

# 2023 Section Annual Report, ASA Sociology of Religion Section, Part 1

2022-2023 Chair | Tricia C. Bruce, PhD

2023-2024 Chair | Grace Yukich, PhD

2022-2023 Secretary/Treasurer | Damon Mayrl, PhD

---

## Table of Contents

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>                        | <b>1</b> |
| <b>SECTION GOVERNANCE .....</b>                  | <b>2</b> |
| BUSINESS MEETING .....                           | 2        |
| COUNCIL MEETING .....                            | 3        |
| <b>AWARDS .....</b>                              | <b>3</b> |
| DISTINGUISHED BOOK AWARD .....                   | 3        |
| DISTINGUISHED ARTICLE AWARD .....                | 4        |
| STUDENT PAPER AWARD .....                        | 4        |
| SANDRA BARNES ANTI-RACIST SCHOLARSHIP AWARD..... | 4        |
| EARLY CAREER AWARD .....                         | 4        |
| STUDENT TRAVEL GRANTS.....                       | 4        |
| KORIE LITTLE EDWARDS RESEARCH GRANT .....        | 4        |
| <b>2023 FINANCES.....</b>                        | <b>4</b> |
| <b>THE PREVIOUS YEAR.....</b>                    | <b>5</b> |
| COMMUNICATIONS.....                              | 5        |
| DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION.....            | 6        |
| ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAMMING .....                 | 6        |
| PROGRAMMING OUTSIDE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING .....  | 8        |

---

## Introduction

This annual report covers the period of Section activity from September 2022 to August 2023 and a fiscal year from January 2023 to December 2023.

## Section Governance

Between September 2022 and August 2023, Section governance occurred through Council Meetings and an in-person Business Meeting. Minutes below.

### Business Meeting

#### ASA Religion Section Business Meeting Minutes

Saturday, August 19, 2023

Attendees: Tricia Bruce (Chair), Grace Yukich (Chair-Elect), Damon Mayrl (Secretary/Treasurer), Valentina Cantori, Evan Stewart, Meredith Whitnah, Rebecca Karam, Anna Strhan, Ruth Braunstein, Tia Noelle Pratt, Lucas Sharma, Daniel Winchester, Erin Johnston, Jacqui Frost, Daniel Cueto-Villalobos, Landon Schnabel, Rachel Ellis, Lisa Pearce, Johannah Palomo, Tess Starman, Anna Holleman, Philip Schwadel, Patricia Snell Herzog, Stephen Hawkins, Shai Dromi, Rebecca Li, Kevin Christiano, Md A Sabur, Jonathan Coley, Camillus Njoku, Bernard DiGregorio, Eylem Kanol, Nicolette Manglos-Weber, Yusuf Ziya Karipek, Asena Karipek, Guillermo Flores, Joseph Roso, Gary Adler, Kayla Kemp

The Business Meeting is called to order at 1:05PM.

Tricia thanks the officers and council, the nominations committee, session organizers, and our section partners at the Association for the Sociology of Religion and the Louisville Institute.

A motion (moved by Grace and seconded by Damon) to approve the 2022 Business Meeting minutes is approved.

Damon gives the budget and membership reports.

Tricia recaps the morning's Council meeting: the Council discussed ways to finance grants, approved a proposal to amend the bylaws (a proposal that will go before the section for a vote this year), and is working on a set of action steps to increase membership. Tricia reminds everyone that ASA Connect is sunseting and that we're going back to the listserv.

Tricia solicits any business from the floor. One member suggests we give more mentorship to graduate students.

Tricia then announces the Section's awards and grants, to great applause.

Tricia issues a call for volunteers to work on section committees, and reminds attendees to attend the joint reception this evening co-sponsored with ASR.

Damon encourages attendees to submit pitches to *Contexts*.

Tricia welcomes Grace Yukich as new section chair; Grace accepts graciously and says she looks forward to working with everyone.

The Business Meeting adjourns at 1:40PM.

## Council Meeting

### ASA Religion Section Council Minutes

Saturday, August 19, 2023

Present: Tricia Bruce, Grace Yukich, Damon Mayrl, Nicolette Manglos-Weber, Tia Pratt, Rachel Ellis, Jacqui Frost, Valentina Cantori; Amy Adamczyk, Kraig Beyerlein, Rebecca Kim via Zoom

Tricia welcomes everyone. A motion to approve 2022 Council minutes is moved by Rachel, seconded by Grace, and approved. A motion to approve 2022 Business minutes is moved by Damon, seconded by Rachel, and approved.

