

**2012-2013 ASA Council  
Third Meeting  
Final Minutes**

**Tuesday, August 13, 2013**  
Hilton New York Midtown, Beekman Room  
New York, NY

**Officers Present:** Catherine White Berheide (Secretary), Jennifer Glass (Vice President), Annette Lareau (President-Elect), Brian Powell (Vice President-Elect), Cecilia Ridgeway (President), Mary Romero (Secretary-Elect), Edward Telles (Past Vice President), Erik Olin Wright (Past President)

**Members-at-Large Present:** Stephanie Bohon, David Brunsmas, Kelly Joyce, Cecilia Menjivar, Dina Okamoto, Monica Prasad, Jane Sell, Mario Luis Small, Laurel Smith-Doerr, Robin Wagner-Pacifici

**Members-at-Large Absent:** Amanda Lewis, Joya Misra

**Incoming Members-at-Large Present:** Paula England, Tina Fetner, Karyn Lacy

**Staff Present:** Janet L. Astner, Les Briggs, Sally T. Hillsman, Kareem D. Jenkins, Michael Murphy, Jean Shin, Brad Smith, Roberta Spalter-Roth, Margaret Weigers Vitullo

## **1. Introductions and Orienting Documents**

President Cecilia Ridgeway convened the last meeting of the 2012-2013 ASA Council at 2:32pm on Tuesday, August 13, 2013. Ridgeway expressed appreciation personally and on behalf of council to Wendy Diane Manning for her work on the amicus brief for the DOMA case. Dr. Manning was present at the council meeting at the request of the President.

The President then reminded Council members of the need to work efficiently at this meeting and identified some of key matters on the agenda for discussion: editorial office staffing, an open access journal, manuscript review times, and possible gender bias in nominations.

### *A. Introduction of Newly Elected Members-at-Large*

The four newly elected Council Members-at-Large were welcomed: Tina Fetner, McMaster University; Karyn Lacy, University of Michigan; Leslie McCall, Northwestern University; and Patricia E. White, National Science Foundation.

### *B. Approval of the Agenda*

No changes were made to the agenda.

MOTION: To approve the agenda. Carried (no opposed).
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*C. Approval of the January 26, 2013 Minutes*

No revisions of the minutes were proposed.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the second meeting of the 2012-2013 ASA Council on January 26, 2013. Carried (no opposed).

*D. Approval of the February 21, 2013 Minutes*

No changes were proposed for the Council action in February on the DOMA/Prop 8 Amicus Brief.

MOTION: To approve the minutes on the DOMA/Prop 8 Amicus Brief on February 21, 2013. Carried.

*E. Approval of the July 25, 2013 Minutes*

There were no revisions of the minutes for the Council action on the Jackson/Sevcik Amicus Brief.

MOTION: To approve the minutes on the Jackson/Sevcik Amicus Brief on July 25, 2013. Carried.

**2. Report of the President**

*A. Reflections on the Year and the 2013 Annual Meeting*

President Ridgeway indicated that preparing and filing the amicus brief in support of DOMA was the main issue dealt with during her term in office. She noted that attendance at the SWS meeting in February permitted discussion about SWS's relationship to ASA, which was useful. Some ASA members think SWS runs ASA, while some SWS members feel alienated from ASA because their research topics are still not considered central to sociology. The 2013 Annual Meeting went very well, both in terms of breaking attendance records and receiving positive feedback about good program sessions. Overall, it was not an easy year but Ridgeway felt the endeavors were worthwhile.

**3. Report of the Secretary**

*A. 2013 Election Report*

Secretary Catherine White Berheide reported strong participation in the election. The outcome raised some questions about gender in nominating and voting processes. The first opportunity to affect diversity is during preparation of the various lists of nominees, and all nominating bodies are briefed on the diversity policy. The diversity of the election slate, however, is greatly affected by who actually accepts the nominations. The final outcome is determined by the voting membership.

One member contacted the Executive Office about doing a study of voting. ASA staff does not typically access the actual voting data; it is held confidentially by the outside vendor. Council would need to take specific action to authorize extraction of individual voting data if a study of voting behavior was desired.

