

Secretary-Treasurer Report 2018

As I approach the end of my fourth year as Secretary-Treasurer and Executive Director of the ASA, I remain optimistic about the future both of the Society and of the specialty of aesthetics. We are continuing to rebuild our membership numbers; we have funded numerous conferences and workshops on cutting edge issues in aesthetics; our annual and divisional meetings are drawing significant attendance and participation; and we are succeeding in raising the profile of aesthetics at many related organizations, including the American Philosophical Association, the North American Kant Society, the College Art Association, and the Society for Philosophy and Psychology.

We have experienced many milestones in the now 76-year history of the Society. Last year we celebrated our 75th anniversary at the New Orleans meeting last November. But other milestones have been quieter and perhaps less noticed. For the first time in our history, all four officers of the society, for 2017-18, happen to be female (President Kathleen M. Higgins, Vice-President Susan L. Feagin, Past President Cynthia Freeland, and yours truly as Secretary-Treasurer). Especially given that the Feminist Caucus celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2015, it was perhaps inevitable that we would cross this threshold eventually and that it would receive so little notice. Women well-regarded in the profession have served as trustees and officers since our earliest years in the 1940s. An all-female slate of officers does not guarantee any particular result in leadership, any more than an all-male slate has in years past. But women do bring a lifetime of experience with the too-often searing challenges for women in the professional work environment. We wish that discrimination, harassment, and condescending, patronizing mansplaining had all disappeared decades ago, when we first experienced it, but we still have much to do as a society and as a professional organization.

New Policies

One of my on-going priorities has been ensuring that ASA is administered with high standards for professionalism and accountability to our members. As a small society, with a very limited administrative structure, it's understandable that some things have taken longer than a large, well-staffed organization might accomplish easily. Thus we are doubly proud that this year we made progress on adopting policies in several key areas of accountability to the membership. These policies are available on the public sections of the ASA web site and have been included in the print *ASA Newsletter*.

***Privacy Policy:** The ASA adopted a policy on privacy in 2012. But with the rapid growth of on-line technologies and heightened attention to the importance of privacy, as well as demanding regulations from the European Union for protection of privacy, we adopted a far more comprehensive Privacy Policy and Protection of Members' Data on July 3, 2018.

https://aesthetics-online.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/files/Conflict_of_Interest_Policy_.pdf

***Conflict of Interest:** Although long-overdue, the Board of Trustees adopted a policy on conflict of interest applying to all ASA officers, trustees, and contractors, effective November 15, 2017. Major provisions were adapted from the policy of the American Philosophical Association. This important policy assures members of the integrity of the ASA's decision-making processes, especially with regard to the expenditure of ASA funds.

https://cdn.ymaws.com/aesthetics-online.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/files/Conflict_of_Interest_Policy_.pdf

***Policies on Annual Meeting Cancellations and Refunds:** The Board has been alarmed at the dramatic increase in last-minute cancellations at the annual meeting, which often leaves panels and commentators in the lurch on the program. In the hopes of educating the membership of these professional responsibilities

and regularizing the ASA response to these developments, a policy was announced on February 28, 2018. <https://aesthetics-online.site-ym.com/news/388975/ASA-Policies-on-Annual-Meeting-Cancellations-and-Refunds.htm>

***Policies on Discrimination, Harassment, and Respectful Behavior:** The American Philosophical Association adopted its first statement on sexual harassment in 1993, with revisions in 2013 and most recently 2016. Unfortunately, the ASA did not follow suit in developing its own policies until July 23, 2018. That meant that ASA had no established way to receive, review, or appropriately respond or provide counseling of any kind when a report of harassment was submitted in late 2017. Instead, ASA officers had no choice but to respond in an improvised manner, in the complete absence of any guidance, procedures, or policies to which they could turn. Even so, the person submitting the report said that the response by ASA had been *very* satisfactory. Responsibility for this failure to develop a policy until July 2018 does not fall on any individual but on ASA leadership (officers, trustees, and committee chairs) over many years, going back to 2013, when it was clear from APA's initiatives that development of such policies should have been a priority. The ASA owes an apology to all of its members that the ASA did not adopt a policy on harassment, discrimination, and respectful behavior several years ago when it was clear that this should have been done promptly.

The policy ASA adopted in July 2018 was adapted primarily from that of the APA, with some additions from other professional societies in the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), and after consultation with the APA's Ombudsperson. It was drafted in the spring of 2018 by leadership of the Feminist Caucus (Sheila Lintott and Sondra Bacharach), the Diversity Committee (Thi Nguyen and Aili Bresnahan), and the President and Secretary-Treasurer of the ASA, and approved by the Board of Trustees on July 23. It is expected that the Board will name an Ombudsperson at its October meeting.

https://cdn.ymaws.com/aesthetics-online.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/files/ASA_policies_on_discriminati.pdf

National Office

We have not modified our national office operations in the past year. The ASA contracts with a wide variety of firms and individuals to provide needed services, such as printing of the *ASA Newsletter* and tax filings with the IRS. Thanks to the efficiency of on-line communications, it has not been necessary to relocate all of these functions from Savannah to Denver, which is now the official home of the National Office. Our journal co-editors are in Minnesota and Michigan; our newsletter co-editors in California and Canada; Facebook manager in Mexico City; Web editor in the Netherlands; printer, accountant and investment advisor in Savannah; and legal counsel in Washington, DC. In 2015, we moved our official mailing address to: 1550 Larimer St. #644, Denver, CO 80202-1602. We also moved some business accounts to a major bank with a physical presence in Denver. In 2015, we added a direct pay option for people who receive more than one payment from ASA in a year; this continues to work well for speeding up and simplifying payments and reimbursements. We continue to encourage people to sign up for direct pay if they expect any payments from ASA.

