and remained at the university until his retirement in 1999, when he was given emeritus status.

Will's own work began in Biblical studies, but then moved to ancient Iran, Zoroastrianism, and pre-Islamic Arabia. He was also interested in interfaith dialogue, and of course, comparative religion. A Christian with deep commitments to issues of peace and justice, Will also wrote about the Arab-Israeli conflict. He spoke out for the rights of Palestinians to live as human beings at a time when, shamefully, very few academics chose to make their voices heard.

A year after Layla died of cancer in 1980, Will married his colleague, Julia Ching. Together, they worked on a number of writing projects. In 1990, they were co-presidents for the 33rd International Congress of Asian and North African Studies, held in Toronto. Julia died, also of cancer, in 2001.

Will was not a person to slow down during retirement. In addition to supervising student work (including my dissertation) at the University of Toronto, he taught at the College of William and Mary, and later at Syracuse University. In the fall of 2002, he co-ordinated a memorial conference for Julia, held in Toronto before the meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR). For 2002–2003, he was selected to deliver the American Lectures in the History of Religions for the AAR, choosing as his topic the encounters of Islam with other world religions. He had begun a new relationship with his colleague Judith Nagata of York University.

In January of 2003, Will was diagnosed with bowel cancer. With so many things to do, with so much more life to live, he opted for a radical course of chemotherapy at Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto at the end of February. He didn't know if the chemotherapy would give him a few more years, a few more months, or a few more weeks. It turned out he had only a few more days. Will died on March 6, 2003.

Will's children, David and Susan Oxtoby, have set up a fund in his memory at Georgetown University. It is administered by the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies and will grant a cash prize each year to the student who writes the best paper on the subject of achieving peace in the Middle East. If people are interested in contributing to this fund, they can send a cheque payable to "Georgetown University", and specifying the Willard Oxtoby fund. The details are given below. I have already contributed to this fund as a way to recognize my teacher, mentor, and friend. I would encourage other colleagues to contribute as well, as a way of remembering Will by rewarding students who work in an area that was very close to Will's heart.

The person to send a cheque to is:

Naila Habiby Sherman
 Assistant Director
 Center for Contemporary Arab Studies
 Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service
 Georgetown University
 241 Intercultural Center
 Washington, DC 20057-1020
 USA
 Tel. (202) 687-5647 Fax. (202) 687-7001
 E-mail: nhs2@georgetown.edu

Amir Hussain
 Department of Religious Studies, California State University, Northridge

Information des membres / Member Notes

Abraham H. Khan

Academic Positions:

Director for Advanced Degree Studies, Faculty of Divinity, Trinity College, University of Toronto.

Convener of *Religion, International Diplomacy, and Economics Colloquia Series*, jointly sponsored by Munk Centre for International Studies, Trinity College, and the Department for the Study of Religion, 2002

IAHR Tokyo (March 2005) Congress Academic Program Committee, 2003

Papers Presented:

International Committee for IAHR Regional Conference on Religions and Cultures in The Indic Civilization, New Delhi, December 18-21.

Presented paper on “Religious Markers and Cultural Transformation of Hindu Community in Guyana: A Case Study.”

XXIst World Congress of Philosophy, Istanbul, August 10-17, 2003

Presented papers on “Science Morality and Tagore’s Poetry of the Person,” and in a session on Postcolonialism and Modernity “Modern Identity in the Context of Postcoloniality: Appropriating Kierkegaard’s Theory of Communication.”

Publication Notes / Notes concernant les publications

Bramadat, Paul and David Seljak, editors

Religion and Ethnicity in Canada. Toronto: Pearson Education, 2004.

The volume deals with the six major minority religious traditions in Canada, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism, Islam, and Chinese religion, as well as three policy areas immediately affected by the new religious diversity in Canada: multiculturalism and citizenship, education, and health care. The volume features several current and past members of the CSSR, including Sheila McDonough, Jordan Paper, John Biles, Mathieu Boisvert, Harold Coward, Humera Ibrahim, Peter Beyer, as well as Seljak and Bramadat. This is the first of three volumes on religion and ethnicity in Canada as part of a research project sponsored by the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria with funds from the Metropolis Project and the Multiculturalism Program at the federal Department of Canadian Heritage. Meetings are already scheduled to begin work on Volume Two, Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada. Volume Three will deal with aboriginal religion in Canada.