Tricia thanks committee members, encourages Council to build and expand membership, provides an update on communications initiatives (including website and ASA Connect [RIP]), and thanks Louisville Institute and ASR for collaborations.

Damon gives the budget and membership reports. Council discusses how to place the KLE and student travel grants on a firmer financial footing. Conversation centered on the value the grants provide to graduate students and as an indicator of our commitment to antiracism as a priority. Sense of council is to continue supporting grants, consider raising dues, make regular requests for donations from Section members, and evaluate the success and sustainability of KLE grants at five-year mark (2026). (NOTE: A motion to send a proposed dues increase to section members was moved by Tricia, seconded by Damon, and unanimously approved by Council via email on September 11, 2023.)

Council discusses potential membership initiatives. An ad hoc committee will be formed to act on the 2019 membership committee report's recommendations and other ideas raised.

Discussion concluded with a proposal to adjust the bylaws to clean up language, and to discourage ASA/ASR leadership overlaps and bylaw adjustment. Support for the proposal once "preferably" is removed from draft language. Tricia moves to proceed with a bylaw change so amended, Nicolette seconds, and the motion is passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned 7:50AM.

## Awards

The following awards were conferred by the Sociology of Religion Section in 2023.

### Distinguished Book Award

*Smart Suits, Tattered Boots: Black Ministers Mobilizing the Black Church in the Twenty-First Century* by Korie Little Edwards and Michelle Oyakawa (NYU Press, 2022)

#### Distinguished Article Award

Ruth Braunstein (University of Connecticut), "A Theory of Political Backlash: Assessing the Religious Right's Effects on the Religious Field"

Honorable Mention: Jesse Smith (Benedictine College) and Gary Adler (Penn State University), "What Isn't Christian Nationalism: A Call for Conceptual and Empirical Splitting"

#### Student Paper Award

Miray Philips (University of Toronto), "(Mis-)Representing Christian Persecution: On the Political Misuses of Quantification in Advocacy."

Honorable Mention: Md Abdus Sabur (University of Massachusetts Amherst ), "Gender, Veiling, and Class: Symbolic Boundaries and Veiling in Bengali Muslim Families."

#### Sandra Barnes Anti-Racist Scholarship Award

Prema Kurien (Syracuse University)

#### Early Career Award

Landon Schnabel (Cornell University)

#### Student Travel Grants

Md. Abdus Sabur, University of Massachusetts Amherst, "Migration, Gender, and Class: Religious Practices and Extra-religious Ends"

Bernard D. DiGregorio, West Virginia University, "Perceptions of Group Boundaries between Amish and Non-Amish during the COVID-19 Pandemic"

Ruiqian (Richie) Li, Baylor University, "Secularized Culture Framework or Conservative Protestantism? How the ethno-based Christian Nationalism is misunderstood"

#### Korie Little Edwards Research Grant

Isaiah G. Jeong (University of Illinois-Chicago)

## 2023 Finances

Our 2023 budget came in at a slight deficit, but a much smaller deficit than was anticipated in the estimated budget for 2023 approved by Council in 2022. The primary reason for this was the smaller number of travel and research grants awarded by the section. With these awards, the section is running a slight deficit, but the section highly values them and is taking steps to place them on a sounder financial footing with the proposed dues increase.

## The Previous Year

This part of the report summarizes Section activities during the period between September 2022 and August 2023.

### Communications

As a Section, we value transparency, regular communication, member inclusion, and ways to celebrate the great scholarship and contributions of our members. Our communication efforts in 2022-2023 were guided by these values, with particular goals of (1) debuting ASA Connect as a platform to connect membership and (2) bringing our communications up-to-date with an eye toward reasonable management strategies.

#### **Mentoring Session**

Room: Red and Clover, 1st floor

This is a joint ASA Religion Section and ASR Event open to ASR and ASA attendees

Food and beverages provided in part by the ASA Religion Section

#### **Table 1: Writing Productively**

Scott Desmond, Indiana Univ. Purdue Univ. Columbus

Rachel Ellis, Univ. of Maryland

#### **Table 2: Surviving and Thriving in the Research-Focused Job Market**

Jualynne E. Dodson, Michigan State Univ.

Jeffrey Guhin, Univ. of California, Los Angeles

#### **Table 3: Surviving and Thriving in the Teaching-Focused Job Market**

Robert Brenneman, Goshen College

Maureen K. Day, Franciscan School of Theology

Damon Mayrl, Colby College

#### **Table 4: Publishing Articles**

Jonathan S. Coley, Oklahoma State Univ.