As the ASA does not have a physical office or office staff, it has an operating budget which is lean and mean, especially compared with larger organizations with substantial overhead. We also have no university home at present. This is an advantage, as we do not need to negotiate with financially strapped universities for overhead costs, but it can also be a disadvantage at those times when it would be handy to be able to turn to student assistants to complete the routine tasks which inevitably arise in running the organization.

Annual Meetings

The Annual Meeting for 2018 is being held October 10-13 in Toronto. This lively, interesting city has good air connections and reasonable ground travel, all significant factors in selecting meeting sites. Last year, we had been notified by several international members that they refused to come to the US for so long as Donald Trump was president, and Toronto seems to be more inviting. Unfortunately, this year we learned that some international scholars teaching in the US are concerned that their passports from certain countries will make it difficult to re-enter the US and one did notify us that she could not attend for that reason.

The program chair, Deborah Knight, reported 120 submissions for the program (105 papers, with 46 selected, and 15 panel proposals, with 7 selected. This is close to the number received in 2017 (98 papers, with 40 accepted, and 30 panels, with 12 accepted). The final program represents significant diversity by many measures, especially because panel submissions have been more likely to address this.

We understand that most people can only get travel funds from their home institutions if they have a substantive presentation on the program, and we have slightly increased the number of "slots" available in recent years. We continue to have four concurrent sessions on Thursdays and Fridays, as has been the practice for many years. But until 2015, ASA had only three concurrent sessions on Saturdays; we increased that to four, adding six additional hours for papers and panels. We know that some lament the Saturday afternoon programming and wish that we would return to an older practice of scheduling group walking tours and other activities in lieu of papers. However, given the increased interest in participation at the annual meeting and the restraints of travel funding, this does not seem feasible. We would lose eight hours of programming, roughly 16 substantive papers and commentaries. Further expansion of the programming could involve scheduling on Wednesday (traditionally our arrival day, with an evening reception). We know that many people would find it difficult to miss that many classes and have not pursued this. In the future, we could consider expanding to five concurrent sessions to add more paper slots. If people are interested in this option, we could consider it for the 2022 meeting, which has not yet been set.

Still, Saturday afternoon has presented us with special opportunities. In Seattle, we held a special session on Grunge, which we hoped would be of interest to the general public and publicity was sent to recruit a broad audience. As all catering has ended at that point, we were happy to welcome people who are not ASA members and had not registered. We did not attract the public audience we had hoped for, but we did, most unfortunately, seriously cut into the attendance at the other three sessions that afternoon. For the Toronto meeting, we are having just one session on Saturday afternoon, a tribute to the late Peter Kivy and we will again welcome everyone, including local music theorists and students, to join us. We will end the session with a champagne toast.

Program chairs previously set up a unique e-mail account with G-mail where persons submit their proposals. At the request of the 2018 program chair for the Toronto meeting, we explored several proposal submission systems, along the lines of that used by APA. Many are very expensive and/or too cumbersome to set up and use. After several on-line demos with other companies, we settled on a company called Submittable recommended by other small societies and we used that for the 2018 meeting. The cost is \$1000 for a 12-month license. The submission period for this first try-out was December 1, 2017 – January 15, 2018. This is comparable to the 45-day submission period used by APA. It has not yet been set for 2019, but will be announced extensively via bulk e-mail to ASA members, the print newsletter in December, Facebook, Twitter, and Philos-L.

This is the third year of the so-called 30-day rule. Although submissions from non-members are welcome, as a way to encourage newcomers, once someone's paper is accepted, that person must join within 30 days or be replaced on the program. This year, 23 people who have never been members submitted papers (of the 105 submitted). Of those, eight were accepted, five of those by full-time students. Of the 15 panel proposals, only one was submitted by someone who had never been a member and that was not accepted.

The program committee procedures aim for fair review of all submissions. All program committee members read and rated all panel proposals. In panel proposals, the identities of all panelists are included. For individual papers, two members of the committee read the paper, without knowing the identity of the author. When there is wide divergence in ratings, a third member of the committee is asked to review the paper. The Program Committee functions independently, with no involvement from the officers or trustees, who do not know what has been selected for the program until it is announced publicly to the membership on the web site.

Meeting registrations are being handled for the fourth year on the new web site. Also for the fourth time, we offered early-bird registration rates for those registering at least 30 days before the meeting, copying a technique used by the American Philosophical Association. Early-bird is a substantial savings of \$55 for regular members. 149 registered early-bird (with 38 on the program not yet registered), which is tremendously helpful in preparing nametags and setting final catering numbers. Pre-registering 80% of the participants is comparable to recent years. Print information about the meeting, with a mail-in registration form, was included in the Summer *ASA Newsletter*, but only three mailed in paper registrations and checks.

The hotel rate for the conference at the Fairmont Royal York was attractive (single or double, \$151 USD/night, including taxes) and the room block was booked quickly. We started trying two years ago to increase the size of the room block, but the hotel declined. Now that the economy is in a strong recovery in most of the country, hotels have less incentive to bargain with us for economical sleeping rooms or add more discounted rooms to our room block. Although rates for the hotels in the next few years are not this attractive, they will still be economical compared with the open market. I encourage people to plan ahead to arrange roommates, when possible, and book their rooms early. I am reluctant to expand our room block for future meeting by too much. We get free meeting rooms and several other perks for attendees when we meet our rooming commitment. Some old-timers will remember when Secretary-Treasurers had to plead with people to stay at the conference hotel. Those days seem long gone now.