It was noted that the handout with background information on the gender breakdown of nomination lists was done quickly by staff in the late summer to produce basic information; it was not a sophisticated data analysis. The intent was to provide a sense of the magnitude of the issue.

A question was raised about whether student members affect election outcomes, since they comprise approximately one third of the membership. Executive Officer Sally Hillsman reported that information on the proportion of students that voted was requested when the Association first moved to online ballots. The proportion of voting student members, and the proportion of students in the overall membership, has remained about the same over the last decade.

Council members were invited to send their ideas and suggestions to the Executive Officer in the next couple months to see if more data analysis of the nominations process was needed.

#### *B. Year-End (2012) and Current (2013) Financials*

The Secretary reported that 2012 ended with a modest deficit. A modest surplus is currently projected for 2013. One challenge is that membership is still struggling to return to the higher levels attained before the recession. The effect of cuts in state budgets and the trickle-down effect to institutions of higher learning is still ongoing, so it may be that slightly lower membership counts are the “new normal” for awhile.

Noting that there are revenue streams other than membership, the Secretary reported that registration for the 2013 Annual Meeting broke the record. Thanks were expressed to ASA staff, particularly Meeting Services Director Kareem Jenkins and Meeting Services staff, for their hard work. Attendance in New York was almost 1,000 higher than in Denver in 2012, offering proof that people come in large numbers to New York City meetings despite complaints about high costs. Meeting costs are higher in major cities such as New York, Chicago and San Francisco, and higher attendance also generates higher expenses, but the expectation is that they balance out and 2013 is expected to end above the break-even point.

#### *C. Report on ASA Investments and Reserves*

The Secretary reported continued growth in ASA’s investment portfolio and commented that the financial strategy seems to be working well. At this time there is no anticipation of needing to withdraw any of the long-term investments to cover cash needs, but there will be the usual evaluation of cash reserves in September to cover expenses for the remainder of the year.

#### *D. Editor Honoraria*

At its previous meeting, Council approved increasing editor honoraria for 2013 as the first of two proposed steps to bring honoraria to original levels in inflation-adjusted dollars, and supported a regular inflationary adjustment of honoraria. Prior to approving the second step increase slated for 2014, Council asked the Committee on Publications to provide more information about the rationale for the relative amounts for different kinds of publications, in particular whether the amount of work involved in editing the Rose Series justified a higher honorarium than that of the quarterly journals or *Sociological Methodology (SM)*.

The Committee on Publications, after the further discussion requested by Council, decided that *SM* and the Rose Series are comparable to each other in terms of editor workload but that neither

workload is as high as a quarterly journal. The Committee voted to adjust their 2014 inflation-adjustment recommendation as follows:

<i>ASR, CS, and Contexts:</i>	\$9,000
Quarterly journals ( <i>JHSB, SOE, SPQ, ST, TS</i> )	\$4,000
<i>SM</i> (annual)	\$3,500
Rose Series	\$3,500

A question was raised about whether honoraria amounts would affect whether someone is willing to take on the job of editor. Data was requested on the editors' needs, not what other associations offer.

It was noted that all editors are present for the bulk of the Committee on Publications' meeting, and their input is taken into account when the elected members vote during the committee's final executive session. Some Council members who had served as editors pointed out that one use of the honoraria can be to support editors' attendance at professional meetings, which facilitates their connection with researchers and recruiting articles. Another point was that editorial offices receive less support from host institutions now than in the past, and an honorarium gives an editor some flexibility in negotiating with universities over things like release time, give Council's policy that ASA does not pay for release time for editors.

MOTION: To approve the proposed 2014 editor honoraria and ask the Committee on Publications to review honoraria every five years for possible adjustment. Carried (16 yes, 1 opposed).

