

Official Reports and Proceedings

2000-2001 Council Minutes

Tuesday, August 21, 2001

Present: Richard D. Alba, Elijah Anderson, Catherine White Berheide, William T. Bielby, Florence B. Bonner, Diane Brown, Michael Burawoy, Craig Calhoun, Nancy Denton, Joe R. Feagin, Richard Flacks, Arne L. Kalleberg, Nan Lin, Carole C. Marks, Douglas S. Massey, Ross Matsueda, Barbara F. Reskin, Barbara Risman, Lynn Smith-Lovin.

Absent: Paul J. DiMaggio

Incoming Council members: Linda M. Burton, Robert D. Crutchfield, Victor Nee, Ivan Szelenyi

Staff: Felice J. Levine, Carla B. Howery, Alfonso R. Latoni, Roberta Spalter-Roth, Phoebe H. Stevenson

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

2. Welcoming Remarks

President Massey thanked all Council members for their faithful service. He welcomed incoming Council members and expressed appreciation to outgoing members.

3. Report of the President

President Massey reported that the number of registrants at the Anaheim meeting was 4,105. Turnout at the meeting was even much lower than expected. The sessions, however, were very well attended, and attendees were pleased with the 4-day program. Some attendees hoped that the online program could be made available sooner. Massey noted that there has been considerable media interest in the Annual Meeting—with both a media presence and many media calls handled in the on-site media office.

Massey also reported on ASA's efforts to address human rights concerns specifically with regard to sociologists being arrested in China and Egypt. Two scholars imprisoned in China were released, and both have extended their appreciation to the Association for help in putting pressure on the Chinese government. Dr. Ibrahim is still imprisoned in Egypt. Massey indicated that overall the U.S. State Department has not been as aggressive in protecting and defending researchers who have been detained or arrested because of their scholarly work. He thanked Council for its timely review and approval of a resolution that was released on August 20, 2001 urging greater vigilance and action by the State Department to protect the rights and well-being of U.S. scholars, including those who are foreign born and those

who are permanent U.S. residence. Follow-up inquiries are expected from the media in response to this press release.

Massey introduced the film commissioned for the 2001 Annual Meeting. With support from the ASA and the University of Pennsylvania, this film entitled "Cities in Celluloid" was addressed to the Annual Meeting theme. Council members viewed the film and responded quite positively. They thought that the film could potentially be of use in sociology classes. President Massey indicated that he and Executive Officer Felice Levine will examine copyright arrangements and whether ASA could distribute and sell the film.

4. Report of the Secretary

Secretary Florence Bonner reported on ASA membership. As of July 20, the count was down by approximately 2.5 percent as compared with last year. Bonner commended the Executive Office, and the entire staff, for embarking on a series of outreach efforts to retain and recruit members. Some non-renewing members indicated that, since they were not attending the Annual Meeting in Anaheim, they would not renew this year. ASA continues to attract a healthy number of new members, with a solid representation from students. The retention rate was slightly lower when compared with previous years. One area of concern is how the decline in members might affect sections.

Bonner reported that, overall the total number of section memberships has increased in 2001 primarily due to memberships in Labor and Labor Movements, a new section-in-formation. The proportion of ASA members participating in sections has remained relatively stable at more than 60 percent. However, there are 11 sections that are below the 300-member minimum requirement, and most of these sections have been below the minimum numbers for two years. The Committee on Sections contacted these sections before the Annual meeting, to monitor the section membership and to help them.

Bonner reported on journal subscriptions, indicating that institutional subscriptions were only slightly below (1.6 percent) the same period last year. Vice President Richard Alba observed that the data from 1994 to 2000 show the number of journals per member subscriber is going down nontrivially (1.5 versus 1.25). The decline is continuous over this period, and it affects not only the specialty journals but also *American Sociological Review* (which experienced more than a 20 percent decline). Executive Officer Levine indicated that these data on member subscriptions are pertinent to the discussion about decoupling dues and journal subscriptions because the proportion of members in categories requiring two journals has declined.

