

**Canadian Society for the Study of Religion/Société canadienne pour l'étude de
la religion
Annual General Meeting (May 30, 2003) / Assemblée annuelle (le 30 mai 2003)
Halifax, Nova Scotia**

Regrets: Faydra Shapiro, Mavis Fenn, Aaron Hughes, and James Mullens

Present: Darlene Juschka, André Couture, Randi Warne, Kenneth MacKendrick, Christopher Cutting, Terry Woo, David Seljak, Paul Bowlby, Peter Bisson, Braj Sinha, Marc Lalonde, Paul Bramadat, Peter Slater, Bruce Alton, Noel Salmon, Bill James, Ira Robinson, Barb Davy, Baraba Clayton, T. Ruparell

1. **Welcome/Bienvenue**
2. **Adoption of the Agenda/Adoption de l'ordre du jour**

Motion: to adopt agenda Seljak/Robins carried

3. **Adoption of the minutes of the (May 27, 2003) meeting of the Annual General Meeting/ Adoption du procès verbal de l'assemblée annuelle (le 27 mai 2003)**

Motion to adopt Minutes of May 27, 2002 Bowlby/MacKendrick carried

4. **Business Arising from the Minutes/Suivis au procès verbal**
none

5. **Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada Representative/ Représentante de la Fédération canadienne des sciences humaines et sociales**
CFHSS Diana Brydon, Chair of ASPP Management Board and Jackie Wright arrived at 2:15 in order to address the members. The following report of Brydon's talk was written by David Seljak CFHSS representative for the CSSR.

Dr. Diana Lee Brydon, Chairperson, Aid to Scholarly Publication Programme Management Board and Jacqueline Wright, Manager, Membership Communications of the Canadian Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences addressed the AGM. Brydon said that the lobbying efforts of the Federation had been very successful and the Canadian government had announced very generous increases in research grants for the humanities and social sciences. She mentioned the successful post-card campaign at last year's Congress in Toronto and reminded members to send the post cards included in this year's registration package, thanking MPs and the government for their support of the arts and social sciences.

Brydon mentioned the success of the Toronto Congress, which was the largest to date. The Congress in Halifax, she reported, was also a success with more than 6,000 registrants. Brydon reported on the SSHRC-funded Federation task-force studying the health of the academic associations. The task-force was looking for ways that the Federation could better serve the association members.

Another important issue for the Federation is the restructuring of SSHRC from a granting council to a "knowledge council". This transformation would expand its mandate from the simple funding of research to a more active one that would include communicating research to other groups and institutions in society and creating partnerships. The new SSHRC would organize itself in a way similar to the CIHR, that is, in a number of discrete "domains" rather than by discipline. The Federation had to be an active partner in this transformation, she stated.

Brydon reported on the health of the ASPP and on the on-going Foundation fund-raising campaign. Wright informed the AGM of the dates for the CSSR's next Annual Meeting, May 28-June 1, 2004. The 2004 Congress will take place at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. This will be followed by University of Western Ontario (London) in 2005, York University (Toronto) in 2006, and the University of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon) in 2007.

6. Reports/Rapports

a) President/Président, André Couture

Couture commented that he met committee for the first time at the executive meeting. He felt that things are moving along smoothly. He wished to thank all those on the committee who volunteer their time and made special mention of those going off the committee, Juschka, Fenn, and Mullens. He made special thanks to Randi Warne for her continued contribution to the society.

b) Treasurer/Trésorier, Kenneth MacKendrick

MacKendrick reported on the CSSR budget 2003-2004. He indicated that the income sources remain relatively constant, e.g. dues and interest, SSHRC grant, travel subsidy. The current aim of the budget is to build up a surplus in order to fund special projects. He noted that last year's expenses are half of what they typically are due to late receipts from the membership secretary, and late submission of special speaker costs. He noted that the projected surplus for next year is \$1800.00. MacKendrick also commented on travel funds provided to the society from SSHRC. He encouraged members to make students aware of this fund so that they can apply for support. He brought copies of the travel fund request form to the AGM to distribute.

Seljak raised the issue about the viability of maintaining a connection with the IAHR and asked the society to consider withdrawal from the IAHR. Warne responded indicating that she had connections with several of the executive of the IAHR, and Juschka indicated that Armin Geertz the general secretary had sent her a brief report and invited a CSSR member to the meeting in Denmark. Sinha also indicated that it was a useful connection and that there would a meeting in Delhi and that several members would be there who could report back to the CSSR society.

