

1999-2000 Council Minutes

Saturday, January 29, 2000

President Joe Feagin convened the 1999-2000 Council at 9:00 a.m.

Present: Richard Alba, Catherine White Berheide, William T. Bielby, Florence Bonner, Diane Brown, Nancy Denton, Paul DiMaggio, Paula England, Joe R. Feagin, Michael Hout, Carole Marks, Douglas S. Massey, Melvin Oliver, Alejandro Portes, Patricia Roos, Ann Swidler, Robert Wuthnow

Staff: Felice J. Levine, Phoebe H. Stevenson, Carla B. Howery, Edward Murguia, Roberta Spalter-Roth, and Svetlana Durkovic

Absent: Nan Lin, Ross Matsueda

1. Approval of the Agenda and Minutes

The agenda was approved as amended. The minutes of the August 1999 meeting will be reviewed and approved tomorrow.

2. Report of the President

President Feagin informed the Council of the 2000 Annual Meeting plans; 108 sessions are planned with 23 thematic sessions, 106 special sessions, 96 workshops, 9 author meets critics, and 6 policy sessions. The three plenary sessions will address the theme of "Oppression, Domination, and Liberation."

3. Report of the President-elect

President-elect Douglas S. Massey informed the Council about the Annual Meeting plans for 2001. The 2001 Program Committee will meet next week in Anaheim, CA. Everything seems to be moving according to the schedule, and the Committee has some innovations in mind to maximize the meeting site.

4. Report of the Secretary

Secretary Florence Bonner provided a brief summary of the reports on membership, sections, and subscriptions. She noted that membership broke the 13,000 level in 1990 and has been growing ever since. However, the 1999 membership year ended just slightly under 1998's final count. While 1999 member retention and recruitment of new members remain consistent with 1998, the drop in membership can be attributed to a drop in the recruitment of formerly lapsed members. The Executive Office continues to follow membership renewals in order to monitor retention. The student membership base remains strong. She also noted several membership outreach efforts, such as to members of the

Eastern Sociological Society, the American Association of University Professors, and sections of the American Public Health Association.

Section membership increased by almost 500 members as compared to last year. Over the decade, the number of section members has grown from 18,019 to 19,605. Of the 39 sections, only seven showed a decline in membership, with Marxist Sociology showing the largest decline of 9%. In general, 65% of all ASA members are section members, with an average number of 2.3 section memberships. Students comprise 34% of the section membership. Seven sections are below the 300 minimum membership mark. Bonner summarized EOB's discussion about this issue and their conclusion that on qualitative criteria, these sections are vital and should be continued. Council discussed various alternatives in the funding formula for sections. The current base funding of \$1000 plus \$2 for each member is costly for the Association to support small sections. Once membership numbers started falling below the minimum requirement, the EOB felt the base support for those sections should be reduced.

Institutional subscriptions continue to decline with a loss of 310 subscribers since last year. A similar pattern holds for other associations. Library budgets are not increasing and there is more pressure to offer subscriptions electronically. Some institutions that had multiple subscriptions to a single ASA journal at various locations around the campus are now consolidating into one subscription. Executive Officer Levine indicated efforts to work collaboratively with the American Council of Learned Societies and with subscription agencies to increase institutional subscriptions. She noted an effort to contact 1999 subscribers who have not renewed for 2000. The Executive Office will continue to track institutional subscription data in order to follow up with institutions and to inform the ASA Council. Council member Hout suggested the possibility of offering various bundling rates that would reduce the total institutional subscription cost and yet retain the current subscriptions.

Levine reviewed ASA investments, noting that ASA's portfolios have shown positive growth since 1995. ASA is working with Fiduciary Trust International, which has provided the ASA with a different portfolio as the market has shifted from growth to value stocks and back again. The goal for these investments is to receive a return close to the S & P 500, from which interest can be used to fund ASA operations and programs. She noted that EOB discussed the possibility of placing some funds with Merrill Lynch, which presented a value investment approach for the proceeds from the sale of the former Executive Office building. EOB chose Fiduciary that presented three different aggressive plans and the ASA chose one of them (20% in equity, 30% in convertibles, and 40% in investment grade bonds). The ASA expects 10% annual return with this plan, which will produce the approximately \$75,000 needed each year for the Executive Office to fund the annual lease and operating costs.

5. Report of the Executive Officer

Executive Officer Felice J. Levine summarized some of the highlights of the year.

The state of the Association is one of good health and well being. The programs are running effectively, as was evidenced in the presentations by program directors last evening.

Member contributions have been steady. The contributions received for the Minority Fellowship Program help fund one non-NIMH fellow a year. Similarly, other smaller contributions within the MFP also help underwrite non-NIMH fellows each year. As the Association is looking forward to 2005, its centennial year, the Association is hoping to leave a mark for the discipline and its future by launching a capital campaign. She acknowledged the help and support of Past-president Portes and President Feagin in this regard.

