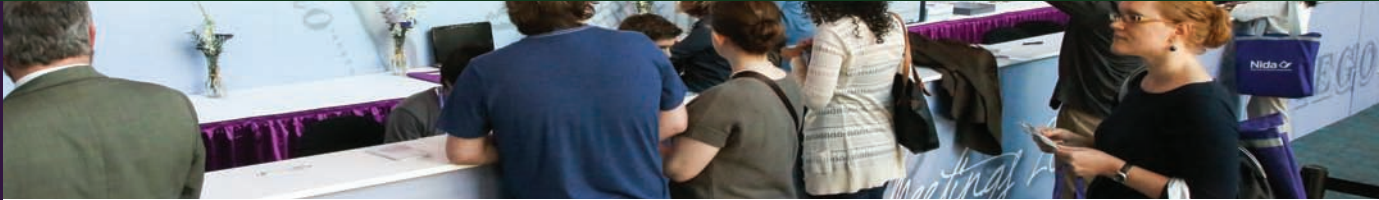


SOCIETY REPORT

SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE



When members talk about the Society of Biblical Literature, they often use synecdoche. “I’m going to SBL” means “I’m going to the Annual Meeting.” In this usage, SBL is a meeting, one part of the organization, not the organization as a whole.

To be sure, we are all pretty fond of the meeting. The regular post–Annual Meeting registrant survey shows very high satisfaction with the conference—what registrants professionally and personally get out of it. I was reminded of the importance of face-to-face meetings by the preface to Alex Pentland’s book *Social Physics: How Good Ideas Spread*. Pentland, who helped create MIT’s Media Lab, described a situation in which university researchers felt isolated with one another, even when they were working in the same field. This isolation limited results. In this case, he said, “the university administrators and the funding agencies thought it was sufficient to have the researchers read each other’s papers . . . that they didn’t need to travel to meetings or conferences.” The work lagged until that changed: “It was only when they began to meet and spend *informal* time together that new ideas began to bubble up and new ways of approaching problems began to spread.”

SBL fosters these connections, makes possible these networks, and it is done within and outside of our meetings (annual, international, and regionals). The services of SBL are larger than any one program, even one as important as the Annual Meeting. Just over 8,100 members, over 1,000 volunteers, and twenty-two full- and part-time staff have built a whole with many parts.

In 2015 we formed the Professions department, which brings together membership services, programs, and resources that help demonstrate the full scope of the Society of Biblical Literature. To learn more about the big picture, what SBL does as

a learned society to foster biblical scholarship (from student to emeritus, from specialist to the public interested in our work), please see the various reports that follow in this year’s Society Report. We hope you will marvel, as we do, at what your participation, volunteerism, and membership in SBL accomplishes for an entire discipline.

As you read, please consider this. We have become accustomed to think about the things we purchase and the organizations we join in terms of a singular and independent transaction: *quid pro quo*. I urge you to consider what you do in SBL in larger, communal terms: *unus pro omnibus, omnes pro uno*.

For two reasons, your participation and membership in SBL is not a simple transaction. First, your membership pools resources that serve the entire guild, advance the discipline, and support scholars in early career phases. Your membership provides resources for you, and it also helps others. Second, your membership ensures that the discipline will be strong in the future, for the next generation. A strong guild keeps the legacy of our collective work alive.

Recently, the widow of a member (deceased in 2002) endowed SBL with resources to support future development of Bible Odyssey in a fund that also provides a legacy for her partner’s work. That is, *mutatis mutandis*, what joining SBL accomplishes. Membership advances our work and the collective discipline now and for the next generation.

We don’t work in isolation from each other, or the guild, or the next generation. As many of you attend the Annual Meeting in November, I hope you will see the full scope of what you do in SBL for your colleagues and for the future.

John F. Kutsko, Executive Director

Founded in 1880 in the United States of America, the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) is the oldest and largest international, interdisciplinary, learned society devoted to the critical investigation of the bible. The Society has published the flagship journal of biblical scholarship, the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, since 1881 and has been a member of the American Council of Learned Societies since 1929. With a membership of just over 8,100 scholars, teachers, students, religious leaders, and interested individuals from over one hundred countries, the Society is more diverse than ever before. The mission of the SBL, to “foster biblical scholarship,” is a simple one. It could not be carried out without the more than 1,000 member volunteers who donate their time and talents to this mission.