#### *E. Editorial Office Staffing*

As mentioned during the previous discussion, institutional support for journal offices has been decreasing significantly, which raises expenses for the Association. One of the more difficult issues is differences in the cost of using graduate students, which can vary tremendously by geographic region/location, whether the school is a public or private institution, whether or not it is unionized, and whether the editor is using the graduate assistantship system or hiring staff as independent contractors. It is generally possible to go out into the local/regional job market and find someone to do clerical work at less cost than a graduate student.

Some editors make an argument for using graduate students to do the first read of submissions and identify area(s) of research to facilitate the search for reviewers. However, much of the routine work in an editorial office can be done by a good clerical person.

While the Association has a strong commitment to full support the journal editorial offices, staffing concerns need to be addressed, including the extent to which the organization is willing to subsidize graduate education and the vast differences among offices whose work appears quite similar. ASA has had a cost-blind approach to selecting editors to date. Yet some good candidates may not be applying because they think their institution has to provide support, and many institutions will not do so.

Consequently, the proposed *core staffing model* recommended by the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget (EOB) is based on current editorial office operations and takes into account the number of issues, pages, and manuscript volume for each ASA journal. There is no intention to change the structure or funding of any *existing* editorial office; the goal is to provide a guideline and

base structure as editorial offices transition. In addition to the formulas for staff and staffing expenses, an additional standard allocation was proposed for copy editing of each journal. Editor's may proposed new, additional initiatives and they will be considered as special projects for that editorship, funded accordingly if accepted, but not permanently built into the base budget for that journal's editorial office.

The Secretary noted that the Committee on Publications would be getting ready to recommend to Council new editors for four journals at its winter meeting. It will be important to implement any desired staffing formula before the next transitions occur.

The Secretary also reported that the current editors did not fully support the staffing model proposed by EOB, due to concerns that editorial offices might lose staff. In response to a query about current editors' objections to the proposal, the Secretary indicated it was likely that they were misreading the tables presenting the formula. She clarified that the proposed staffing levels *plus* an allocation for copyediting represents the current status of editorial office budgets, and that the salary values reflected past *averages* and not funding maxima. (That is, regional and type of institution will affect *actual* salary levels, but not the level of staffing proposed.)

Further Council discussion noted that one positive outcome of establishing a staffing model is that rationalizing the system for supporting editorial offices increases the transparency of how those arrangements are handled.

MOTION: To approve the proposed core staffing model for editorial offices, with implementation to begin with new applications for editorships. Carried (17 yes, 1 opposed).
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#### *F. ASA Open Access Journal*

SAGE has offered to partner with ASA on the creation of a premier open access journal in sociology. An open access publication is very different from traditional journals. Among the advantages are that any accepted article would be available online immediately, there would be no page limits, and thus there would not be any significant backlog. The proposed initial financial model is that authors will pay for publication of their accepted articles but not for submitting their manuscripts. It was noted that the fee levels and whether there is a submission fee could change in the future based on experience. Authors would sign a Creative Commons licensing agreement for their work to be published by ASA in that journal rather than transfer copyright to ASA. A tentative title for the new journal is *ASA Open*, which is intended to highlight both the open access and the openness to all new scholarship in the discipline.

The Secretary acknowledged that the Committee on Publications had several concerns, among them the intellectual argument for an open access journal, the prospect of "peer review light" on submissions, and how publishing costs would be covered. The current concept is that this will be a general journal, open to any sociological specialty and type of analysis. The only general research journal that ASA currently has in its publications portfolio is ASR, which has a very low (5+%) acceptance rate.

There are other author-pays open access journals being launched in sub-disciplinary areas in various disciplines. There is also the recently announced *Sociological Science* that is a general research journal but may focus on empirical organizational research. It has author fees for both submission and publication, and is not affiliated with a national disciplinary society.

The viewpoint that the author-pays model is “soaking members for revenue” does not account for the fact that financial support for a publication has to come from somewhere. Authors will pay no fee to submit their manuscripts, only to publish them once they are accepted. It was suggested that the author-pays model is a bit like paying taxes to build roads; no one wants to pay taxes but everyone wants good roads. The expectation is that the open access journal will be revenue-neutral to the ASA for some time and perhaps indefinitely; that is possible only because SAGE already has the infrastructure to support the new journal.