Levine noted that Norman Bradburn has been named the Assistant Director for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences for the National Science Foundation.

She highlighted that working with sections has been fruitful this year. The Section on Sociology of Education and ASA are collaborating to sponsor a conference, funded by the Spencer Foundation. The planning committee, consisting of Michael Hout, Pamela Walters, and Felice Levine worked on organizing a conference on Sociology and Education to take place March 1-3, 2000. ASA is also working with the Section on Undergraduate Education to offer a workshop on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in July 2000, funded in part by the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

The ASA has been involved in planning a conference with the NIH on "Toward Higher Levels of Analysis: Progress and Promise in Research on Social and Cultural Dimensions of Health," which will take place in Bethesda, MD, in June 2000.

Levine thanked the ASA Council for its very active help in communicating various issues concerning the discipline and on-going plans and projects during the past six months.

President Feagin stated that he plans on setting up a small group to organize a conference dealing with the future direction of the *ASR*. This conference would be part of the Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. The idea is to have a broad conference, and Michael Hout and Carole Marks have already agreed to co-chair a committee to organize such a conference.

Levine reminded Council of the resolution from last Council's meeting to include other journals in the discussion of the ASA publications portfolio, and not be

limited to ASR alone. This issue will be discussed tomorrow after the minutes are reviewed and approved.

6. ASA Sections

Final Language for Proposed By-Laws Change Relating to the Composition of the Committee on Sections (COS). Levine briefed the Council about the background concerning the restructuring of the COS. Last August, Council had considered a motion from section officers about enlarging the COS and ensuring representation from sections of different sizes. The section proposal would require a bylaw change. Thus, if Council accepts the proposed language, the referendum will be placed on the ballot at the 2000 ASA Election.

Council discussed the merits and limitations of stratifying sections by size. Vice President-elect Alba inquired about the membership structure proposed for COS and why it would include only current section chairs and not all section members. Council member England, liaison to COS, stated that section officers were very committed to this proposed structure.

Motion: To approve the following language in Article V. Committees, Section 5. Committee on Sections and to place it on the spring 2000 ballot:

(b) The Committee on Sections shall consist of nine members. Six members shall be appointed by Council for three-year terms based on the recommendation of the President. Three of these members shall be appointed from among the Association membership and three shall be appointed from among the Council members-at-large. Three members shall also be elected for three-year terms by current section chairs from among current section chairs according to section membership size. All terms will be staggered. Carried (yes,14; no, 0; abstain, 1).

Budget Allocation for Sections. Council also discussed the issue of sections whose membership dips below the 300 minimum requirement. Some felt that only sections over 300 should be eligible to participate in the voting process. Council discussed generally the procedures to help sections meet and exceed the 300 threshold.

Bonner indicated that the strategy for sections with membership below 300 will be phased-in over three years. After that period of time those sections failing to meet the membership requirement would be discontinued. Levine stated that Craig Jenkins, Chair of the COS, would be working closely with those sections.

Bonner stated that currently there are seven sections with membership numbers below 300 level. This proportional formula will be implemented in 2001 as to give enough time to sections to be informed.

Council member Swidler argued that the procedure seems brutally mechanical and number oriented and guarantees certain "death" of some sections.

England stated that the ASA does not have a procedure for the discontinuation of sections. Even without the allocated base money, the section will still be able to operate and carry on with the majority of its activities (with the possible exclusion of the section reception at the Annual Meeting). She also added that regardless of the size all sections still receive same level of support and assistance from the Executive Office.

Council member Brown inquired about the procedure of informing sections of this change in funding formula. Levine stated that all sections would be informed quickly by the Chair of the COS.

Motion: To proceed with the following strategy in regard to section budget allocations:

- The general budget allocation formula will remain at \$1000 in base amount and \$2 per member with amendments as presented below. The amendments will go into effect in 2001.
- The first year that a section is below the 300-member requirement, the base amount will be calculated based on dividing the total number of section members by 300 and multiplying the result by 1000; the \$2 per member allocation will remain unchanged.
- Were a section to remain below the 300 required number of members for a second year, the base amount will be reduced in half if a section has 200 or more members and will be eliminated if a section has less than 200 members. These sections will receive \$2 per member.

Carried unanimously.

Proposed Section-in-formation on Labor and Labor Movements. COS was satisfied with the revised proposal submitted by the group and recommended the approval of this section-in-formation.

Motion: To approve the section-in-formation on Labor and Labor Movements. Carried unanimously.

Update on Proposed Section-in-formation on Animals and Society. Feagin stated that the group was able to come up with current 80 signatures, and not 100 as expected. The group asked for an extension to collect the required number of signatures. Levine indicated that she had approved an extension until August, provided that signatories are current (2000) members.