We are using, for the fourth time, an app called Grupio at the annual meeting. Everyone is able to look up the meeting schedule, maps, hotel information, restaurants, speaker bios, and much more on their tablets, smart phones, and laptops. The app works with both Apple and Android on tablets and smart phones. On laptops, the same information is available in a different format: <http://www.grupio.com/asa2018>. Preliminary schedule information was available on Grupio in May. The Grupio app can be downloaded for free at the Apple Store and Google Playstore. We received many positive comments on Grupio in the past, especially for those adept at newer devices. Although some members don't particularly care for these new communication vehicles, we continue to publish extensive information in our print newsletter, which was mailed in August. We explored alternative apps, but Grupio is by far the most economical and is more than adequate for our needs. The APA uses a different brand of app, but it is much more expensive.

In 2015, the Board approved an overhaul in the registration fees for our annual fall meeting and that rate structure was continued for the years since. Among other things, we added the early-bird discounts for those registering at least 30-days before the meeting. ASA's fees have been very low compared with the American Philosophical Association, the American Political Science Association, and the British Society for Aesthetics.

We run this important meeting at a substantial deficit and hope to reduce that somewhat. We do consider special requests for fee reductions or waivers from unemployed and underemployed aestheticians, following the case-by-case approach of APA, although none was received for the 2015, 2017, or 2018 meetings and only one was received (and approved) for the 2016 meeting. (This was a retiree in the Seattle area who had never had a tenured faculty appointment and who was considered important on a panel presentation.) Because of the substantial deficit, the Board approved a modest across-the-board rate increase for the 2018 meeting, but our fees are still be very low compared with comparable organizations and less than the 2018 APA registration fees.

In 2015 the Board adopted a new policy on the use of recording devices at our annual meetings, continued without change in the years since. We learned of some unfortunate incidents at other professional meetings, when entire talks were recorded and distributed on-line, without the advance knowledge or permission of the speakers. Our policy: "Out of respect for our speakers, unless you receive their express approval beforehand, please do not use any visual or audio recording devices of those speakers during their presentation." Enforcement of this policy rests solely with the chair of each session. If a speaker does not object to being recorded, that is the speaker's choice. No reports of problems have been received.

For the fifth year, we are providing luncheons for the meetings of the Feminist Caucus and the Diversity Committee. Because of the difficulty getting a precise head count for these, we asked members to register and pay \$15 in advance for box lunches (\$10 for students). The actual cost is \$44/person (which includes service charges and sales tax), with ASA absorbing the balance of the cost. By using hotel catering instead of sending people to a nearby restaurant, the costs count toward our guaranteed food-and-beverage minimum in the hotel contract. The luncheons have been limited to 40 persons each, at the request of the respective committee chairs, to facilitate more productive discussions during the meeting.

ASA is also supporting a new mentoring project, by paying for a continental breakfast meeting for 40 people recruited by the mentoring committee.

Commencing in 2018, we are providing six Chayes Travel Grants to the Annual Meeting of \$1250 each for persons with no institutional access to travel funds. Selections of papers will continue to be made by the program committee without knowing who is eligible for this or student travel funds. 29 of the submitters requested these, but only six were accepted after anonymous review, so all accepted papers in this group were awarded the grants this year. If more are accepted for the program in future years, the guidelines include criteria for the program committee to use in deciding which six receive the funds.

Also commencing in 2018 was the first year of the Chayes New Voices awards. 19 asked to be considered, but many did not submit the required essay to the chair of the Diversity committee. Two were awarded, as planned. Because of the interest in the awards, the Board approved continuing these for future meetings.

As in the past, all full-time students with papers accepted by anonymous review receive travel grants of \$1250. These are by far more generous than the student grants awarded by other professional societies, but ASA has been eager to attract people to attend the meeting and this has been very successful. This year, 19 accepted papers were by students and all received the travel grant. One withdrew due to scheduling problems. Over the five years since 2014, ASA has awarded 93 student travel grants to 67 different students, totaling \$99,418. (Several have received two or three awards.) This has been a major investment, but one that we continue to believe is wise to help ensure the future of aesthetics and the ASA.

One of my priorities the past four years has been securing hotel commitments for the Annual Meetings for

the next several years. Other members of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) typically book annual meetings three to five years in advance. With the economy strong, hotel space at acceptable rates is increasingly difficult to come by. Our membership has indicated they want to meet in interesting areas, with cultural opportunities. I routinely look at airfares to various cities, to find locations with competitive rates for our members. Finding hotels with acceptable rates and adequate meeting rooms in attractive and inviting venues is an increasing challenge.

I learned a lot from our survey of members in fall 2014 on preferred scheduling options and locations and have taken that into account. I am keenly aware of the fiscal stress on many members. For the first decade of my own teaching career, I received little or nothing to support travel to professional meetings, and vividly remember the stress of getting to meetings on my own dime. About a third of our members do not have access to any travel funds to attend meetings, and I have taken costs into account in looking at meeting sites. I always talk with hotels about the availability of double rooms with two beds for those who need to share to cut costs. I look at ground travel from the airport and the availability of reasonably priced food options in the adjacent neighborhood. In some cities, such as Toronto (2018), Washington, DC (2020), and Montreal (2021), Amtrak service will be an economical alternative for transportation to the meeting.