Patricia Snell Herzog, Indiana Univ.

Jaime Kucinkas, Hamilton College

#### **Table 5: Preparing Early for the Job Market**

David Eagle, Duke Univ.

Courtney Irby, Illinois Wesleyan Univ.

Nicolette Manglos-Weber, Boston Univ.

#### **Table 6: Preparing for the Non-Academic Job Market**

Ilana Horwitz, Tulane Univ.

Michelle Mueller, California Institute of Integral Studies

#### **Table 7: Grant Writing**

Prema Kurien, Syracuse Univ.

Lisa Pearce, Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

**Goal #1:** The Sociology of Religion Section, as with all ASA Sections, debuted (and ultimately sunsetted) the ASA Connect communication platform this year. While initially intimidating, we found the tools amenable to providing members with regular updates regarding section activities and opportunities. One strength of the system was in its dispersion of responsibility across members rather than solely within the Chair – i.e., members could post publication announcements, CFPs, job postings, and more themselves. At times it was unclear whether the messages were actually reaching members, however. The Chair’s regular updates to the “Announcement” posting, for example, did not seem to reach member inboxes. Members did not seem to log into ASA Connect regularly, nor did it emerge as a place to dialogue and interact. Our membership is prepared to return to the listserv, where the Chair will hold greater visibility and responsibility (which has advantages and disadvantages, itself).

**Goal #2:** In addition to ASA Connect, the Section worked this year to clean up its public-facing online presence. We shut down a Section-specific website that previously tracked Section activities, leaders, awards, and the like – given that it had not been updated in

a year and that we do not have consistent resources to manage this website. Moreover, the Section opted to use the ASA-provided resource of the Section webpage attached to ASA as the primary platform for Section updates. Further, we used our Section X [Twitter] account to

announce calls for Section awards and papers, to celebrate members, and to activate membership during the in-person meeting. The Section will continue to monitor X as an evolving platform.

All told, we did achieve goals (1) and (2), but will continue to adapt our communication strategies in the coming year.

#### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Our work as a Section continues to elevate the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We especially seek to increase BIPOC membership and celebrate anti-racist scholarship on religion. Our recently-established Diversity and Inclusion Committee once again convened to review and extend our Section' DEI efforts, with a particular focus on creative ways to sustain financial support for our newer Korie Little Edwards Research Grant. This grant supports research conducted by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) members of the Sociology of Religion section. We additionally awarded the Sandra Barnes Anti-Racist Scholarship Award, encouraging sociologists of religion to engage in anti-racist scholarship that critically examines the intersection of religion and race, particularly work that challenges racist systems and structures.

We further met our DEI goals by once again offering mentoring tables to support belonging and development among graduate students and all in the section (See Inset Box).

#### Annual Meeting Programming

Our primary programming activities occur at the annual meeting, with the goals of generating dialogue around new scholarship, interdisciplinary connections, networking, and participation. This year's sessions featured connection between religion and education and religion and justice as well as open-themed sessions to welcome cutting-edge scholarship. Our well-attended roundtables provided another opportunity to present new research with dedicated feedback in a less formal setting. Session details are included below. In addition to our sessions and roundtables (and mentoring session, detailed above), the Section also hosted a reception co-sponsored by the Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR). This reception well-attended, meeting goals of participation, networking, and celebrating member achievements through award recognition. We also received funds from the Louisville Institute in support of this reception.

## Moral Life and Inequality at the Intersection of Religion and Education

Sat, August 19, 8:00 to 9:30am, Marriott Philadelphia Downtown, Floor: Level 4, Franklin Hall 5

Session Submission Type: Paper Session (90 min)

### Description

Schools and Religions are two of the most vital institutions in human history, especially regarding questions of moral cultivation and mechanisms of inequality. Yet their intersection is too rarely acknowledged. This panel explores what the study of schools and the study of religions have to say to each other and how their interaction might develop broader sociological conversations about moral life, culture, and inequality. How are schools—even seemingly secular schools—actually religious? How are religious locations inevitably educative? We welcome all submissions at the meeting of education and religion, with special encouragement for those that emphasize contexts outside of Christianity and/or the Global North.

