

**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