There was discussion about what peer reviewing model would be best for an open access journal. Authors need to be sure that their work is being seriously reviewed and this can be conveyed to their departments. In launching a journal of this kind, the review aspect is crucial in avoiding a “race to the bottom.” The inaugural editor will need to be a highly ranked and recognized sociologist who will ensure review processes are at ASA standards. The possibility of using a large editorial board with subject area editors, similar to how TRAILS handles submissions of teaching materials, can also be considered, especially since the volume of submissions to an open access journal is unknown over the long run but likely to be different than what comes into ASR. At this point, reviews of submissions are expected to be vigorous, but there would be no revise and resubmit (R&R) handling by the editor. Reviews would generally yield an up or down vote allowing the reviewer to concentrate on a careful examination of the methods used to support the findings and the content’s contributions to the field rather than on *writing* extensive reviews intended for the improvement of the manuscript.

One thing that would be lost in this approach to review would be sociology’s typical use of the peer review system as part of the pedagogical process. An open access journal would provide that function only in a very limited way, unlike what occurs with traditional journals.

Past President Erik Olin Wright encouraged Council members to think as experimentalists. The proposed journal has every possibility of becoming a flagship journal in the online sphere. The speed of publication is very attractive to authors. Going online also opens up possibilities for publishing longer articles and/or good scholarship in fields that do not have a current ASA specialized journal and do not often get into ASR. Publishing online means that an editor has no page limits to deal with; consequently, no excellent submission would be rejected solely on the grounds of space constraints.

Comments from other Council members highlighted the need to focus on quality. Some concerns about fees and the fee structures were expressed, particularly because other open access journals have rather high fees unlike what is proposed for the ASA journal. It was noted that the author-pays model originated in the natural sciences, where the vast majority of researchers have large grants that cover payment of publication fees. Sociologists rarely have those resources. However, it was also noted that an increasing number of universities are creating publication funds as they cut library journal acquisition budgets. There is some worry about the fairness with which such funds would be distributed to authors by universities, but that is a problem that will have to be faced regardless of what ASA does. There is no logical reason for sociologists not to seek access to such funds. It was noted that no fee information is available yet for *Sociological Science*.

Director of Publications Karen Gray Edwards indicated that the current proposal includes the possibility of waiving the publishing fee for International Associate members from developing countries (N=80), but that there may be a need to consider other waivers as well.

There was some discussion about having a modest *submission* fee now or in the future to serve as protection against a flood on inappropriate submissions from domestic or international sources

In response to a question about licensing versus copyright, the Secretary clarified that ASA currently requires authors to transfer copyright to the Association as part of the agreement to publish their articles in ASA's *traditional* journals. There are no exceptions to this policy. When an ASA published article is reprinted, the permission fee goes to copyright holder. ASA shares permission fees with authors for reprints of articles published in its traditional journals. Authors publishing in the new open access journal would select a Creative Commons license agreement that would permit their papers to be published in the ASA open access journal. Since authors would retain their own copyright, ASA would not be involved in reprint permissions for material published in the open access journal. (ASA would neither have the costs involved in this process or the revenue.)

Consensus was reached to move ahead on preparing a plan to partner with SAGE on launching an open access journal for general sociological research.

MOTION: Council approves in principle moving forward with a plan for ASA to launch a premier open access general sociology journal in partnership with SAGE, using an author-pays model. The author-pays model to be used will include a fee for publishing an accepted article. Authors will not be asked to transfer copyright; they will instead sign a limited license with the Association for publishing the article. Consideration will be given to naming the new journal *ASA Open*.

Council requests that the Committee on Publications proceed to identify candidates for this new editorship and discuss with those individuals the appropriate process for selecting reviewers including the concept of area editors.

The Executive Office is directed to bring a complete plan back to Council at its 2014 winter meeting. If Council approves, ASA would then move forward to launch the new open access journal as soon as possible. Carried (13 – yes, 0 – no, 3 abstain).