We have a small window for scheduling meetings and compete with both business and non-profit groups for hotel space. On the survey in 2014, I asked about meeting over Labor Day (when the APSA meets), summer, and early in the new year, but respondents were not happy with those alternatives. When we exclude Halloween weekend (at the request of many members) and take into account the schedules of both quarter system and semester campuses, as well as the British Society of Aesthetics meeting in September (attended by many of our members), our window is basically mid-October through mid-November. This is a popular time for professional meetings and conferences and as a small society we do not have the bargaining power of much larger organizations.

On the new web site, I added an unscientific survey for preferred cities for future meetings. I encourage everyone to vote if you have not yet done so. Now that we are booked for meeting sites through 2021, we have some breathing space before we start looking at locations for 2022 and beyond. Several members have recently suggested we look at Detroit, home of a magnificent art museum and opera house, but Detroit has not fared well in our on-line survey. In the past, we had hopes that we might hold a meeting in the next decade in Havana, given the efforts to gradually re-open commerce of President Obama. But these are being reversed by the current administration, and the lack of appropriate hotel facilities for a meeting like ours makes this venue unlikely. I hope ASA can make such a trip eventually. In 2017, we made a serious attempt to schedule a meeting in Mexico City, but encountered several major roadblocks which would have made this very difficult for our members, so we abandoned those plans.

At the urging of many members, I have contacted associations with shared interests in the arts to see if we might coordinate our meetings, but have been unable to arrange this so far. We have sought bids from several cities of interest to members, but costs are prohibitive (e.g., Chicago, San Francisco). If any members are interested in hosting a future meeting, please get in touch with me and we'll see what we can do.

Here's the schedule of annual meetings through 2021:

Toronto: Fairmont Royal York Hotel: October 10-13, 2018 (Program Chair: Deborah Knight)
Phoenix: Sheraton Phoenix Downtown Hotel: October 9-12, 2019 (Program Chair: John Kulvicki)
Washington, DC: Hilton Crystal City: November 11-14, 2020 (Program Chair: C. Thi Nguyen)
Montreal, QC: Hyatt Regency Montreal: November 17-20, 2021

Divisional Meetings

I encourage people to look seriously at the three divisional meetings as venues for presenting their work. They are doing well in terms of attendance and finances and we hope that continues. We rely heavily on volunteer organizing committees for all three meetings and we assist when possible. E.g., we do significant publicity about each meeting on the ASA web site, Facebook pages, Twitter, and the *ASA Newsletter*. We also manage all funds for the divisions, including the on-line registration on the ASA web site and paying all bills from funds received. We ask each Division to plan their meeting to bring in sufficient revenue to cover all expenses and leave at least \$2000 to carry-over to the next year. All are doing well in meeting this goal.

For several years, ASA has provided up to \$2000 to each Division to cover travel and honoraria for keynote speakers that enhance the meeting and improve attendance. Commencing in 2018, each Division also receives \$1000 for Irene H. Chayes Travel grants for persons with no institutional access to travel funds. Although ASA is thus seriously involved in the finances of the divisions, we have sought to defer as much as possible to the organizers in their selection of locations, program, format, etc. We hope this decentralization promotes distinct regional interests in each meeting.

Membership

When I was handed the baton on February 1, 2015, the paid membership stood at 388. This is truly alarming, given that membership in 1999 was 1042. Our membership year is the calendar year, so December 31 is always the “high-water mark.” We finished 2015 at 533, 2016 at 601, and 2017 at 627. We are at 623 today for 2018 membership, and I am confident we will add several more by December 31 of this year. The increases result from a mix of returning members who had lapsed for several years and new members. It appears that some new members are participants in our Facebook-Group who see regular announcements of our activities and decide to join. (ASA membership is not required for the Facebook-Group, which now numbers 1059 members.) Following a long-standing ASA policy, brand-new members who join in the last three months of the year are extended through 12/31 of the next calendar year, and we have been publicizing this on Facebook and Twitter.

The new Green Memberships, which went into effect on January 1, 2017, are a great success. To date, 93 people have signed up for the Green option. Members can only make the conversion to green when they renew, so we expect more as memberships expire 12/31. We hope this option will make it easier for persons (especially international members) who do not get institutional support to purchase and retain a membership. Green members receive all membership benefits, except print materials (the *Journal* and the *ASA Newsletter*), but can access those on-line. International members save \$18/year, while domestic members save \$3, but interestingly about half the current green members are in North America.

Many people have offered their ideas on how to reverse the previous membership slide, and it’s clear that there is no “silver bullet.” I believe we need to continue to proceed on many fronts. Here are some things I’ve done the past four years to rebuild membership.

Enforcing existing membership requirements: Historically, the ASA has limited several activities to members, including presentations on the program at the annual meeting and eligibility for the annual monograph prize. Enforcing those requirements has been a priority. It’s not enough to have a requirement on the books, if it’s not enforced effectively.

Adding membership requirements to more activities: We try to strike a balance between activities open to

everyone, in hopes of introducing them to both aesthetics and the ASA, and activities that are restricted to members and provide incentives for new and renewed memberships. Activities open to non-members include most of the new web site (including the current issue of the *ASA Newsletter*), the Twitter feed, the Facebook-group page (which replaces the old AE-list-serv, which went off-line in August 2015 when the new web site went “live”), and attendance at ASA-sponsored conferences.

The Board in 2015 also added a few requirements for membership to encourage more to join the ASA. Beginning in 2016, although non-members may submit a paper for the annual meeting, if that paper is accepted, the person must join ASA within 30 days or be replaced on the program. We considered the approach used by the APA that everyone must be an APA member at the time of submission, but the program committee chairs were concerned that this would discourage new people to the field. The 30-day rule (which also applies to commentators, panelists, and chairs) worked well for the meetings in 2016, 2017, and 2018 and we expect to continue with this approach.