Motion: to accept Treasurer's report MacKendrick/Seljak carried.

c) Membership Secretary/Sécretaire aux admissions, James Mullens (read by Juschka)

The membership enrollment procedure in 2003 remained the same as in previous years, with members sending their applications and dues payments to Wilfred Laurier Press with a notification copy to the membership secretary. Membership dues for 2003 were set at: \$90 for regular members, \$60 for other members; \$50 for students; and \$50 for Associate members. According to the information provided by Cheryl Beaupre at Wilfred Laurier Press, the 2003 membership count as of May 1 totaled 267. This represents a marginal increase from 250 members in 2002 due to a larger student membership (see category breakdown on page 3 below).

Payment of both 2002 and 2003 membership dues is still being received.

Bulletin

Fall and Spring issues of the CSSR Bulletin were published this year : Vol XXVI Nos.1& 2. The Bulletins were prepared in printed format and sent by regular mail to all members. They were also posted electronically on the CSSR website at the time of mailing. The membership secretary raised the issue of going to a virtual Bulletin, but Paul Bowlby objected arguing that hard copy although costing the society continued to act as a concrete representation of membership in the society.

Motion: to accept Membership secretary's report Juschka/Sinha

d) Nominations Committee/Comité pour les nominations, Darlene Juschka, André Couture and Kenneth MacKendrick

Juschka reported on behalf of the nominating committee. The following persons were put forward for the positions of Recording Secretary, Terry Woo; Membership Secretary Mark Chapman, and Ad hoc Grad Student MAL Christopher Cutting.

Nominations were open for the position of Recording Secretary. None were forthcoming.

Motion: nominations be closed Bowlby/Warne carried

Terry Woo acclaimed.

Nominations were open for the position of Membership Secretary. None were forthcoming.

Motion: nominations be closed Couture/Woo carried

Mark Chapman acclaimed

Nominations were open for the position of MAL. Darlene Juschka nominated.

Motion: that nominations be closed Sinha/Woo carried.

Darlene Juschka MAL

Ad-hoc Student MAL, Christopher Cutting named to the position for one year.

e) 2003 Programme Chair/Responsable du programme 2003, Faydra Shapiro (read by Juschka)

There were sixty abstracts submitted for this year's congress meeting and of this forty-two papers made up the Programme. However, there were in total 13 late-date cancellations.

There was some discussion in regard to late-date cancellation of paper presentations. It was decided that a final date for withdrawal of paper from the programme would be published in the Call for papers. It was also suggested that the Call for papers emphasize panels and this

too might discourage late-date cancellation of papers. It was noted by that the lack of funding from universities could discourage folks from following through with their commitment.

Motion: to accept Programme Chair's report Juschka/MacKendrick carried

f) Student Essay Awards/Prix pour les essais étudiant(e)s, Aaron Hughes and Mavis Fenn

(Juschka reported for Mavis Fenn)

There were seven graduate student essays were received André Couture and Mavis Feen vetted the essays and awarded first place to Nicole Goulet (PhD candidate at the University of Manitoba) for her essay "Ramakrishna and Becoming: Deleuze and Guatari's Becoming-Animal"

(Juschka reported for Aaron Hughes)

There were nine undergraduate student essays received. First place went to Erin Dyck "The Spin Doctor: Irenaeus of Lyon and the Second Century Reidentification of Paul". Second place went to Stephanie Bumstead (University of Calgary) for her paper "Merkabah Mysticism and Gnosticism: An Analysis of Gershom Scholem's Theory."

Motion: to accept graduate and undergraduate student essay reports Juschka/MacKendrick carried

g) Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion/Corporation canadienne des sciences religieuses, André Couture

nothing to report

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

Couture indicated that the executive met last week. Alain Bouchard is the president of SQER. Couture will meet with Alain Bouchard the week of June 2nd.

i) CSSR Web Site/Site Web de la SCÉR, Kenneth MacKendrick and William Arnal

MacKendrick indicated that the committee was looking at basic improvements to the web, for example increasing the efficiency of the web-site. It was suggested that names and areas of interest of scholars be included at the web-site. This will be examined by the web-site committee.

7. Remembering Will Oxtoby, Bruce Alton and Peter Slater

Bruce Alton and Peter Slater both spoke warmly in remembrance of Will Oxtoby who died March 6, 2003. The membership bowed their heads for one minute of silence. Following this first Alton and then Slater reviewed and commented on Oxtoby's life, teaching and research. Alton's address was particularly touching.

Following this, Paul Bramadat spoke briefly about the life and career of Carl Ridd of the University of Winnipeg who died April 2003.

8. Local Arrangements Coordinator

The local coordinator for the 2003 Congress was Randi Warne. Warne did a fine job and the dinner at Café Chianti was a dinner to remember. The local coordinator for University of Manitoba, 2004 Congress will be Kenneth MacKendrick.