Past vice-president Roos indicated that signing the petition indicates an agreement to be a member of that section for the following year. She asked whether the Executive Office is able to check on whether signatories do join. Levine indicated that this could be done if Council wished.

7. Information Technology Update

Update on Information Technology Innovations: Deputy Executive Officer Stevenson indicated that the most pressing issue at the end of 1999 was the Y2K issue. ASA's network was updated and tested. Also, a new accounting system was installed and the data were converted. The ASA homepage has been successfully redesigned. The ASA has benefited greatly from its work with the American Psychological Association (APA). The ASA is planning on having a member-only area on the homepage with a searchable membership e-mail database and with other information available on line.

Listserves for all sections have been launched and have been operating effectively. Officers communicate by e-mail in closed announcement lists, and section members receive regular electronic communications. Sections also have the option to operate open discussion listserves to enhance communication among section members.

Members can verify and update their own membership information on-line. A secure server is also being set up to facilitate online registration and membership applications and renewals.

As recommended by EOB and approved by Council last August, the on-line *Preliminary Program* will be the primary source of detailed information for the 2000 Annual Meeting. A program summary will be published in *Footnotes*.

Finally, ASA is in the development phase of working with APA on a SocINFO edition of PsychINFO, a collection of electronically stored bibliographic references. SocINFO would be available on a subscription basis to ASA members only.

Collaborations with JSTOR and Sociometrics. The Association has been collaborating with JSTOR and Sociometrics. Members will pay a fee to subscribe to JSTOR, the on-line archival journal storage database for ASA journals. Sociometrics Corporation will offer ASA members and sociology departments a discounted subscription to their Social Science Electronic Data Library (SSEDL). These offerings both serve the members and generate some non-dues revenue for the Association.

Council discussed the possibility of reducing the JSTOR subscription fees somewhat for individuals and institutions that do not have access to JSTOR, or offering a lower price in hopes of getting more subscribers. Stevenson stated that there is staff time involved in maintaining the collaboration, administering the subscription process, and running of monthly reports.

Levine stated that it might be a good idea to wait for a few months until more data have been collected vis-à-vis subscriptions. 130 members signed up so far for JSTOR.

8. Briefing on Transactions Publishers' Use of ASA Mailing List

Levine briefed the Council on ASA's policy concerning the rental of ASA mailing lists. The policy clearly requires that purchasers provide a specimen copy of what is to be mailed to the ASA members and that the materials need to have professional relevance. She noted that Transactions Publishers violated the policy by purchasing the mailing list to send out a flyer about a book, but instead using the list to mail a "special abridged version" of J. Philippe Rushton's book *Race, Evolution, and Behavior*. Many members complained about receiving the book and asked why the ASA had permitted its mailing list to be used in such a manner. Levine followed up immediately with Transaction Publishers. Her letter asked for an explanation for Transactions' actions and a formal apology for the misuse of the list. Until such a response is received, ASA cannot continue to work with Transaction on mailing list rentals, advertising, and exhibition services.

Council discussed the case and the steps the Executive Office had taken concerning this issue. Secretary Bonner stated that Transaction Publishers needs to send a formal apology. Such a letter has not been received yet.

Council member Hout stated that the basic argument is that the ASA sold a list for a certain purpose and Transaction used it for another purpose, violating the ASA policy. There was consensus that this was the heart of the issue.

Motion: The ASA Council supports the action taken by the Executive Officer in relation to Transactions' clear violation of ASA rules for mailing list rentals and insists that the Transactions clearly acknowledge this violation and take steps to prevent this in the future. Carried unanimously.

Levine introduced George Dowdall, ASA Congressional Fellow, who met with the Council over lunch and briefed Council on his Fellowship placement in the office of Senator Joseph Biden.

9. ASA Publications

Past-president Portes stated that Council adopted a motion at its last meeting that the Chair of the Committee on Publications (COP) or his/her representative has to be present at the Council meeting during the presentation of the COP's recommendations to Council. Michael Schwartz (Chair, Committee on Publications [COP]) was invited but was not able to attend the Council meeting

President Feagin suggested that one possibility would be to call Michael Schwartz. Other alternatives are to have Secretary Bonner and President

Feagin, both members of COP, act as COP representatives, but Bonner indicated that she would not act as a sole representative of the COP. Michael Schwartz was contacted over the phone.

Recommendations for New Journal Editors. Council reviewed the recommendations of the Committee on Publications for three vacant editorships in Executive Session. The Council discussed, with COP Chair Schwartz, the recommendations and rankings.

Motion: To approve the ranked list of candidates for editor of *Contemporary Sociology*. Carried unanimously.

Motion: To approve the ranked list of candidates for editor of *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. Carried unanimously.