Each division also now requires ASA membership for all on the program and all on the organizing group. Although enforcement methods are left to each region, compliance has been very good.

The Board also added ASA membership requirements for some on-going prizes, beginning in 2016, including the John Fisher Prize and the Ted Cohen prize. For students wishing to publish their dissertation abstract on the ASAGE site, a valuable form of self-promotion, ASA student membership is now required. ASA membership is also required for ASAGE editors, but *not* for authors who submit papers to the on-line journal. For *JAAC*, ASA membership is required for the editors, but *not* for authors submitting work or writing book reviews.

We also require ASA membership at the time of application for several new opportunities we created in 2015, including presentations at the Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy at Rutgers University, the UCSD Summer Program for Women in Philosophy, and the Brown Summer program, cooperative ventures we continued in 2016, 2017, and 2018.

Adding perks for members: We have added several valuable perks for members which are only available in the members section of the new web site. Currently, that includes access to historic archives from the ASA, minutes, other documents from current ASA activities, newsletters, annual meeting programs, and divisional meeting programs, as well as discounts from Oxford University Press. A member-search function also is available on the site, but only for members; we hope members find this helpful in identifying possible speakers for conferences and persons in the same geographic area with shared interests. Since 2016, members have had access to the on-line version of the new *Oxford Encyclopedia of Aesthetics-2d* edition. We are very pleased that Oxford extended this benefit for the *Encyclopedia* through 2018 for ASA members. (This was initially a benefit from Oxford in gratitude for ASA’s subsidy of editorial costs for the *Encyclopedia* several years ago.)

Grant-funded conferences: Only members are eligible to apply for grants. I have made encouraging grant applications a major priority the past four years and I am pleased at the steady stream of applications we have received. Among other things, I have made presentations at all three divisional annual meetings since 2015 to talk about the future of ASA and encourage brainstorming with me about possible conferences and other activities. Our grant-funded conferences aim to show the rest of the academy, as well as the broader public, the value of aesthetics for a wide range of interests: architecture/design and aesthetics, the ethics and aesthetics of the environment, art and cultural images, theater and aesthetics, cognitive science and aesthetics, philosophy of games, black aesthetics, etc. Among other things, I hope these conferences help demonstrate the interdisciplinary possibilities of aesthetics and attract more members. The Board also

approved a new requirement four years ago that all grant-funded activities must give credit to the ASA and include our logo. This helps us build the identity of the ASA as an organization supporting a wide range of important and worthwhile activities in aesthetics and thus promote future membership.

Responding to changes in the profession: The traditional professoriate is changing, with increasing reliance on adjuncts, lecturers, visiting professors, on-line teaching, and outsourced instruction. At least some of our membership decline seems attributable to the loss of traditional, tenure-track teaching opportunities. We can try to push back, as others are trying, but the changes are major and likely to continue. If we focus mainly on recruiting from traditional academic positions, our membership is likely to decline as the traditional professoriate declines. I regularly talk with people who love the arts and aesthetics, but have no expectation of ever getting a tenure-track job with good benefits that earlier generations enjoyed. Is there a place for them in the ASA? I believe there is, but we need to focus on what we might do to adapt. I hope we can provide information and incentives on using aesthetics education in non-traditional careers outside the academy. Having spent fifteen years of my own career in non-traditional positions, I know these jobs can be rewarding in many ways and also make good use of formal academic training. I am talking with many people about ideas for conferences that reach out to non-traditional audiences with events on evenings and weekends when they can attend and with content that connects with their interests. Should we be trying to add more streaming video to our events? Will on-line conferences and blogs be of interest? Our essay contest for the 2016 meeting focused on this new terrain (all essays were published in the *ASA Newsletter*). If we show at least some of these people that they have a place in the ASA and we value their contributions, some membership will follow.

The Board also approved using some of the bequest from Irene H. Chayes for travel to the annual meetings so people with no institutional access to travel funds could present their work and stay connected to the professional dialogue.

Member outreach: I have tried to take advantage of economical mechanisms for reaching out to lapsed members. In 2015, when I was travelling for other reasons, I held these in Washington, DC, New York City (for graduate students), Toronto, and southern California. In 2016, I held one in Seattle and another in New York City (for dance scholars). Even for those unable to attend, I have been able to strike up worthwhile conversations to elicit their ideas for the future of the ASA. In recent years I have met when travelling for other reasons with groups working on project grant proposals.

New modes of communication: As discussed below, we are expanding our means of communication in several ways, which I hope will reach a broader range of people interested in aesthetics of various ages. We are straddling several generations, so we still have a print newsletter which includes information on the Annual Meeting in the summer issue, but we added several newer forms of communication in 2015 and are very active on all of them: a Twitter feed (@ASA_aesthetics), a Facebook group page (now with over 1000 members) (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/7399905817/>), and the new web site (as of August 2015) with many more interactive features. While “community” was shaped largely by in-person meetings only a few decades ago, these new forms of social media are building new senses of community, available to people who love the arts and aesthetics but for whatever reasons are unable to attend our meetings. We need to continue staying in touch with new media that respond to contemporary interests.

Differing senses of “aesthetics”: Several long-time members have suggested to me that membership has dropped off as ASA membership is perceived as of interest only to narrowly defined analytic philosophers. Our current membership actually includes a wide range of practicing artists, art educators, historians, anthropologists, and many others. On a survey I posted on the web site, members indicate interest in much

more than analytic philosophy. From time to time, I post these (unscientific) results on Facebook to demonstrate this diversity to people. In our meetings and other ventures, I hope we can be as broadly inclusive as possible to demonstrate the relevance of ASA to a wide range of disciplinary interests and methodologies.