For more information on the book, see:

<http://vig.pearsoned.ca/catalog/academic/product/0,1144,0321248414,00.html>

Harold Coward,

Yoga and Psychology: Language, Memory and Mysticism. SUNY Press, 2002

Hinduism and Human Rights. Greenwood (in press)

Harold Coward, Editor

Indian Critiques of Gandhi. SUNY Press, 2003

Harold Coward and Gordon Smith, Editors

Religion and Peacebuilding. SUNY Press, 2004

Abraham H. Khan

“Person and Boundedness in Wittgenstein and Tagore: Positioning Artificial Intelligence,” in *On Mind and Consciousness, selected papers from MICom 2002 Conference*, edited by Chhanda Chakraborti, Manas K. Mandal, and Rimi B. Chatterjee (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, 2003). pp. 300-318.

“Indo-Canadian Religiosity and the Challenge,” in *India and Canada: Past Present, and Future* (New Delhi, Mittal Publication, 2003), pp. 23-34.

“The Academic Study of Religion in South Asia,” *Encyclopedia of Religion, 2nd edition*, Macmillan (forthcoming)

Concernant les départements / Departmental News

The Department of Comparative Religion at Dalhousie University

The Department of Comparative Religion at Dalhousie University welcomes Matthew Mitchell who is currently finishing his doctoral studies at Temple University in Philadelphia. His dissertation is entitled ‘The Prenatal Apostle to the Gentiles: A Study of 1 Corinthians 15:8, Galatians 1:15-17, and the Origins of Paul’s Gentile Mission.’

Mr. Mitchell (Matt) graduated with his B.A. from the University of Saskatchewan with the St. Thomas More College Convocation Award for Religious Studies in 1998. In 1999, he was awarded Fellow of the School of Graduate Studies at Memorial University where he completed his M.A. with a specialization in Hebrew Bible in 2000 with Dr. Michael DeRoche.

Call for Papers / Invitation à proposer une communication

Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses

I am writing especially to those of you who presented papers at the most recent Congress, in Winnipeg, to encourage you to consider submitting your papers to *Studies in Religion (SR)* for possible publication. The sessions I attended this year were excellent, and from everything I heard, so were the ones I was unable to attend. I would think some very interesting papers are floating around out there, looking for a home. Please consider SR as your first choice for publishing your work. SR is a SSHRCC-funded, refereed journal, with an excellent reputation and good circulation, especially in Canada. Publications in SR will be highly visible within Canada, and will look as good on your c.v. as publications in any other journal.

Presidential addresses from the various societies appear in SR with some frequency. The journal has been, and remains, an excellent venue for the work of the various Canadian societies focused on religion: the CSBS, CSSR, CSPA, CTS, and CSCH (as well as the Francophone societies, the SQER and SCT, which I am not addressing here). As such, it is the perfect venue

for work presented at the recent Congress, or indeed, for any of the work currently being produced by members of these Canadian academic societies.

Please think of us first when you are considering publishing your work. And please contact me if you have any questions or suggestions.

Protocols for contributors may be found through the SR link at the CSSR website.

William Arnal
Editor (English), *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*
Department of Religious Studies
University of Regina
Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 0A2
(306) 585-5680
william.arnal@uregina.ca

Du bureau des affaires étudiantes / From the Student Desk

CSSR Graduate Student Representative Bulletin Report September 2004

A hearty **welcome back** to another exciting year of graduate and undergraduate school to all you students out there! I'm just coming back for my second year of MA work in Religion and Culture at Wilfrid Laurier University here in Waterloo. I sincerely wish you all a fun and successful academic year!

A deep thank-you to all students who participated in this year's **CSSR conference** in May. It was a huge success, and I was fortunate enough to be able to sit in on a great number of sessions in which students presented. All the student papers I was able to listen to were top-notch, which says a lot about the quality of our students, the quality of their professors and programs, and the quality of the CSSR. Attending and presenting at society conferences is crucial to the vitality and quality of the field. It allows members to find out what's currently hot in the field, and allows us to display to others in the field what we're up to. Involving students in conference presentations keeps the field fresh and exciting, and allows students to get valuable feedback on their work from religion scholars from across Canada. Congratulations and thank-you to all who participated. And I would like to enthusiastically encourage students to submit applications to present at this year's upcoming conference in May 2005 to be held in London Ontario at the University of Western Ontario.