Motion: To approve the ranked list of candidates for editor of *Sociological Methodology*. Carried unanimously.

Page Allocation for Journals. Jonathan Turner, editor of *Sociological Theory* expressed his concern about the backlog of manuscripts. His suggestion was to make the journal into a quarterly, expand pages, and obtain additional funding. Council discussed the request, decided to defer a decision on moving to a quarterly publication, and supported the publication of larger issues this year.

Motion: In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee on Publications and the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget, to approve approximately \$6,500 for an additional 160 pages for *Sociological Theory* in 2000. Carried unanimously.

For volume 65 of the *American Sociological Review*, editors Charles Camic and Franklin Wilson have asked for additional 156 pages for 2000 in order to clear the backlog of accepted manuscripts from the outgoing editor Glenn Firebaugh. COP and EOB recommended that their request for additional 156 pages for 2000 be approved.

Council discussed the general issue of why these backlogs occur. England stated that there is a structural problem concerning the editorship and backlogs, as each editor must have quality manuscripts in the pipeline. President-elect Massey stated that this issue will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the COP.

Motion: In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee on Publications and the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget, to approve an additional allocation of 156 pages for the *American Sociological Review* in 2000. Carried unanimously.

Proposed Section Journal: City and Community. Council member Denton summarized the decade-long history of the Section on Community and Urban Sociology's interest in sponsoring a journal. She stated that every step of the proposal has been put to a vote by the Section members.

Council inquired about members being willing to pay for the journal as part of their section membership dues, which would be required for the proposal to go forward.

Council discussed the intellectual market niche for the journal, given a large number of journals in urban studies. Denton indicated that there is a difference between community and urban sociology and that the emphasis would be on community studies. She then recused herself from the vote, due to her affiliation (as chair-elect) to the section that submitted the proposal.

Council discussed both the specific proposal and the general issue of section-sponsored journals. Levine indicated that there is a governance structure within sections as to how to handle journal proposals. The opportunity to sponsor journals is one of the new options for sections under the new section guidelines approved by Council in 1998. Past-president Portes indicated that this proposal has gone through numerous revisions, and how this sections shows a great deal of enthusiasm and determination to have a successful journal. He added that there is no American journal that deals with this topic.

Alba inquired about financial obligations on behalf of the Association vis-à-vis this journal. Levine stated that there will be no cost to the Association; the section must support the costs. Levine indicated that the journal will be ASA's property with the section as an operator. Council was supportive of such section initiatives, but was concerned that the current "environment" for journals is rather harsh, both with the shift to on-line publications and with the decline in library/institutional subscriptions. Levine indicated that the proposal budgets for institutional subscriptions and library subscriptions conservatively.

Motion: To approve the proposal from the ASA Section on Community and Urban Sociology for a new ASA-sponsored journal *City and Community* based on the principle in the *Guidelines* that any publication agreements signed by the Executive Officer on behalf of the Association would bear no financial liability to the Association and to make a strong recommendation that the deputy editors and editorial board for the journal be more diverse by race and gender. Carried unanimously.

Update on New Journal. Swidler recused herself for this discussion. Levine reviewed the proposed journal titles, indicating that among the five top choices, no consensus was reached on which one to select. Council suggested broadening the number of people participating in the title search, which might broaden the interest in the journal among the ASA members. Levine indicated

that there is some benefit to moving swiftly through the title process. Council agreed to a mailed ballot vote once COP and Claude Fischer, editor-designate, agree on a title proposal.

10. Further Discussion of 1999 ASR Editor Selection

Dr. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Texas A & M University and Chair, Section on Racial and Ethnic Minorities (SREM) joined the Council meeting at the invitation of President Feagin, to continue the discussion of the 1999 *ASR* editor selection process.

Feagin stated that during his tenure on the ASA Council he was concerned about the lack of contact and communication with sections and section officers. He decided to invite Dr. Bonilla-Silva to express the Section's concerns.

Bonilla-Silva thanked Feagin and the ASA Council for being invited and having an opportunity to express his and his section's view. Bonilla-Silva read a prepared statement from the Section council and discussed it with the ASA Council. He indicated that there might be a petition from ASA members suggesting that Walter Allen become the next editor of *ASR* when the Camic-Wilson editorship is completed.

Bonner reported on communications with Bonnie Thornton Dill, who was leading the petition drive. Dill planned to report to Council on the efforts to have the petition signed. Dill sent the petition and a list of 289 signatures to Bonner. While the number of signatures fell short of what was needed to place a referendum on the ballot, Council agreed to discuss the spirit of the petition and the concerns of members who had chosen to sign it.