New Technologies and Social Media

I have been working with the Board of Trustees and an *ad hoc* committee on Social Media to explore adding new capabilities to our communications and dissemination. We spent much of 2015 working with a web technology company to move to a new web site and went “live” on August 28. It is the same company that supports the American Philosophical Association’s web site and gives us many more options for members and non-members alike. Members can look up their own membership status and see whether they are paid up on dues, e.g. We also are able to collect anonymous demographic data from members and get a better sense of the state of the profession (although most decline to complete this, making the data unusable). Since 2016, we have given members on-line access to the new edition of the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, available only to members on the new web site. Oxford extended this access through 2018, which we greatly appreciated.

Rob van Gerwen was selected after a search for a new web editor; he began work on the new site June 1, 2015. In summer 2017, our ad hoc committee conducted a two-year performance review and extended his contract for another two years. We recently connected the ASA site to Google analytics to get some sense of usage. It is too early to provide significant data, but it is noteworthy that in the last month only half of the persons accessing the site are in the US. The rest are from 30 different countries around the world.

In 2015, we established a new Twitter account for announcing deadlines and other information about the ASA. Please follow us: @ASA_aesthetics. We decided not to forward Tweets from other associations; if people want to follow them, they can, so we won’t clutter up people’s Twitter feed with duplicates they are already receiving. For the annual meeting, we encourage people to use #asa2018 to share comments on the meeting.

We have ruled out, for the time being, establishing a YouTube account, but are open to adding those in the future. The technology exists for us to live-stream our meetings, but costs are still high, mainly for the technology and staff we would need. We could consider this in the coming years if there is member interest. One big problem is a likely reduction in the in-person registration revenue. The technology for Facebook-Live is very easy to use for a lecture or panel discussion and we have started encouraging conference and meeting organizers to consider this.

We have added still photos from our various events to the web site under Photo Gallery, and welcome submissions from members for that use. Cynthia Freeland is serving as the volunteer photo editor for our meetings and conferences and photos should be sent to her. In submitting photos for the web site, photographers are providing ASA with a non-exclusive, royalty-free license to use the photos in its official publications, including the web site. We only need to know the name of the photographer, so we can provide credit, and the identifications of the persons in each shot. We recently established an Instagram account which Cynthia plans to use at the 2018 annual meeting.

We have wondered what to do with the physical archives of the history of the Association, including programs of meetings and Board minutes. Many of these are on deposit in the archives of San Diego State University; when in town for the APA-Pacific meeting, I spent a day at the archives scanning documents we were missing, especially old programs and minutes. Many more documents have been scanned and are available under the

Members tab of the new web site: newsletter archives, annual meeting programs, and divisional programs. These are of specialized interest to some researchers. E.g., the Feminist Caucus would like to search old records concerning the participation of women in the ASA. For those interested in specialized topics, such as dance or opera, it is possible to search presentations at annual meetings to see when these topics were addressed and which scholars were doing pioneering work on them. The on-line archive has the distinct advantage of being available to all members with access to the Internet worldwide. We are still missing a few items, as noted on those pages, if anyone can loan us their copies for scanning. After trying unsuccessfully for years to locate the first two volumes of the *ASA Newsletter* (1980-81, edited by Selma Jeanne Cohen), we finally located the originals in the archives of the New York Public Library. We ordered PDF scans and posted them on the archives section of the web site. This gives us a complete set of all *ASA Newsletters*, a unique history of the ASA.

Grants

The ASA is fortunate to have a successful journal (which provides about 70% of our operating budget) and a substantial investment account. We are committed to using the revenue to support grants of various kinds that will promote the ASA and aesthetics. Since 2015, we have committed to obligating \$100,000/year in grants and have come close to this goal each year. The complete list of grants funded in 2011-2018 is available on the web site with the guidelines. I am always happy to brainstorm with people on project ideas and to review draft proposals with an eye to issues that have been of concern to the Board. Funding decisions are made by the Board of Trustees, and proposals are accepted throughout the year. The Board needs at least a week to discuss by e-mail and another to vote, but schedules sometimes require a longer review period. We have several important priorities we are trying to support with these grants and welcome ideas for future projects.

Promoting aesthetics within the academy

We are alarmed that after the retirement or death of prominent aestheticians in recent years, departments are not always choosing to replace them with specialists in aesthetics. We aim to demonstrate the continued importance of hiring aestheticians and offering aesthetics courses. For example, we co-sponsored with philosophers of art from Australia a two-continent conference on "Art and Imagination: the role of metaphors, tropes and images in shaping experience and guiding action." The project received major funding from the Australian Research Council (ARC). The first conference was held April 2-3, 2016, in San Francisco to coincide with the APA-Pacific meetings. The second was held over several days in July 2017, during the annual conference of the Australian Association of Philosophy. ASA funds helped to support videotaping of the Australian events so interested persons worldwide can benefit and all tapes are now available on our web site under the Photo Gallery submenu. ASA funds also supported travel grants to both conferences for ASA members whose papers are selected for presentation by the program committee. Other conferences we have funded share the goal of demonstrating to both the university and interested public what aesthetics can offer.

We also are supporting graduate students in aesthetics. In the past, we have funded a one-day graduate student conference in conjunction with the ASA Eastern meeting in Philadelphia and we again funded this in 2016, one day after the ASA-Eastern meetings. However, the organizing committee has moved on and we were unable to recruit a new one. Instead, we hope to nationalize the experience of one-day student conferences. The Board approved a CFP for grants up to \$3500, with up to four conferences each year; the first one was held in Charleston, SC, for the southeastern region in March 2017. A second will be held in San Diego in November 2018. We hope this is a model for other regional conferences for students, e.g., New England, greater Chicago, Bay Area, etc.