The SBL offers its members diverse resources in order to accomplish our mission. Many of these are tangible, such as the diverse electronic resources that promote research and teaching. These include, but are by no means limited to, the entire backlist of the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, the *Review of Biblical Literature*, and the *SBL Greek New Testament*. Members of the Society have access to the member directory and the Program Book for our Annual Meeting, allowing them to link with other scholars who share common interests in the field of biblical studies. We provide an annual Job Report that tracks employment in biblical, religious, and theological studies. The SBL Font Foundation is developing specialized fonts for biblical studies that are available to individual scholars at no cost. We support women and underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities in the profession through our mentoring and recruiting programs. Special tools and sessions are provided for students and those outside the academy. The Society also fosters biblical scholarship through a variety of publishing partnerships.

For over a century SBL has provided, through a system of Congresses, a chance for its members to gather and exchange ideas, to network and form relationships. Members receive substantial discounts on registration and housing at these events. These dynamic meetings allow scholars to renew old relationships with colleagues and mentors and to meet and interact with the “great names” in biblical scholarship. The meetings are designed as forums to encompass the diverse needs of our members. They include smaller, intimate regional meetings, the diverse and growing International Meeting, and the largest gathering of scholars in one single place, our Annual Meeting. Over half of SBL’s members attend the Annual Meeting. SBL’s meetings keep scholars active and up to date, provide them access to the latest tools and resources, and expose members to diverse subjects and ideas. Special sessions are provided for students to help prepare them for their future in biblical studies. Members are provided training and resources for creating résumés and have

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ABOUT THE SBL



an opportunity to apply for job postings listed on our website, as well as apply and be interviewed at the Annual Meeting at the Employment Center and to network with other scholars to learn about other employment opportunities. A professional photographer is available at the Employment Center to take “head shots” for use on résumés and on social and professional media, at a substantially reduced rate.

Members of SBL have opportunities to publish papers in the flagship *Journal of Biblical Literature*, write for Bible Odyssey, write a review for the *Review of Biblical Literature*, and submit books for possible publication with SBL Press. Members also receive substantial discounts on SBL Press books at the congresses and also receive substantial discounts from affiliate organizations on their journals and books. At this time these include, among others, De Gruyter, the Pennsylvania State University Press, Cambridge University Press, and Sage.

In addition, the Society offers members opportunities to apply for many awards and travel grants, including:

- Paul J. Achtemeier Award for New Testament Scholarship
- David Noel Freedman Award for Excellence and Creativity in Biblical Scholarship
- De Gruyter prize for Biblical Studies and Reception History
- Regional Scholar Awards
- Travel Grants

Besides these tangible benefits of membership, SBL offers many other benefits that are no less important, even if less concrete.

The Society is the oldest academic organization dedicated to biblical scholarship, so by definition any member of the biblical studies academy or interested individual needs to be a member of and represented by the SBL. Membership in the Society not only allows one to be counted as a colleague with peers in the guild but is also an important professional credential.

Membership also enables scholars and students to provide valuable data by completing an in-depth member profile survey. With this aggregated information, we assist departments and institutions in creating new positions or making the case for keeping faculty positions open. With this data we approach funding agencies to develop programs and services that strengthen the field and give new opportunities to biblical scholars. Through the member survey, we see trends more clearly, respond to them more quickly, and allocate SBL resources more effectively to help define and shape worldwide biblical scholarship. Please join, renew, participate, and fill out your member profile.

The Society continues to track job postings submitted through the Employment Services website (www.aarsbl.org), which it comanages with the American Academy of Religion. A fuller report will be available soon, but the information below provides a synopsis of postings from July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2015.

The overall number of positions ticked up slightly from the previous academic year, halting the drastic decline between 2012–2013 and 2013–2014.

However, slightly more of these positions were pending some type of approval (19 versus 11, or 4.1% versus 2.4%) or were designated as visiting positions (49 versus 46, or 10.7% versus 10.2%). These changes in a direction of concern seem to contradict a positive move, namely, that the number of tenure-track positions increased significantly year over year from 184 to 231. Given the fluctuation in numbers and types of positions in recent years, however, we should interpret this fact timidly. Along with positions that are tenured or on the tenure-track, we have classified faculty positions in three other ways: contingent, which are explicitly noted as non-tenure-track, part-time, term-limited, or nonpermanent in some way per the AAUP definition; positions for which tenure status is unknown; and postdoctoral and/or fellowship positions. The numbers of contingent and postdoctoral/fellowship positions decreased significantly, while positions for which tenure status is unknown increased. Even if the positions in the unknown category are all contingent, 50% of faculty positions overall would be tenured or tenure-track, which is significantly better than the 41% from the 2013–2014 academic year.