### Sub Unit

Section on Sociology of Religion / Moral Life and Inequality at the Intersection of Religion and Education

### Session Organizer

Jeffrey Guhin, University of California-Los Angeles

### Presider

Jeffrey Guhin, University of California-Los Angeles

### Individual Presentations

Is Religious Pluralism Concentrated Among the Elite? A Longitudinal Study of College Students - *Iliana Horwitz, Tulane University; David Song, University of Oklahoma*

Mapping the Contours of Citizenship, Religion, and Education in "Postsecular" Britain - *Anna Strhan, University of York; Joanna Malone, University of York; Peter Hemming, University of Surrey; Sarah Neal, University of Sheffield*

Traditional vs. Cool vs. Light Islam: A Comparison of Three Suburban Weekend Schools - *Kemal Budak, Emory University*

Theorizing Diversity as Civil Religion in US Higher Education - *Krystal Laryea, Stanford; Mitchell L. Stevens, Stanford University*

### Discussant

Jeffrey Guhin, University of California-Los Angeles

## Open Session in the Sociology of Religion

Sat, August 19, 10:00 to 11:30am, Marriott Philadelphia Downtown, Floor: Level 4, Franklin Hall 5

Session Submission Type: Paper Session (90 min)

### Description

The papers in this session examine how religious groups relate to and engage the broader society.

### Sub Unit

Section on Sociology of Religion / Open Session in the Sociology of Religion

### Session Organizer

Jonathan Coley, Oklahoma State University

### Presider

Gary Adler, Pennsylvania State University

### Individual Presentations

Styles of Public Islam: Public Religious Expressions among American Muslim Advocates - *Valentina Cantori, University of Southern California*

Withdrawal, Introspection, Mobilization: How Twin Cities Congregations Responded to the Twin Crises of 2020 - *Daniel Cueto-Villalobos, Laura Mandeville Gilbertson, Bethel University; Penny Edgell, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities*

Contrasting patterns in the political engagement of highly religious young Catholics in France and Italy - *Fabio Bolzonar, Waseda University*

Religious Dissolution and the Crisis of Liberalism: Inside a Christian Brotherhood and a Masonic Lodge - *Graham Wilson Hill, University of Bern*

### Religion and Justice: The Transformative Power of Religion in the Criminal Legal System

Sat, August 19, 2:00 to 3:30pm, Marriott Philadelphia Downtown, Floor: Level 4, Franklin Hall 5

Session Submission Type: Paper Session (90 min)

#### Description

Religious groups in the United States have a lot to say – and a lot to do – when it comes to inequalities in the criminal legal system. From policing and use of force to mass incarceration and capital punishment, many religious communities and parachurch organizations have been engaged on the ground floor, working towards transformative social change. This can take many forms, from involvement in Black Lives Matter protests, to community bail fund initiatives, to decarceration efforts, to death penalty advocacy and more. We welcome papers on these and related empirical and/or theoretical explorations of religion and justice. What does religious involvement look like, and how does it vary across faith communities? What role do faith-based organizations play when working within justice-adjacent institutions? How do practitioners make sense of their activism, and how do they maintain their efforts in the face of conflict or setbacks? Broadly, how can the sociology of religion contribute to dialogues, and ultimately social change, around policing and punishment in the contemporary U.S.?

#### Sub Unit

Section on Sociology of Religion / Religion and Justice: The Transformative Power of Religion in the Criminal Legal System

#### Session Organizer

Rachel Ellis, University of Maryland-College Park

#### Presider

Rachel Ellis, University of Maryland-College Park

#### Individual Presentations

Church, Cash, and Cowboys: How Philosophies of God and Money Shape Judicial Decisions in Texas - Tauheeda Yasin, University of Texas-Austin

Finding Freedom through Religion in a Women's Prison - Rachel Ellis, University of Maryland-College Park

How Modalities of Education Shape Attitudes Toward Abolition and Criminal Justice Reform among Black Christians - Katherine Durante, University of Utah; Shaonta'E. Allen, Dartmouth College

#### Discussant

Rebecca Wolfe, UCSF

## Sociology of Religion Roundtables

In Event: *Sociology of Religion Roundtables*

Sat, August 19, 12:00 to 1:00pm, Pennsylvania Convention Center, Floor: 100 Level, 113B

Session Submission Type: Refereed Roundtable (60 min)

#### Sub Unit

Section on Sociology of Religion / Sociology of Religion Roundtables

#### Session Organizers

Eisar Haider

Miray Hany Wadie Philips, University of Minnesota



Our primary mode of programming outside of the Annual Meeting links back to our communication strategies, connecting members to each other and to relevant professional opportunities asynchronously. ASA Connect provided a new platform to share news, events, and opportunities. We also promoted and cross-connected with the events of related associations, including the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and Religious Research Association. Council opted not to organize separate virtual programming this year due in part to “Zoom-fatigue” expressed by Section members.