We awarded our first Dissertation Fellowship to David Johnson of Northwestern University. The competition was ferocious, with twelve applications. Marilyn Johnson of CUNY-Graduate Center received the second one, Madeleine Ransome received the third, for 2017-18, and Caitlin Dolan the fourth, for 2018-19. The deadline for the next Dissertation Fellowship competition is January 1, 2019. Guidelines were revised in 2016 to permit resubmissions and to accept applications from doctoral programs throughout North America. We are very pleased that both David and Marilyn completed their PhDs during the fellowship year.

For students with papers accepted for the annual meeting, we continue to provide generous travel grants, roughly 17-21 students at each of the recent annual conferences. In 2017, we also began offering travel support for ASA student members to *attend* some of our conferences and several took advantage of this new funding.

Promoting diversity within the profession

We are especially proud of funding aesthetics speakers at three important summer programs for undergraduate philosophy students in 2018, the UCSD Summer Program in Philosophy for Women, the Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy at Rutgers University, and the Summer Immersion Program in Philosophy at Brown University. This was the fourth year we have supported these programs. Our financial support not only helps promote diversity in the profession but also introduces these promising undergraduate students to aesthetics almost none of whom have had an undergraduate aesthetics course.

Using new means of communication and technology to promote aesthetics

Our four in-person meetings each year are successful and popular, and we will continue those. But we understand that many members are unable to attend these, due to financial and scheduling complications. We are exploring additional means of dissemination and communication. As noted, we funded video taping of the Australian conference in 2017. We have awarded a grant for an on-line aesthetics conference; if it is successful, we can consider making this an annual event. ASA funded the start-up costs for the popular blog, *Aesthetics for Birds*, developed by Christy Mag Uidhir at University of Houston and now directed by Alexandra King at SUNY-Buffalo. We also approved funding for an ASA member to develop aesthetics content for the new *Wi-Phi* site, although we did not receive applications and have tabled this project for now. As technology develops and costs decline, we should remain open to taping and/or live-streaming at least some elements of our annual meetings, for people without the means to attend in person.

Divisional Meetings

Our three divisional meetings in 2018 (in Philadelphia, PA; Pacific Grove, CA; and Santa Fe, NM) were great successes. All three regions had excellent attendance, diverse programming, and all finished their meetings with sufficient carry-over funds in case there is an unexpected registration drop for the next year. All registrations and financial disbursements are now handled through the ASA web site. But all other planning (including programming, scheduling, and locations) are determined by the local organizing groups. One gap in the funding arrangements for the regional meetings has been support for travel for students and unemployed/underemployed philosophers, and the availability of \$1000 for each division in 2018 from the Irene H. Chayes Travel funds will help begin to address this problem.

The Eastern meeting moved to the Courtyard Marriott across from City Hall in Philadelphia. The charming boutique hotel where it had met for many years remodeled, eliminating the meeting rooms. It then had a

catastrophic fire and had to close entirely. The Pacific meeting is making a big move in 2019 to the Berkeley City Club, a beautiful historic property designed by Julia Morgan, who also designed the Asilomar facility where Pacific had met for many decades. Unfortunately, the high costs at Asilomar and expensive travel have been a problem for many years, discouraging those on limited budgets from attending. The Pacific organizers hope the new location will make it easier for more to attend.

ACLS/NHA/IAA/CAA

The American Council of Learned Societies has its annual meeting for member organizations in April. Vice President Susan Feagin attended the meeting this year in Philadelphia as the ASA substitute Delegate and I attended as the Chief Administrative Officer. ACLS also holds a fall meeting for the CAOs. I have never before attended, as they have typically conflicted with our annual meeting, but will attend this November. I was also elected earlier this year to the Executive Committee of the CAO council of the ACLS. The organization maintains a very useful list-serv for CAOs. An attorney specializing in non-profit organizations provides discounted rates for members and conducts a workshop on pressing legal issues at the spring meetings.

ASA also belongs to the National Humanities Alliance, the major lobbying organization for the humanities in the US, and contributes annual dues based on membership to the International Aesthetics Association. ASA is also an affiliated member of the College Art Association. That gives us a guaranteed 90-minute program at their annual meeting in February. I'm very pleased that Andrea Baldini organized a program for their 2019 meeting in New York and I hope we can take advantage of this opportunity in the future.

Elections

Two trustees complete their two-year terms on January 31, 2019 (Eva Kit Wah Man and Katherine Thomson-Jones). The trustees nominated four persons to stand for election as trustees and two to stand for election as Vice-President in December 2018. Their bios will be posted on the "Trustee elections" submenu on the Members section of the web site. The announcement and bios also will be posted on Facebook and through bulk e-mail to all members. The web site is also where the elections will be held in December. The web site enables us to set up elections that are completely confidential and easy to submit, which we hope will increase the participation rate. For the handful of members who do not use the internet, a notice in the August print newsletter informed persons unable to vote on-line to request a print ballot. One such request was received in 20016, but to date, no additional requests have been received.

Prizes

Committees have been busy selecting the winners of the new Ted Cohen Prize, the Monograph Prize, the Outstanding Student Paper, the Selma Jeanne Cohen Prize in Dance Aesthetics, and the Irene H. Chayes New Voices awards, all to be awarded at the business meeting in Toronto. Guidelines are available on ASA's web site under "News-Grants and Prizes." Also on the web site, there is now a "donations" section where anyone can easily make a tax-deductible donation to the Ted Cohen, John Fisher, Peter Kivy, and Somaesthetics Research Prize funds.