We also classify institutions based on the types and share of the highest degrees they confer. Private not-for-profit institutions have long dominated hiring in our field, accounting for around 80% of positions since the 2001–2002 academic year. Their share had decreased from 81% to 78% over the past several years, but jumped again to almost 82%. This increase also reflects positive gains in real numbers of positions (from 282 to 295) among private not-for-profit institutions, but at the expense of a notable decrease at public institutions. Positions at the latter institutions are at their lowest level to date, the 64 positions for this academic year just below the previous nadir of 65 positions during the 2009–2010 academic year. Except among master's institutions, decreases in the number and share of positions by type of institution seem more closely related to this classification (public versus private) than to the primary types of degrees the institutions confer (e.g., baccalaureate versus master's). Both public master's and research institutions decreased year over the past year (17 to 14 and 63 to 50 positions, respectively), but private master's institutions are the only type of private institutions that have seen a year over year decrease (65 to 54 positions).

Among faculty positions, the share of upper-level positions sharply increased from the previous year, from 6.4% to 13.5%. The shares of entry and mid-level positions, as well as that of open positions, held relatively steady year over year, while the share of positions for which a hiring rank is unknown decreased. Almost 55% of positions are entry-level, 5% are mid-level, and 14% are open.

Academic Year	Job Postings
2001–2002	536
2002–2003	538
2003–2004	519
2004–2005	520
2005–2006	598
2006–2007	577
2007–2008	652
2008–2009	574
2009–2010	412
2010–2011	523
2011–2012	501
2012–2013	548
2013–2014	452
2014–2015	460

It has been a good year for Bible Odyssey, and if it were to have a theme, it would be, to quote the Jeffersons, “Movin’ on Up.” We’ve seen upward movement in our overall site traffic: from 6,914 visitors in July–August 2014 to 72,865 visitors in July–August 2015—as well as an increase in course adoptions. For a three-day period in September 2014 there were 80 visits from “edu” sites; in the same three-day period in September 2015 we received 276. That’s measurable progress, and we have our SBL members to thank, who continue to write and produce great content for the site and who have promoted it by word of mouth, blogged about it, or assigned readings in their classrooms.

While we celebrate all the contributions on the site, and believe in them equally for their merit and intellectual value, some content is worth flagging for earning the special attention of our audience. In particular, a gold star goes to Brennan Breed for his top-ranked article, “What Are the Earliest Versions and Translations of the Bible?” with well over 9,330 views this year, and to Christopher Skinner for his international hit, “Who Was the Beloved Disciple?” with 9,000 views this past year.

Kudos also to Bart Ehrman for having the most viewed video with his “Apocalyptic Literature.” Other popular videos include Gabriel Said Reynolds on “Judaism, Christianity, and Islam,” Candida Moss on “How Did the Early Christians Think about Martyrdom?” and Mark Goodacre on “The Synoptic Question.”

But focusing on the top is misleading. There are many other articles, timelines, videos, maps, and games that receive steady traffic and that inspire the questions we continue to receive each day via our “Ask a Scholar” button (<http://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/ask-a-scholar.aspx>). Notable here are Tracy Lemos’s “Weddings and Marriage Traditions in Ancient Israel,” Maura Sala’s “The Road to Jericho,” and Dexter Callender’s video, “Noah and Gilgamesh.”

We are truly lucky to have such a talented corps of scholars who excel at communicating with general audiences and who have taken the time to translate the fascinating work of biblical scholarship into accessible and interesting content. Thank you!

What’s ahead for Bible Odyssey? We will continue to add more videos, timelines, quizzes, and articles. But we really want to set our sites on our discoverability, so that we can continue to “move on up” and bring our members’ work to a wider and broader audience. You can help Bible Odyssey to become a go-to resource for students, journalists, clergy, and interested readers by continuing to assign it in your classroom, blog about it, share links on social media, or talk it up among friends, family, and colleagues. And if anyone is a friend of Stephen Colbert or Oprah, let us know!



THE PHILIP G. AND LOIS F. ROETS ENDOWMENT FOR THE BIBLE AND THE PUBLIC GOOD

SBL extends its thanks to Lois Roets, widow of the late Philip Roets—biblical scholar, educator, and long-time member of the Society of Biblical Literature—for providing a \$50,000 fund that will be used exclusively to develop new content for Bible Odyssey. Beginning in 2015, The Philip G. and Lois F. Roets Endowment for the Bible and the Public Good will provide generous, long-term support to expand SBL’s mission to foster biblical scholarship among the general public. Bible Odyssey was developed through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Ongoing support such as this allows SBL to strengthen and extend its impact by engaging the public, educators, and the media. Please visit and support the public face of SBL at <http://www.bibleodyssey.org>.