Council took a short break at 4:48 – 5:01pm.

#### *G. 2012 Annual Report*

Copies of the latest Annual Report were distributed at the meeting. Council members were invited to send comments and feedback to Deputy Executive Officer Janet Astner.

### **4. Report of the Audit Committee**

#### *A. Approval of the 2012 Auditor's Report*

The EOB Committee convenes as the audit committee, and the Secretary reported receipt of a clean financial audit for 2012.

MOTION: Council accepts the 2012 Auditor's Report. Carried (16 yes, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions).

*B. Auditor for 2013*

Based on the positive experience with the new auditing firm of Gelman, Rosenberg & Freedman, EOB recommended that an engagement letter be signed for the 2013 audit.

MOTION: Council authorizes the Executive Office to sign the engagement letter with Gelman, Rosenberg & Freedman. Carried (16 yes, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions).

**5. Reports of Council Subcommittee**

*A. Committee on Review Times in Sociology Journals*

Council Member Monica Prasad presented the committee's proposal to publish its five-page report in *Footnotes*, with the respondents' material added to online version. There was some discussion about the space constraints of the printed version of the newsletter, and agreement was reached to publish an executive summary of the report in up to 1,000 words.

MOTION: To accept the committee memo and the accompanying quotations, and produce a shorter version appropriate for publication in *ASA Footnotes* and place the entire report and respondents' material on the ASA website. Carried (16 yes, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions).

**6. Request from some Council Members-at-Large**

In response to seeing several studies and reports in the media that highlighted the particular problems faced by students who are the first in their families to attend institutions of higher education especially problems gaining access to and remaining in the academy, several Council members asked what role, if any, the ASA might play in addressing this issue.

There was some discussion about whether it was feasible to add another question to an existing survey or perhaps start a new research project, which yielded consensus about looking first at existing data before starting to collect new data from members.

MOTION: Council authorizes the ASA Executive Office to assemble existing data and collect new data on sociology students and faculty who are first in their family to attend college. Carried (0 opposed, 0 abstentions).



## 7. Report of the Committee on Awards

Council Member Robin Wagner-Pacifici, the Council Liaison to the Committee on Awards (COA), summarized issues that arose during the recent COA meeting and noted that nothing required urgent action.

COA meets annually with chairs of the award selection committees. The issue again is the chronic problem of getting more nominations. The proliferation of section awards was mentioned as one possible factor because there are more pools siphoning off potential nominees. One suggestion was that selection committee members be permitted or encouraged to tap people to nominate recipients.

The issue of having a standardized format for the nomination of major award nominees was also raised by the COA, but it decided to continue the process of let each major award selection committee determine its own procedures.

The selection committee for the Public Understanding of Sociology Award asked for a Council-designated session dedicated to their award recipient, similar to what is done for the Excellence in Reporting Sociology award. Initial response to that request was not positive, due to the different nature of the two awards.

Lastly, the selection committee for the Distinguished Contributions to Teaching award wants to add “and Learning” to the name of the award. Council took no action because there was no recommendation from COA regarding this request.

Council then recognized the excellent work done by ASA’s Governance and Information Systems Program Assistant Jordon Robison in redesigning and customizing the major award plaques.

Discussion about awards concluded with several comments about shortening or containing the award ceremony which is viewed as too long by some attendees. Staff reported that although some recipients speak longer than their allotted time (despite the structure in place to prevent that) and more frequent award decisions with multiple winners, the ceremony has remained within its allotted time for some years.

## 8. Report of the Executive Officer

### *A. Resolutions of Thanks to Wendy Diane Manning and Cleary Gottlieb*

Council approved two resolutions thanking the major participants involved in preparing ASA’s amicus brief.

MOTION: The Council of the American Sociological Association, meeting in New York City, August 13, 2013, by acclamation expresses its deepest appreciation to Dr. Wendy Diane Manning for her outstanding work in preparing and writing the Association’s *Amicus Curiae* Brief to the United States Supreme Court submitted jointly in the cases of Hollingsworth, et al. v. Kristin M. Perry, et al. (California Proposition 8) and the United States v. Edith Schlain Windsor et al. (Defense of Marriage Act).

