

2015 Treasurer's Report  
Society for the Anthropology of Religion  
Submitted by Lauren Leve

I'm pleased to report that the SAR is strong and solvent, although I am noticing a few concerning trends that I want to bring to the attention of the Board.

The good news is: We began the year with **\$62,203.41** and have added **\$15,799.05 in revenue** (as of 9/30), bringing the total SAR funds to **\$78,002.47** as of September 30th.

That income is primarily from membership dues (totaling **\$5559.06**) and registration fees for the spring meeting in San Diego (**\$10,240**). Of the registration revenue, \$4554.64 came from regular members, and \$1004.42 came from student memberships.

So the good news is a reasonable income and a good cushion of funds remaining in our account. The less good news is that we are, nonetheless, in the red this year, having spent about \$2000 more than we brought in.

As I said, we gained \$15,799 in revenues this year, as of September 30<sup>th</sup>. However, we spent \$16313 in the same amount of time. And while we can expect about \$1800 more in membership dues by the end of the year (October, November and December fees), we have not yet paid out our AAA expenses (board and business meeting food, prize awards, president's travel), which I expect will add up to about \$3470. So we're talking about total 2015 expenses of roughly \$19,783. This means that we'll spend about \$2184 more than we'll earn.

#### Spring Meeting

We spent **\$16,313.40** on the meeting, with the largest costs being food and space (\$6320), equipment rental (that's projectors and screens for powerpoint presentations -- \$2681), and expenses related to the Rappaport speaker and the Presidential Panel.

Several of these costs were slightly higher than we'd anticipated, based partly on the simple fact that it was an especially well-attended conference.

We also had an unanticipated expense. A hearing-impaired student member who registered for the conference requested accommodations and AAA said that we, the section, were legally required to pay to provide an ASL interpreter. We pushed for them to share the expense with us, and in the end they agreed to split it (and Adeline will be attending the section heads assembly tomorrow morning to push for AAA to develop a strategy for paying for these requests since small and midsize sections like us can't be expected to bear the cost alone). But in the end, we did pay out **\$1190** for this expense that we hadn't expected or budgeted for.

So we ended up losing **\$6073** on the conference. Although I would stress that this is not something that we need to panic about, especially since the conference was so well attended and, reportedly successful. I see organizing good intellectual experiences for its membership as exactly the way that SAR should be spending its money. But this did contribute to our overall losses this year.

### Membership

Our membership **increased** slightly this year: we had 551 members in September 2015 compared to 538 in September 2014 (146 professional members and 135 student members).

That said, the overall numbers over several years seem to be decreasing.

September 2012 = 679 members/217 students  
September 2013 = 642/182  
September 2014 = 538  
September 2015 = 551/135

Some of this may be due to a new system that the AAA adopted to keep track of membership last year that dropped all section's memberships somewhat (removing dead members from the roles, etc.). But inasmuch as we'll looking at a possible drop of up to 128 members, I think we may want to think about how to draw in new members and how to ensure that current members feel served by and want to stay in the association.

### 2016 Budget

For 2015, I've budgeted **\$6955** in expenses. This includes the Geertz and Student paper prizes, food and space at next year's AAA, and the president's travel costs to AAA.

Based on membership numbers in June, when I had to submit the budget, I'm expecting about \$7500 in membership-based revenue. If all of this works out, it would leave us with a \$500 gain. But without really knowing the costs many things that we'll have to cover, these numbers are really guesswork at this point.

### Dues recommendation

On the basis of all of this, and the fact that we haven't raised dues in quite a while, I think we should consider raising membership dues.

Our current membership dues are \$15 professional, \$5 student. We could raise these by \$5 and still stay within the middle rate structure for sections without journals.

We could raise these only for professionals or also for students.

**Commented [LL1]:** Note: this was my error—our actual dues were \$10 for students. So, after some discussion we actually moved them down (to \$9) for students, rather than up \$5. My bad on this but the damage shouldn't be too bad and we can fix the error next year.

We could also raise biennial meeting registration rates (now \$120/140 and \$40 for students)

**(Discussion led to a decision to raise due to \$20 for professional members and to \$9 for students).**