Levine specifically addressed the issue of

institutional subscriptions. She noted that ASA journals experienced a smaller decline in institutional subscribers as compared to other learned societies. While she thought that the market might be close to saturation in the U.S., there are opportunities to expand the international markets especially through electronic publication. She indicated that she hopes that the drop by the end of the year would remain close to 1 percent as we experienced in 2000.

JSTOR subscriptions have remained consistent as compared to last year. Levine indicated that, while subscriptions have been healthy, actual usage has not been as high among those who subscribe. Therefore, the costs to ASA are lower than anticipated since charges also reflect use. JSTOR provides the opportunity for members to be able to access and search back issues online (five years and beyond).

5. Report of the Executive Officer

Executive Officer Levine thanked ASA staff for a wonderful job of ensuring smooth operations of the Association as well as preparing for the Annual Meeting. She indicated that the agenda itself reflected many of the important issues of substance occupying the Executive Office and thus that her opening remarks would be brief.

Levine commented further on the unusual membership renewal pattern this year. Initially, membership renewals were ahead of the prior year during the early months of the renewal cycle. During the data conversion at the Executive Office, no membership reports were available, and the 2nd renewal notices were sent later than usual. The slow down in the number of renewals occurred at the middle of the cycle. Further, these factors intersected with the Annual Meeting being held in Anaheim, a less attractive or convenient place for ASA members, even with a very appealing program. To address this situation, the Executive Office launched an aggressive outreach project. The outreach yielded many more renewals, but many members, who were not planning on attending the Annual Meeting, decided not to renew this year. Levine is hopeful that the coming year will be better, especially with efforts to reach out earlier, including partnering with sections on such issues as outreach to lapsed members of ASA and of specific sections.

Levine thanked Council for its support and for the opportunity to serve as Executive Officer.

6. Investment Report

Secretary Bonner reported that ASA's long-term investment portfolios did show losses given the market situation. Kenneth Siegel, the ASA investment manager at Fiduciary International cautioned that the outlook for the coming year is not optimistic. Bonner indicated that, despite the downturn, investments have

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been able to generate the necessary income to support the Rose Fund and the Executive Office lease. She noted that the Rose Fund must generate annual income to support the publication of *Contexts* and protect the principal necessary to maintain the *Rose Series* by the end of the support period for *Contexts*. She overruled ASA's investment manager's recommendation to reposition our asset mix for Rose—moving from a 60-40 mix to a 50-50 mix. Bonner also reported that ASA's bond holding has been increased and equity holding decreased in response to the volatile market. Bonner indicated that ASA is in a good position in the long run.

Executive Officer Levine addressed the concerns that Vice President Alba had raised in February regarding financial projections and the ability of the Rose Fund to yield the needed resources. Levine indicated that she had worked with Kenneth Siegel to reexamine projections and to make the necessary adjustments to the asset allocation to ensure the ability to meet the needs of *Contexts*. Council discussed whether the 50-50 mix will yield the annual income needs from the Rose Fund. Levine indicated that the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget (EOB) thought that this allocation was reasonable at this point. She noted that Fiduciary International is vigilant in monitoring requirements for this account and that there is also considerable interaction with the Executive Office and discussion at meetings of the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget (EOB).

Council member Craig Calhoun requested that more comprehensive information be presented when describing the overall performance of the accounts within the ASA portfolio. Past President Joe Feagin urged that the proportion of ASA's investment in stocks be further reduced during this time when the economy is so uncertain. Council appreciated the cautious approach of the Executive Office and the EOB and reiterated the importance of the Association's risk-adverse nature.

7. 2000 Final Audit and Financial Report

Bonner reported that the 2000 audit has been completed and that the Association's financial affairs are in good order. She also reported on the new practice of the auditor interviewing the Secretary to ensure good financial management and spending by the Executive Office. This new practice was put in place last year for all non-profit organizations.