After considerable discussion, Council reached consensus that it is not in favor of revisiting the issue of the recent *ASR* editor selection. Current editors were duly chosen and the controversy has placed them in a difficult position already. Council agreed that it was important to review all procedures on editor selection to make sure that the process is clear, that all Council members have ample time to review background materials, and that the outcome and rationale is communicated to members.

Hout stated that the Council has a responsibility of explaining how they reached their decision. He stated that the discussion was not short, nor did it lack substance. Some Council members might have not had enough time to review their materials, but most members reviewed their materials the night before.

Council member Swidler stated that the SREM would like Council's decision overturned now, and therefore the substance of such decisions needs to be addressed, as opposed to addressing issues only concerning future selection of editors.

Bonilla-Silva noted that he would be very interested in learning why Council made the decision it made, and why it decided to go against COP's recommendation for editors.

England stated that explaining what Council did raises an issue of confidentiality. The decision making process of last year itself was confidential. She stated that although she would be content stating her reasons for her vote, she thought it would not be right for anyone to paraphrase Council's decision because to do so would breach confidentiality. Levine re-emphasized the issue of breach of confidentiality that would come with revelation of the details of any Council discussion in Executive Session.

England stated that the editor selection process involved two democratically elected bodies, COP and Council. Information about their deliberations, however, cannot be made public without violating confidentiality.

Council member DiMaggio inquired about Bonilla-Silva's opinion as to how the selection could be done in the most effective way.

Bonilla-Silva suggested that perhaps the whole editor selection process should be more open and not confined only to Council.

Marks stated that the COP spends a lot of time reviewing proposals and making suggestions while Council receives that information and decides to approve or disapprove with their choice, but without in-depth review and discussion of proposals and materials.

Levine stated that Council's decision not to agree with COP's recommendation was not the first one. It was, however, the first time the COP made its decision without Editors as COP advisory members.

Hout inquired about members' knowledge about Council's decision to organize a conference concerning this issue. Levine stated that this information has been and will be publicized through many different venues.

Council discussed at length how Council could best convey its serious consideration of the issue then and now, and the essential elements of the process of editor selection. Council member Brown stated that it is important for Council to acknowledge publicly that it is aware of the complexity of the situation. Furthermore, the composition of the Council has changed since the original decision.

Roos stated that Council's job is not just to listen to people in the Business meeting, but to make its own decisions. She felt it was inaccurate to suggest that Council did not hear the voice of the people in the Business meeting.

Bonilla-Silva stated that as long as Council decides not to take further action, the controversy will continue. Being democratic includes doing things one disagrees with, especially when Council as democratically elected body represents the ASA's membership.

Bonilla-Silva left the meeting and Council went into Executive Session.

Council member Berheide inquired about the conference and how participants will be chosen, suggesting that critics of the Council action be present. Information on the conference should be shared in a letter sent to the membership. Perhaps the 289 petition signatories could be in charge of selecting people who will participate.

Council member Bielby suggested that a task force needs to be formed to plan this conference. Massey stated that both a public hearing (open to anyone) and an official committee meeting should be featured during this conference. President Feagin indicated that he would follow through with these suggestions.

11. 1999 Budget Reports, Analysis, and Review

Bonner reported that 1999 ended with the Association in very solid fiscal standing, with no deficit budget. In terms of the below budget spending in the personnel line, part of the \$152,000 will be spent when three more staff positions are filled. The key areas of revenue for the Association come from subscriptions, annual meeting revenue, and some advertising. Annual meeting net revenue has been declining, something the EOB and the Council have been monitoring. Planning and implementation of the annual meeting becomes more expensive each year. In terms of advertising, the Association is getting good returns. Mailing list rentals, *Guide to Graduate Departments*, and *Employment Bulletin* are averaging good revenue. Levine added that mailing list rentals generate approximately \$100,000 a year. There will be no additional dues income in 2000 as dues rates for 2000 will remain unchanged at their 1999 levels.

Bonner reported that the EOB has stated that all staff hirings need to be finalized. For the benefit of the Association the need for staff in communications and technology needs to be addressed immediately by the Executive Office.

12. 2000 Proposed Budget

A modest deficit budget has been proposed for 2000. The 2000 budget includes the cost of the extra pages for *ST* and *ASR*. JSTOR and SOCIOMETRICS appear in the budget for the first time as revenue sources. Mailing list rentals and advertisements remain important sources of revenue. Hiring for 2-3 positions in the Executive Office will not be delayed. Overall, personnel

expenses are budgeted to increase by 3.6 % in 2000. There will be a slight increase in the budgets of all journals. 2000 Annual Meeting expenses will be lower than for the Chicago Annual Meeting costs, due to lower hotel labor and staff travel costs. There is also a saving in catering expenses of \$20,000 because Hilton is underwriting one of the bigger receptions.

Council discussed specific elements in the budget, particularly rising publication costs.