Two new prizes were established in the last year. The Somaesthetics Research Prize is funded from the revenue resulting from a generous gift from a private foundation. The one-time Peter Kivy Prize is funded with gifts from family and friends. Two other potential donors have spoken with me about establishing prizes in the future and we are always open to new ideas. The Board decided years ago that all new prizes must be self-supporting.

In 2017, the first Arthur Danto/American Society for Aesthetics prize winner was selected. It was to be awarded in January 2018 at the APA-Eastern meeting in Savannah, along with a program with commentary and response. Unfortunately, the snow storm that week made it impossible for participants to get to the meeting. The session has been rescheduled for the January 2019 APA-Eastern meeting. The prize will be awarded in alternate years for the outstanding published article in aesthetics in the previous two years. The Board, in approving this prize, hoped that it will bring more attention to aesthetics among the broader philosophical community.

For the first competition, fourteen nominations were received. Three were withdrawn, as nominators were not members of both APA and ASA and declined to join both to make the nomination. The winner announced in June 2017 is Professor Kenneth Walden (Dartmouth College) for his paper, "Art and Moral Revolution." The article was published in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 73:3 (Summer 2015), 283-295. It is available in the Wiley On-line Library (for ASA members) and JStor.

JAAC

We are now completing the fourth year of a six-year publication contract with Wiley-Blackwell. Theodore Gracyk and Robert Stecker, co-editors of the *Journal*, area in their second five-year terms that continue through 2023. We are all very grateful for the editorial and financial success of the *Journal*. The JAAC co-editors have prepared a separate report on the *Journal* which is available on the ASA web site. As noted, revenue from the *Journal* provides about 70% of the ASA's operating budget. This revenue comes from institutional subscriptions and downloads from JStor. We hope members help us ensure that their home institutions continue to renew their library subscriptions.

ASA Newsletter

Shelby Moser continued as co-editor of the *Newsletter*, publishing three issues each year. Michel-Antoine Xhignesse was selected as her co-editor after an open search. They have a good working relationship with the printer in Savannah that ASA has used for several years. All agreed that there was no point in moving to a different printer, so long as everyone is happy with the current arrangement. To avoid the considerable expense of a separate print mailing of schedule and registration information for the Annual Meeting, I compiled a 12-page insert on salmon paper for the summer issue of the *Newsletter*, with a complete schedule as of 7/31/2018, mail-in registration form, mail-in membership renewal form, and the complete text of the new Policies on Discrimination, Harassment, and Respectful Behavior. Although we are experiencing several schedule changes since that printing, I hope those who prefer a print program bring this with them to the meeting. I expect to do this next year, again to save printing and mailing costs.

ASAGE

At ASAGE (the ASA Graduate E-Journal), Nick Curry as Managing Editor and Eric Murphy as Assistant Editor, completed their two year terms on June 30, 2018. After a national search with a broad pool of applicants, new editors were selected last spring, Emily Lacy as Managing Editor and Jeremy Fried as Assistant Editor. As ASAGE just celebrated its 10-year anniversary, a review committee to assess the role and success of the publication was appointed and presented their recommendations to the Board last year.

Facebook

ASA Member Gemma Argüello established in 2014 an unofficial Facebook-Group page which has been very popular with members. The Board decided to formalize our arrangements and put out a call for applications to be the Facebook Manager. Gemma was appointed and oversees both the Group page and a formal ASA page. The group page currently has over 1000 members, and it is open to both ASA members and non-members. Anyone on the group site can post their own announcements of aesthetics events, learn about other events, and add comments. The site thus functions as an effective replacement for the old AE-list-serv, which we had to shut down when the new web site went “live” on August 28, 2015.

Guide to Graduate Studies in North America

The fourth edition of the *Guide* was published in 2016, and is available to the public on the web site. We had some difficulty getting department chairs to respond to the questionnaire mailed in early 2016. An addendum has been started to include departments not included in the original published *Guide*; information should be sent to secretary-treasurer@aesthetics-online.org. We have not at this time scheduled another edition, but should probably consider this for 2019 or 2020.

Financial Affairs

ASA is presently in excellent financial shape. The *Journal* generates substantial income (over \$200,000 a year) which, along with membership dues of about one-eighth of that, cover our operating expenses. We all wish that nothing would ever change in the earning capacity of journals, but nobody knows what publishing will look like in five, let alone ten years. We are making a heavy investment in grants to promote the ASA and aesthetics and hope that future budgets will show a much greater revenue stream from memberships. As noted, we are fortunate to have a substantial investment account at this writing. It is certainly possible, in the future, that the revenue from this account will be needed to support basic operating expenses. But we have several years (at least) to work on promotion of ASA membership and aesthetics.

ASA also benefits financially from its very thin administrative structure. We have no employees (and thus no salaries or benefits to pay), no physical office, no staff. We are all independent contractors receiving modest honoraria from ASA for our services. The absence of these overhead expenses means we can keep membership dues low, but it also means we are not able to provide all the services that might be expected from a much larger organization. Given our current membership and likely growth in the coming years, I don't anticipate a change in this administrative structure.

I attend all the divisional meetings, as well as the annual meeting, and I am happy to talk with any members who have additional questions about the ASA. If we can't talk in person, you are also welcome to contact me by e-mail: secretary-treasurer@aesthetics-online.org

-Julie Van Camp
September 26, 2018