This past Congress was also a landmark event for the new **CSSR Graduate Student Representative** position. Although I was under the impression that this position had existed at some point in the past, apparently this is a completely new position in the history of the CSSR. I was appointed as trial ad hoc grad rep at the 2003 AGM, and the position was officially created at the 2004 AGM. I have now been appointed to the two year position of grad rep, ad hoc no longer! And at the end of my term in 2005 the nominating committee will search for potential candidates for the position, and the next grad rep will be voted in like any other executive position.

Since this is still quite a new position I would very much appreciate any suggestions as to what I might do to raise the student profile of the CSSR and how I might serve the students of the CSSR generally. This year I will be **creating a list of liaison contacts** with graduate programs in Canada (and possibly the United States as well) in an attempt to keep in close contact with Canadian students. Any help anyone who is reading this might offer in this regard would be very greatly appreciated. My contact information is below. I have already had the privilege of being contacted by the graduate students of the University of Winnipeg, and look forward to making many more contacts.

I could also use **ideas for the student panel session for next year's Congress**. Last year I put together a panel on how to construct and teach a first year course coming out of graduate school, without pitching it over student's heads. We had an excellent session with Chris Klassen, Tony Chartrand-Burke, Randi Warne, and Michel Desjardins on the panel, and I would like to deeply thank them for their participation in what I thought was a fantastic panel. I also want to deeply thank all the students and professors who attended. Without you there would have been no session! I hope you found it as enlightening and fun as I did.

Book Reviews!!! An interesting issue came up at this year's CSSR AGM. The CSSR administers *Studies in Religion*, one of the premier Canadian journals in religion, and great concern was registered this year that books being published by Canadian scholars are not being reviewed in *SR* in a timely fashion. Book reviews are crucial to the field for displaying to Canadian religion scholars what is currently being published, and for providing a quality yet concise summary and critique of current publications in the field. On average book reviews only need to be about 1000-1500 words long. What's more, publishing a book review is an excellent way to get a peer reviewed publication on your CV, and that counts a lot for students applying to graduate schools and teaching positions. I can't stress enough the importance of book reviews both for students who publish them, and for those in the field who read them. Please send a CV with a request to do a book review to *SR*'s English book review editor Annette Ahern or French book review editor Diana Steigerwald immediately, and when a book is published in your area of interest that hasn't been reviewed you may be contacted to do the job. And hey, you get a free book out of it too! Contact information for the editors and protocols for contributors can be found on *SR*'s website, which can be found easily through a Google search, or accessed from the CSSR website.

And finally a reminder that the deadline for submission to the **student essay contests** for both graduate and under-graduate students will be coming up in early spring next year, so think about using the papers you are writing right now as potential submissions. The winners receive cash prizes, and last year we received only a few submissions unfortunately, so that exponentially increases your chances of winning! So please submit! If you win it looks good on a CV and is a great opportunity to present your work.

I wish everyone a fantastic year. I look forward to making contact with you over this coming year and building a network of Canadian students interested in religion. I also look forward to meeting as many of you who can attend the 2005 CSSR conference at Western in London, Ontario next year. All the best.

Christopher Cutting
CSSR Graduate Student Representative
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Membership Form

Canadian Society for the Study of Religion

Please use this form in forwarding your membership fees, whether a new membership or a renewal. Your membership pays your 2005 CSSR dues, CFH dues, and (unless you are an associate member) a subscription to *Studies in Religion*. In addition, your membership entitles you to receive the bi-annual *Bulletin* of the Society and to submit papers to the Programme Committee for consideration for presentation at the Annual Meeting. It does not cover your registration fee for the Annual Meeting. **Please make cheque or money order payable to: "Wilfrid Laurier University Press."**

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Request for Participation / On sollicite votre participation**

Inform us of your recent academic activities, your latest publications, the organization of seminars, colloquia, and conferences. Tell us about appointments, retirements, and new developments in the teaching of religious studies. Send materials before March 1, 2005, for the Spring 2005 edition of the *Bulletin*.

Le Bulletin de la SCÉR sera d'autant plus intéressant que vous y apporterez votre participation. Faites-nous connaître vos activités académiques, vos publications récentes, la tenue de séminaires, de colloques, de congrès que vous organisez. Informez-nous des nouveaux développements dans votre institution, des suppressions de postes aussi bien que des nouveaux postes. Si vous voulez qu'elles paraissent dans le Bulletin du printemps 2005, faites-nous parvenir ces informations avant le 1^{er} mars 2005.

Send to:

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