Bonner reported that the 2000 budget year ended on a positive note. The excess of revenue over expenditure is mostly due to above budget revenues in subscriptions, publication sales, and the Annual Meeting and below expenditure predictions for governance expenses and the Annual Meeting.

8. COLA Adjustment for Membership Dues

Secretary Bonner and Executive Officer

Levine reported on the recommendation from the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget to return to the annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) increase with the 2002 dues renewal. EOB recommended an adjustment of 2.5 percent. Bonner and Levine reminded Council that dues had been kept at the 1999 rate in 2000 and 2001 pending review of the dues structure. Since the mid-1980s, the Association had raised dues by COLA on an annual basis.

Council member Lynn Smith-Lovin asked if ASA could hold dues at the same level for another year while the Association waited for the outcome of the referendum. Executive Officer Levine indicated that the COLA adjustment is independent of the referendum change—although the COLA adjustment will only be applied to the dues portion and not to required subscription rates if the referendum passes. She indicated that EOB thought the Association should return to the general practice of a COLA adjustment. Council asked whether there is a financial need to reinstate COLA. Levine indicated that there was insofar as projected membership dues income and income from Annual Meeting are lower than budgeted and, in that sense, the revenue picture is tighter than in prior years.

Motion: To approve a COLA increase of 2.5 percent for the 2002 Dues. Carried (yes, 11; no, 2).

9. Decoupling of Dues and Journals Subscriptions

Secretary Bonner and Executive Officer Levine provided a brief update on the status of Council's decision in February to recommend decoupling dues and required journal subscriptions. Council had approved taking a referendum to the membership that would decouple dues while requiring all members to subscribe to one journal. In February, Council asked EOB to work on final costs with specific consideration to preserving the neutrality of combined costs of dues and journals for all categories of members, especially for students. At its August meeting, EOB had considered rates that achieved this goal and provided additional subsidy to students to encourage their subscribing to journals. Levine presented a table showing the costs under the current "coupled" and proposed "decoupled" plans for all dues levels.

Council thought that the proposed plan achieved Council's intent. Council discussed the importance of the referendum being accompanied by a clear explanation of the change. Council members thought it unlikely that ASA members would recall the *Footnotes* story in any detail.

Motion: To approve the 2002 dues rates as proposed. Carried unanimously.

Council considered the request that was presented at the Business Meeting to include pro

and con statements about the proposed change in the dues structure. The issue was brought to the Business Meeting by co-editor of the *Rose Series* Dan Clawson who inquired about the possibility of presenting a "counter" view to make clear the advantages and disadvantages. President Massey indicated that it would be useful to include pro and con statements to ensure that voting members were aware of the care that went into Council's recommendation and that the intent is to make transparent both the advantages and disadvantages to voting members.

Council discussed different approaches to providing members with information on the referendum. Council concluded that it would be best to present the pros and cons without seeking to define who supported which views. Council appreciated that editors wanted to be sure that members understood the advantages and disadvantages as they were voting.

Executive Officer Levine indicated that she and incoming Secretary Kalleberg could craft such a statement outlining both the pros and cons. She noted that they were well positioned to do so—having weighed many considerations in arriving at the recommended plan. She indicated that this draft could be circulated to the editors and Council for review. Council thought this approach made sense and suggested that editors be informed so that they were aware that their recommendation for a "counter" statement was being addressed.

Council discussed some of the pros and cons that they had previously considered in making the recommendation in February. Council members agreed that it was hard to forecast how the change would affect member reading and purchasing preferences. Vice President Alba indicated that he was concerned that ASA is introducing a change in the dues/subscription structure while, at the same time, introducing a new journal. He was concerned that members wishing to reduce the amount that they pay would only subscribe to one journal. He was also concerned that, if members chose *Contexts*, it could erode support for journals publishing original research. Alba suggested that *Contexts* should not be included as a required choice in the mix of ASA-wide journals until a period of time has passed to assess the impact of the dues restructuring. Levine indicated that historically no ASA-wide journal has been excluded as a member required choice.