Hout inquired about the extra \$18,000 under the Annual Meeting expenses. Stevenson stated how part of that money is intended for the shuttle bus service during Washington meeting. There will be no need for shuttle bus service in Anaheim in 2001.

Berheide inquired about Teaching Resources Center publications and how to price those materials. Levine stated that there is no profit, but that most of expenses reside with mailing and printing costs, and some staff time. Stevenson indicated that the Executive Office will print some of the sets with lower demand in the office on a "on demand" basis, and will keep detailed information on demand concerning those and other sets. This will keep costs down, especially for materials with fairly low sales.

Motion: To adopt the 2000 budget as approved by EOB. To adopt the Spivack Program operating budget using resources from the restricted account as approved by EOB. To adopt the Rose Series operating budget using resources from the restricted account as approved by EOB. To adopt the operating budget for the "new journal" using resources from the restricted account as approved by EOB. Carried unanimously.

13. Plan for Members' Forum

President Feagin had asked EOB and the Executive Office to explore possibilities for enhancing member communication using the internet. He invited two members to draft a proposal and asked the Executive Office to look at H-Net as a model. Levine reported on the progress on all fronts and stated that there would be a member-restricted section on the homepage that would feature communication among members. There would be monitoring to ensure that discussion topics and content are of high quality and relevance to the discipline and the Association. EOB recommended that the Executive Office proceed with implementing that idea. Specialty conversations within the subfields can still rest with section listservs.

Bonner indicated that with a new staff member in the area of communication, this monitoring and whole project could be easily managed and implemented. Bonner also stated that there could be a section on the homepage for communication between the ASA President and the ASA membership.

Feagin suggested that sociologists involved with these issues and highly knowledgeable with the internet and its academic and intellectual significance should be used as advisors in this project.

Motion: That ASA introduce, under the aegis of the Executive Office, a Members' Forum on the ASA homepage in the Member Only area, and that ASA reaffirm that the section listservs should stimulate specialized communication within subfields of sociology. Carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Sunday, January 30, 2000

14. Report on Confidentiality for Journal Editor Selection

Levine summarized the history of this subcommittee. President Feagin appointed a joint subcommittee of the Committee on Publications and Council to consider the issue of confidentiality as it pertains to the editor selection process. The charge of the subcommittee was "to articulate a policy regarding confidentiality and accountability that addresses the interests of both candidates and the ASA membership."

On December 8, Nan Lin, ASA Vice President and chair of that subcommittee, submitted a final report to President Feagin who referred the document to the ASA Committee on Publications for its discussion and review. The Committee on Publications considered the report and the topic of confidentiality in editor selection with editor representatives present on December 11 and alone in its final deliberations on December 12. The COP reviewed the proposed resolution in its conference call on January 19 and reaffirmed its approval: The Committee on Publications reaffirms its fundamental commitment to principles of confidentiality for the editor selection process. The Committee maintains that these principles should guide the submission, review, and selection process and that both the Publications Committee and ASA Council should be governed by these principles. Moreover, given that the Publications Committee and ASA Council operate under principles of confidentiality, these two bodies will share information about editor selection between them. The Committee on Publications further noted that principles of confidentiality should inform the work of any joint subcommittee of Publications and Council charged with arriving at a recommendation of an editor to Council in the event that there is initial disagreement on a choice. Carried: yes,5; no, 2.

The subcommittee moved the following recommendations:

1. How to move into an executive session? In the case of the selection of journal editors, Council should be automatically in executive session, as it concerns personnel issues, similar to the situations where other personnel issues are involved (e.g., the Executive Officer and other office staff).

For non-personnel issues, Council can move into executive session by a two-thirds vote among those present. Carried unanimously.

2. The application to an editorship should be considered as a public act. The names of the applicant(s) for editorships should be considered as public information, to be disseminated via appropriate public venues (e.g., web site and/or *Footnotes*). Failed: yes, 5; no, 8. Referred back to COP.

3. The Publication Committee, in submitting their recommendations to Council, should:

(a) provide information regarding issues raised and discussed regarding each proposal;

(b) summarize reasons for the preference-orders among proposals.

Carried unanimously.

FELICE SHOULD ITEM C be here when it was struck?

4. After Council has made its choice,

(a) the proposals recommended by the Publication Committee to Council should be made available after Council has made its choice. That is, the selected proposal itself, should be made available to ASA members upon request. Carried unanimously.

(b) Council should make public, via appropriate public venues (e.g., web site and/or *Footnotes*), its reasons for the decision.

(c) Council should record in its minutes who voted for or against each proposed editor submitted by the Publication Committee and voted on by Council.

(d) Council should make public more detailed information when (1) there was a split (within 60-40 percentages) vote on proposed editors, or (2) there was a disagreement with the Publication Committee's top choice. The information should include (1) issues discussed relating to pro and con for each proposal, and (2) who voted for or against each proposal voted on.