1. The SBL Press Team

By the end of 2015 SBL Press will publish eighteen monographs, nineteen collected volumes, and two annuals. In addition to these book-length works, we will also publish four issues of *JBL* containing fifty articles, notes, and responses and more than five hundred reviews in *RBL*. Obviously, SBL Press could not do this



apart from the efforts of a large and diverse body of individuals devoted to authoring, editing, and producing works of scholarly excellence. To learn just how large and diverse the SBL Press team is, permit us to quantify the composition of some of the key groups within the SBL Press publications team.

1.1. The most visible members, of course, are the authors and editors of SBL Press works. The thirty-nine books in the 2015 lineup were authored or edited by fifty-nine scholars (14 women and 45 men). Although most hail from

the United States (35), SBL's international reach is also in evidence, with authors and editors from the Netherlands (4), Canada (3), Australia (3), Finland (2), France (2), Italy (2), Austria (1), Denmark (1), Japan (1), Malaysia (1), Norway (1), South Africa (1), Spain (1), and the United Kingdom (1).

As noted earlier, some 2015 SBL Press books were monographs, others collections of essays. The nineteen volumes of collected essays published the work of 306 scholars (94 women and 208 men) from thirty-four countries, making available scholarship from the United States (134), Germany (26), the United Kingdom (19), Australia (15), the Netherlands (14), Canada (13), Italy (13), Israel (7), South Africa (7), Switzerland (7), Spain (6), Austria (5), New Zealand (4), Norway (4), China (3), France (3), Belgium (2), Columbia (2), Finland (2), Indonesia (2), Japan (2), Myanmar (2), Peru (2), Russia (2), Cuba (1), Czech Republic (1), Dominican Republic (1), Ghana (1), Ireland (1), Malaysia (1), Portugal (1), Samoa (1), Sweden (1), and Ukraine (1).

SBL Press's serial publications present a similar picture. *JBL*, for example, published the works of fifty-three authors (14 women and 39 men) from the United States (33), Israel (13), the United Kingdom (3), Canada (2), Italy (1), and Japan (1). *RBL*'s 500+ reviews were authored by 417 scholars from the same countries as well as from Belgium, China, Germany, Hungary, India, Ireland, Lithuania, New Guinea, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Russia, Switzerland, and Taiwan.

The tally thus far: 59 authors or volume editors + 306 authors of essays + 53 authors of articles + 417 reviewers = 835 scholars from forty-two different countries creating the scholarly content that SBL Press publishes.

1.2. In order to ensure that SBL Press publications consistently adhere to the highest scholarly standards, we rely on the expertise and dedication of a number of editors and editorial boards. SBL Press's twenty-eight book series, for example, are managed by 127 of the finest scholars (35 women and 92 men) from the United States (61), Canada (16), Germany (8), the United Kingdom (8), Australia (7), Argentina (6), Israel (4), New Zealand (3), the Netherlands (3), Finland (2), Switzerland (2), Austria (1), France (1), Ghana (1), Hungary (1), Italy (1), Japan (1), and South Africa (1).

JBL's general editor and editorial board number forty-four (20 women and 24 men), who represent the scholarship of the United States (29), Canada (5), the United Kingdom (2), Israel (2), Switzerland (2), Austria (1), Denmark (1), Germany (1), and Japan (1). *RBL*'s editorial staff is, at present, comparatively small, comprising seven members (2 women and 5 men) from the United States (3), Austria (1), Canada (1), Germany (1), and the Netherlands (1).

The tally of editors volunteering their expertise and time: 127 book series editors + 44 *JBL* editors + 7 *RBL* editors = 178 scholars managing and monitoring the content that SBL Press publishes. Adding this 178 to the earlier 835 content creators leads to a striking result: over 1,000 SBL members from every corner of the globe are involved in authoring or editing SBL Press publications every year.

1.3. A relatively small staff of five full-time and four part-time workers based primarily in the Atlanta office takes the content created by these scholars and, with the help of freelance professionals, prepares it for publication in print and e-book form. Of this staff, several merit special mention.