Council member Nancy Denton raised the issue of section-sponsored journals. Levine clarified that, prior to the adoption of the Guidelines for the ASA Publications Portfolio in February 1999, sections were not permitted to sponsor journals. The Guidelines make possible the Publications Committee and ASA Council approving section journals under a specific set of conditions, including requiring subscriptions from all section members. Levine also clarified that the Guidelines do not classify ASA-wide journals as "general" and sec-

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tion-sponsored journals as "specialty." Council member Calhoun suggested that we should proceed as planned understanding that, in the coming years, ASA may need to deal further with the distinctions among ASA-wide general and specialty journals, section-sponsored journals, and *Contexts*.

Council member Diane Brown asked whether ASA should think about a discount for members subscribing to more than two journals. Levine indicated that the Publications Committee had suggested the possibility of creating a "package deal" for purchasing more ASA journals. While EOB also reflected on this possibility, it seemed wise to bring to the members a simple and direct referendum rather than seek to have members consider a number of packaging options.

Motion: To include *Contexts* with other ASA journals in the cafeteria plan. Carried unanimously with 2 abstentions.

Council returned to a discussion of ASA-wide general and specialty journals and section-sponsored journals. Council members sought to craft a number of motions with friendly amendments but none was duly seconded. Levine indicated that the Publication Committee spent considerable effort developing the Guidelines for the ASA Publications Portfolio which addressed the distinction between ASA-wide journals and section-sponsored journals. She noted that these Guidelines were also reviewed and adopted by Council. Levine suggested that Council might make a request to the Publications Committee rather than making a formal motion.

Motion: Noting the changing mix of ASA publications and the decoupling of dues and journal subscriptions, Council seeks the advice of Publications Committee as to whether the definition of "ASA-wide journal" and "section-sponsored" remains adequate. This review is needed by 2004 to inform the first mandated review of *Contexts*.

Past-Vice President Lin suggested that the motion be tabled until January when ASA would know the results of the membership referendum. Motion to table carried (yes, 11; no, 4).

10. Task Forces and Status Committees

Executive Officer Levine indicated that, because some Council liaisons were rotating off of Council at the conclusion of this meeting, President Massey and President-elect Reskin have scheduled their reports to be on the agenda for this Council meeting. Levine overviewed the work of the Council Subcommittee on Task Forces (Chair Kate Berheide, Nancy Denton, Paul DiMaggio, and Levine). She also reminded Council that it had approved via e-mail the recommended composition of the Task Force on the Undergraduate Sociology Curriculum. Outgoing Council member Kate Berheide was asked by Council to chair this Task Force (she

did not participate in this e-mail selection). Berheide indicated that she had convened a meeting of Task Force members present in Anaheim. She noted that the full group would meet in the late fall or early winter.

Berheide continued the report of the Council Subcommittee on Task Forces. She indicated that the Subcommittee had invested considerable effort in preparing a slate of nominees for both the Task Force on Contingent Employment in the Academic Workplace and the Task Force on Opportunities Beyond Graduate Education: Postdoctoral Training and Career Trajectories. Because the number of self-nominations for these task forces was low, the Subcommittee worked as a group to identify a broad and diverse slate.

Berheide circulated the rank-ordered list of nominees for both of these Task Forces. Council responded favorably to the slate with some suggested modifications.

Motion: to approve the suggested list for the Task Force on Contingent Employment in the Academic Workplace, as proposed with amendments. Carried unanimously.

Motion: to approve the suggested list for the Task Force on Opportunities Beyond Graduate Education: Postdoctoral Training and Career Trajectories, as proposed, deferring to President Reskin the appointment of chair and any amendments as may be necessary. Carried unanimously.

Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities in Sociology. Staff Liaison Carla Howery and Council Liaison Kate Berheide reported on the activities of this Committee, which have primarily centered on the accessibility of the Annual Meeting. At the 2001 Committee meeting, the group addressed programmatic issues, such as doing research when the sample includes persons with disability (e.g., how to interview persons with particular disabilities). The Committee wants to provide an opportunity for persons with specialties in disabilities to meet at the Annual Meeting, such as during the "Other Group Activities" slots. The Committee will submit proposals to the 2002 and 2003 Annual Meeting Program Committees.