FELICE – SHOULD b-d be included when they were moot?

Swidler stated that an ability of COP or Council members stating one's opinion would be inhibited if all this information would be made public. While it feels as if the elimination of confidentiality would solve the problem and controversy from last year, it is very unlikely that it will achieve just that.

Levine noted that both groups, COP and Council, operate under the principle of confidentiality but will share information. The whole process is confidential, but internally both bodies will share information.

DiMaggio stated that disclosure might not have much influence on submissions. He is concerned with two issues: Council has to decide if it will go against the recommendation collectively; research done on the influence of the voting rules should be reviewed to facilitate further discussion.

Bonner stated that the role of the Secretary was not to report *verbatim* on issues discussed in the COP meeting, but rather to summarize main issues. She added that confidentiality in itself was not a problem.

Feagin stated that there is a problem concerning actual or perceived elitism, openness, and secrecy in ASA governance. He supports the subcommittee's proposal as a way to reduce those concerns.

Swidler stated that although Council members might not object to having this information public, the candidates themselves might find publishing of such information humiliating. Hout noted that the disclosure of information would happen only when there is a very close vote. Not offering real reasons for Council's collective judgments might lead to further problems with members.

Denton stated that a large part of what contributed to last year's problem was the fact that the vote was not unanimous. There is more of an obligation to explain itself when it is so hard to reach a decision in the first place.

Levine stated that the process cannot be segregated. Confidentiality should either apply or not. Internal communication between the two groups is not an issue here; the issue was more of external communication. The principle of operating under confidentiality is supposed to protect those in question.

Portes stated that yesterday's executive session was confidential although now it is being quoted. There is a gap between principles and implementation. There are reasons for confidentiality, and those are not of trying to keep things secretive. If all information is made public, the whole process would become problematic. He made a suggestion to approve parts of the proposal 1, 3a, 3b, 4a (limited to a winning proposal), and 4b.

Council discussed at length the pros and cons of making public the names of the applicants for editorships and other key ASA appointed posts.

Portes stated that making names public would create a disincentive for applicants to submit their proposals.

Hout noted that other elements can be added to the proposal in increments. He also added that a summary statement would be offered at the end of Council's selection/approval process, although information involved will not be made public.

England noted the timeline vis-à-vis deadlines to use *Footnotes* to announce applicants for editorships. It would be hard to have enough time to publish that information before Council had reached its decision.

Council agreed that COP should be consulted on this topic once again. As far as making the names of candidates public, that can be posted on the ASA's home page in order to wait for publishing in *Footnotes*.

Motion: The names of the applicants for editorship should be considered as public information to be disseminated via appropriate public venues (e.g. web site and/or *Footnotes*). Failed (yes,5: no, 8).

Council was conflicted about whether this issue should be returned to the subcommittee for further discussion. Some felt that the proposed motion was defeated and that concluded the matter. Others felt COP input would be helpful and that more discussion was important. The latter sentiment prevailed.

15. ASA Policymaking and Member Resolutions

Past Vice President Roos summarized the issue. A year ago, Council considered a report from the Subcommittee on ASA Policymaking and Member Resolutions. Council was overall very supportive of this report and recommendations. Council members, however, recognized the usefulness of a long comment period and wide outreach in crafting Association policy. Thus, Council passed the following motion, among others:

To support the new guidelines for the scope of ASA policymaking and member resolutions as set forth in its Subcommittee report, as amended by Council; to call for a broad comment period from the membership through September 1999; and to reserve a final determination and formal adoption of any new guidelines until Council's winter 2000 meeting when member feedback can be usefully discussed and considered. Carried (14 yes; 1 no).

The March 1999 issue of *Footnotes* reported extensively on this issue, including an open letter from President Portes, a substantial excerpt of the Subcommittee Report, and a column from the Executive Officer. Overall, the direct response thus far has been limited. Then-president Portes planned to include this topic on the Business Meeting agenda, but that meeting focused almost exclusively on the issue of the *ASR* and editor selection. Roos stated that some minor changes

were incorporated in the current proposal and that Council needed to adopt it (or reject it) as ASA policy.

Vice President-Elect Alba stated his doubts about this proposal, concerning the elitist charge of this body. He wonders if this is a good time to be adopting such a resolution.

Portes stated that this proposal has a certain history. Council at that time appeared troubled that it had to state its view on a number of issues. The Association should not have to express its views on every issue. Although the climate might have changed since that time, this resolution still might obtain greater legitimacy either by Council or the ASA membership voting and approving it.

Hout stated that being elected by membership to make decisions on behalf of the Association in areas where he is not very knowledgeable and has to rely on other people's opinion is very dangerous. Ironically the whole process in the end was viewed by some members as undemocratic.