MOTION: The Council of the American Sociological Association, meeting in New York City, August 13, 2013, by acclamation expresses its deepest appreciation to Carmine D. Boccuzzi, Jr. (Counsel of Record), Scott Thompson and Mark Lightner of Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP of New York City for their outstanding work in preparing and submitting the Brief of *Amicus Curiae* American Sociological Association in support of Respondent Kristin M. Perry and Respondent Edith Schlain Windsor to the United States Supreme Court in the cases of Hollingsworth, et al. v. Kristin M. Perry, et al. (California Proposition 8) and the United States v. Edith Schlain Windsor et al. (Defense of Marriage Act).

#### *B. NSF Budget and Responses to Congressional Attacks Update*

Various background materials provided to Council included an article by Jon Marcus in the London Time Higher Education Supplement about social sciences being targeted in “ideological” war on research; a letter from Eddie Bernice Johnson, Ranking Member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, US House of Representatives, protesting the intrusion of that committee’s chairman into the peer review process of NSF grant proposals; and an editorial by Kenneth Prewitt about the Coburn amendment that negatively impacted NSF funding for political science.

The Executive Officer commented that Congressional actions negatively impacting the social sciences and science in general may be pronounced over next few months and that the science community in general is nervous. Most of COSSA’s activities are focus on education and advocacy on behalf of social science with Congress and relevant Executive Branch offices (e.g., the President’s Office of Science and Technology Policy); COSSA does not have the resources to do grassroots advocacy. ASA staff and other members of COSSA looking into several software packages that could support COSSA organizations’ capacity for action alerts.

The importance of being very careful about what ASA sends out to members was emphasized. A segment of the membership is very vocal in complaining about any political involvement by the Association. However, support for or protection of research is unlikely to generate much opposition and any communications would contact an opt-out procedure.

In closing, ASA Public Affairs & Public Information (PAPI) Director Brad Smith indicated that the House of Representatives has not approved any of its 12 appropriations bills. If sequestration levels continue, there will be an 8% across-the-board cut in the NSF budget.

#### *C. Task Force on Sociology and Global Climate Change Update*

There was no discussion of the short progress report from the task force.

#### *D. Press Results from the 2013 Annual Meeting*

The summary of media activity included 22 press releases from ASA, 3 press releases from universities, 30 reporters registered for the Annual Meeting, and media coverage appearing on every continent except Antarctica. Highlights included 5 minutes of coverage on NPR, and two segments on the *Today Show*.

Vice President Jennifer Glass added that she was interviewed by CBS for the *Sunday Morning* show that is slated to air on Labor Day weekend.

*E. Fisher v. University of Texas–Austin Update*

With the Supreme Court ordering a new appeals court consideration of this affirmative action case, it appears that higher education will remain in litigation mode for some time.

*F. Boston College Oral History Update*

There was no discussion of the update.

*G. ANPRM 45 CFR 46 (Common Rule) Changes Update*

The Executive Officer reported that funding for a National Academy of Sciences consensus study has been secured from the Gates Foundation, the Sloan Foundation, and the National Academy of Education. The committee that was responsible for the workshop (for which ASA provided some funding) will also be responsible for the consensus study, with the addition of four new members who have expertise in privacy and emerging technologies and ethnography. Prepublication release of the consensus report is expected in December of 2013 with final publication in March of 2014. According to the presenters at the briefing, this is remarkably fast timeline for a National Academies workshop and consensus study process.

President Ridgeway expressed thanks to the outgoing officers and members of Council. Past President Wright commented that serving as an officer was a moving experience and “absolutely worth it.” He thanked the Association for being what it is and for the three years of service he was privileged to have. The tremendous amount of work done by the Secretary was recognized with kudos to outgoing Secretary Catherine White Berheide for doing an amazing job.

The last meeting of the 2012-2013 ASA Council was adjourned at 6:10 p.m. on Tuesday, August 13, 2013.