9. AAR/CSSR relationship, Randi Warne

Warne reported that five years of ostensible outreach to the CSSR and CCSR by the AAR has been somewhat problematic. She indicated that there has been no real attempt on behalf of the AAR to properly understand the Canadian Scene as distinct from the American scene. To give but one example, their Lilly-funded research project, the Census of programs in Religious Studies and Theology in North America did not accurately represent what is going on in Canada, in part because no attempt was made to set questions that would flag these differences. Indeed, when the first draft of the questionnaire was circulated, a number of differences between the American and Canadian scenes were noted by Canadian scholars. Rather than frame the questions to highlight these differences, the questions in the next draft were “homogenized” so as to be generic (with the American case as the norm). It was decided than rather than produce a full report on the relationship between the AAR and CSSR, there ought to be appropriate scrutiny of any future liaisons that CSSR has with the AAR. Warne indicated that they may be well meaning but are uninformed about (and apparently disinterested in) the specificities of Religious Studies in the Canadian scene.

10. Other Business/Varia

Thérèse De Groot (arrive 4:15).

Analyste de politiques/Policy Analyst

Secrétariat en éthique de la recherche

Secretariat on Research Ethics

Tri-council granting agencies adopted a policy statement that demonstrated gaps in regard to SS and Humanities Issues. Therefore an Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics has been formed to examine these gaps. It is entitled “Consultation on the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans: The Evolution of the TCPS and Opportunities of Refinement” to be held at the Congress June 1, 2003. This reflects a special working group focusing on ethics issues in regard to research in the Social Science and Humanities.

**PRE Consultation: Evolving the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS) to Better Meet the Needs of Canada’s Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) Communities
June 1, 2003**

In November, 2002 the Interagency Advisory Panel on Research ethics (PRE) approved the creation of a PRE Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Special Working Committee (SSHWC). The SSHWC held its inaugural meeting in May 2003. Its mandate is to provide advice and recommendations to PRE on (a) priorities, and (b) methods and strategies for coherently addressing priority ethical issues in social sciences and humanities research involving human participants.

Consistent with PRE's basic processes, SSHWC's work is based on principles of transparency, community engagement and consultation. Thus far, the Committee has reviewed a wide range of materials and submissions that have been sent to PRE. It now seeks further input on issues that members of Canada's social sciences and humanities (SSH) communities believe require (re)-consideration in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans* (TCPS). The material considered thus far suggests four basic categories of change to be addressed:

- **Core assumptions and paradigms of research** have been clearly identified as a class of concerns that must be addressed. A common critique is that the TCPS was originally based on more positivistic, experimental, and biomedical research models. This has created problems for some researchers who are guided by other paradigms of knowledge development.
 - Examples of this include concerns that the TCPS should more clearly recognize diverse assumptions concerning the fundamental nature and intent of research (e.g., how research is defined; what is considered "legitimate" research; the inherently emergent and collaborative basis of some research approaches).
- The way that certain **core and guiding ethical principles** within the TCPS are applied in relation to the diversity of research that characterizes Canada's social sciences and humanities research communities has been questioned as well.
 - For example, emphasis on the core concepts of "harm" and "protection" may require different consideration in more critical types of research, and/or completely miss concepts that are more highly valued in more collaborative research approaches, such as "relationship building."
- While a variety of **methods** are addressed and highlighted within the TCPS, many are not, thereby leaving REBs with little guidance regarding issues and "best practices" that characterize those approaches.
 - Examples of methods that are not addressed or insufficiently covered in the TCPS include autobiographical research, ethnography, participatory action research, historical research and text-based research.
- Finally, the TCPS has been critiqued for not providing sufficient guidance for a number of more **specific research techniques** and **sites** that are of particular relevance for Canada's social sciences and humanities communities.
 - Examples include research involving human participants conducted on the internet, and issues that arise with techniques such as snowball sampling.

The Committee welcomes your commentary on these and other issues that you believe are important for them to consider. If elaboration of the table below is a useful device, then please use it to convey your comments to the Committee. Please complete the information sheets and provide examples to illustrate your points, if necessary, or provide us with your comments on the back page of the table, whichever is more appropriate for you.

Please send completed information sheets to SSHWC: secretariat@pre.ethics.gc.ca or fax to (613) 996-7117 **before July 1, 2003**.

For further information about the SSHWC, its mandate, and its place in Canada's

evolving TCPS governance structure, please see http://www.nserc.ca/programs/ethics/english/nomination_e.htm or www.pre.ethics.gc.ca (forthcoming).

In the coming months, the SSHWC will likely consult further with the research community on social sciences and humanities issues. If you wish to participate, please write clearly your e-mail address below. Your e-mail will not be used for any purpose other than your participation in future consultations on issues related to the TCPS.

Motion: We request that the Tri-council require the presence the representation of humanists on the review process Bowlby/James carried

11. Adjournment/Levée de l'assemblée
Bramadat/Bowlby carried