Roos inquired whether the Council should make political and ideological decisions and statements. This policy allows for more effective use to disseminate information about what the membership of the Association thinks.

Portes stated that the Council should not react to every opinion out there. He trusts that the majority of ASA members will vote affirmatively to the resolution.

Levine supported the resolution and added that this policy resolution is similar to the Code of Ethics and how it was presented to the membership.

Roos supported putting the resolution on the ballot. It would be important, however, to have Council support the resolution. She added that the entire proposal needs to be on the ballot. She moved that the resolution be ratified by Council and put to membership for vote.

Portes suggested accepting the policy recommendation with additional examples being inserted. Bodies and associations that proclaim themselves on numerous issues tend to have less credibility. The policy, however, has an escape clause for issues concerning the discipline and profession; internal governance; and other exceptional cases.

Levine added that the report was provisionally adopted by Council last year. If carried this would be the rules under which Council would operate. The recommendation made at that time was to submit it to membership for vote.

Motion: To endorse the statement on ASA policymaking and member resolutions. Failed (yes, 6; no, 7; abstentions, 2).

Motion: To put the statement and guidelines to membership for vote.

Council agreed that without Council's support it makes no sense to put the resolution to membership for vote. Motion withdrawn.

Portes stated that he hopes that in the future Council would re-address this issue. Levine stated that the current policy is for Council to speak on issues when there is sufficient scientific evidence and documentation on the topic.

Swidler suggested that this report come back for Council's evaluation in one year's time. Roos agreed with this suggestion and suggested that Alba as the Vice President-elect can take the draft and review the statement.

Motion: To establish a new subcommittee on the topic of policymaking and member resolutions, with Richard Alba as chair, that will report back to the Council at its January 2001 meeting. Carried (yes, 12; no, 1).

Feagin will appoint another two members to this sub-committee.

16. ASA and a Statement on Race

Levine summarized the issue. She and President Feagin received a series of e-mails urging that the American Sociological Association issue a statement on race that would address "scientific racism." There was a call either to adopt or modify the statement of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) that emanated in 1998 from an AAA committee, or to create an ASA committee (or task force, in the ASA's new language) charged with crafting such a statement.

Roos made a recommendation to send this statement to a task force or sub-committee with a short deadline. They can produce a report and submit it to Council prior to the August annual meeting.

Swidler stated that the people who proposed this resolution did actual research and work. She added that sociologists need to do their own work and not just endorse AAA's statement.

Levine stated that a task force can be established. A call for seating of the task force would be published and the task force can start its work quickly thereafter.

DiMaggio stated that three disciplines/associations made statements concerning the race issue (anthropology, sociology, and history) and inquired about inter-disciplinary effort for a joint statement. Council had a number of ideas on how to reach other sociological associations and groups, as well as section officers.

Motion: That the Council support the recommendation of the AAA and establish a task force to draft a resolution for the August 2000 Council meeting and to engage in broad notification of sociologists for their input. Carried unanimously.

17. AAAS Statement on Kansas State Board's Decision

President Feagin received a request from the president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) requesting that the American Sociological Association, an affiliate of AAAS, endorse the AAAS statement opposing the decision of the Kansas State Board of Education to remove references to evolution and cosmology from its state education standards and assessments. The AAAS statement emphasizes the importance of student learning and education that encourages the examination of fundamental concepts and ideas of science and urges the citizens of Kansas to restore these topics to the state curriculum. Affiliates are being asked to endorse this statement and similarly convey their support. Council felt that this statement appears as professional freedom issue and therefore documentation is not required.

Motion: To endorse the AAAS statement on the Kansas State Board of Education Decision on the Education of Students in the Science of Evaluation and Cosmology. Carried unanimously.

18. Portes Council Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes from the August 1999 Council meeting. Carried unanimously.

19. Follow up Business

Discussion of Awards Ceremony. Feagin noted that many members of the Association expressed concerns about the length and lack of focus to the Award Ceremony this past August and how it intruded on leaving quality time for the Presidential Address. This is a recurrent concern of the Association and both the Committee on Awards and the ASA Council have tried various strategies to honor awardees yet limit the amount of time for presentations and acceptance speeches. Despite Council specifying a word and time limit, many of those involved in the 1999 Awards Ceremony well exceeded guidelines. Council discussed several proposals from members to improve the situation. One idea was to have the Committee on Awards (COA) chair be the only person introducing the award recipients. Council discussed the pros and cons of having presenters or awardees having the most time to talk.

Berheide suggested that the COA should be asked to think about this issue. There must be an effective way of having this issue resolved.

Feagin stated that the Chair of the COA committee will be appointed, asked to make some improvements in 2000, and asked for recommendations on how they will address this issue.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:11 am.