Committee on the Status of Women in Sociology. Staff Liaison Roberta Spalter-Roth and Council Liaison Barbara Risman reported that the Committee continues its interest in available data on the status of women, including trend data on women's participation in ASA. Over the winter and spring, the Executive Office provided members with data and data sets for them to review and analyze.

Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in Sociology. Staff Liaison Alfonso Latoni and Council Liaison Ross Matsueda reported that Verna Keith will be stepping down as chair at the end of the calendar year, but will remain on as member. With some members departing and others commencing terms, the Committee composition will change in 2002. Only a few members came to the meeting in

Anaheim. The Committee had received data from the ASA Executive Office. At the meeting, there was some discussion as to whether to collect qualitative data to augment the quantitative data.

Committee on the Status of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered (GLBT) Persons in Sociology. Staff Liaison Roberta Spalter-Roth and Council Liaison Richard Flacks provided an update on the Committee's activities. The Committee is making progress in collecting data on the following: (1) articles on GLBT topics in a broad selection of sociological journals from 1960-2000; (2) papers and roundtables on GLBT topics presented at the ASA Annual Meetings from 1986-2000; and (3) books reviewed on GLBT topics in journals, Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline grants on GLBT topics, and support for graduate student research. A report is expected in 2002.

Task Force on the Reexamination of COC and CON. Vice President Alba and Council member Berheide provided a brief overview of the work of this Task Force. The key recommendation of this Task Force—to reconstitute the Committee on Committees (COC) with an altered structure and scope—was supported by Council in February. Members will be voting on it as part of the referendum. Council was pleased that there were supportive comments and essentially no negative comments about the restoration of COC.

Alba and Berheide also reported that at its August meeting the Task Force considered a number of possibilities regarding the nomination process and the Committee on Nominations (CON). These include: (1) that Council members receive a more extensive statement on diversity guidelines; (2) that a task force be reconstituted in four years to review the guidelines and results of implementation; (3) that ASA move forward as soon as possible to create a relational database so that information about persons who can be potential nominees can be easily created; and (4) that there be some tracking of networks for names, where nominations come from (e.g., *Footnotes*), and any patterns in declination of candidates who are asked to run.

Task Force on ASA Journal Diversity. Council member Carole Marks (Vice Chair of the Task Force) reported that the Task Force is interested in (1) an analysis of content, (2) a review of process (submission, review, feedback), and (3) strategies of outreach to encourage submissions. She indicated that the Task Force would divide into subgroups around these issues and would be meeting during the 2001-2002 year to accelerate the pace. Conference calls are also likely to be held.

Task Force on Current Knowledge on Hate/Bias on Campuses. Hate Crimes. Staff Liaison Levine and Council Liaison Marks said that the Task Force has submitted a report. Levine indicated that it was important for Council to digest the

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report and request any further clarification or information it might wish. She noted that the Task Force was interested in Council's view and pursuing any next steps that might be useful.

Task Force on Articulation of Sociology in Two-Year and Four-Year Sociology Programs. Staff liaison Howery and Council Liaison Berheide described the activities of the Task Force. Members have summarized articulation agreements in a number of states. The chair, Rhonda Zingraff, made a presentation to the chair conference and sought their feedback. The Task Force's goal is to provide a report and craft a handbook for two- and four-year schools addressed to the transfer of sociology credits.

Task Force on an ASA Statement of Race. Staff liaison Roberta Spalter-Roth and Council Liaison Diane Brown indicated that the Task Force has been constituted under the leadership of Troy Duster as chair. Duster convened an initial meeting in Anaheim that provided a useful opportunity to share ideas, consider background documents, and discuss how best to proceed. The Task Force will meet again in the fall. The Task Force aims to have a statement ready for Council's consideration in August 2002.

Executive Session

Council concluded by meeting in Executive Session.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.