As most readers of the report will recall, Leigh Andersen retired from the Press team in late 2014 (although she continued to help us through early 2015). Fortunately, Nicole Tilford (PhD, Emory) stepped into the position of Production Manager and kept SBL Press production moving along both effectively and efficiently. We are grateful to Nicole for extraordinary contributions from the very start of her career with the Press.

We are also grateful to Marketing Manager Kathie Klein, who recently celebrated twenty years of working on SBL books. Be sure to stop by the SBL book booth to admire Kathie's handiwork on our book covers and to thank Kathie for her service to the Society and its members.

Finally, we said goodbye to Acquisitions Editor Billie Jean Collins, who left the SBL Press team on 30 October to devote more time to her own publishing venture, Lockwood Press, as well as ongoing research and writing on matters Hittite, including finishing a book on Hittite ritual for SBL Press's WAW series. We will miss Billie Jean's skills, dedication, and collegiality, but we wish her every success and all the very best.

1.4. Obviously, the SBL Press team is large (1,000+ members), diverse (40+ countries), and ever-changing. It is an exciting time to be involved with SBL Press, not least because of the successful products that the team created, which led to SBL Press finishing its fiscal year in the black for a second year in a row. Even more exciting are the projects now under discussion and development. Stay tuned—it is a great time to be a member of the SBL Press team!

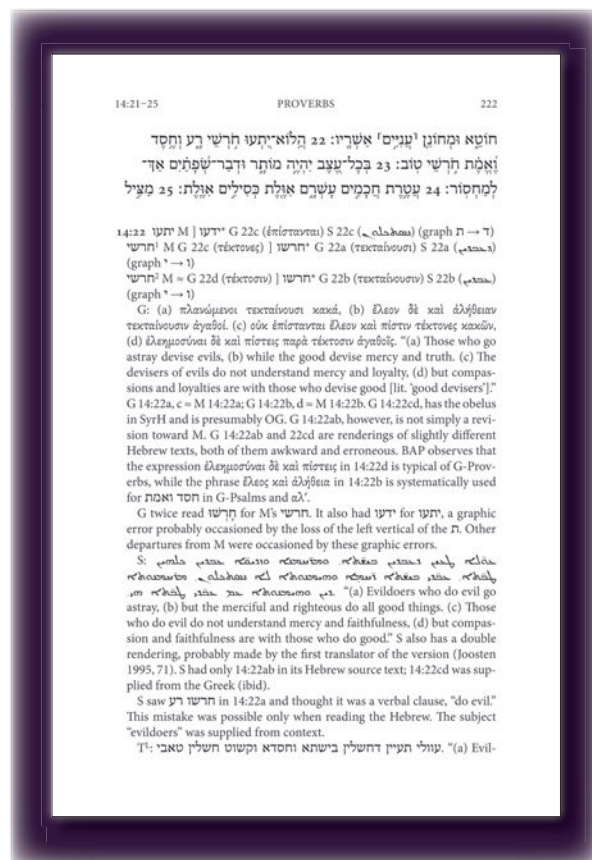
2. The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition

In April 2015 SBL Press published the first volume of a significant project in Hebrew Bible textual criticism: Michael V. Fox's *Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition with Introduction and Textual Commentary*. This publication was significant for SBL Press, since it signals a long-term commitment to a brand new field for us: publication of a critical edition of the Hebrew Bible. The work is also significant as the first volume of *The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition* (HBCE), a series devoted to producing critical reconstructions of the text of the Hebrew Bible.

Under the leadership of Editor-in-Chief Ron Hendel, HBCE will publish twenty-one volumes of a Hebrew text reconstructed via an eclectic, rather than a diplomatic, approach. The goal of the HBCE is to approximate the manuscript that was the latest common ancestor of all the extant manuscripts. This "earliest inferable text" is called the archetype. The HBCE represents a new model for a critical edition of the Hebrew Bible, although it will be familiar to scholars who use critical editions of other ancient works such as the Septuagint or New Testament.

As can be seen in the sample illustration from the Proverbs volume, each HBCE volume will provide a critical text of the biblical text and by an extensive text-critical commentary on that text. A series of introductory chapters on the manuscript evidence for the Hebrew text, the textual witness of the Septuagint, Peshitta, and other versions, and the principles and procedures used in the volume set the entire text-critical process on a solid foundation.

HBCE's print volumes are supplemented and supported by a website devoted to the project: <http://www.hbceonline.org/>. At present the site



provides background and online resources related to the project. In the future the site will add an electronic version of all texts, including all the material from the print volumes plus important texts and versions and even photographs of manuscripts. The electronic HBCE will be free and open-access, and its open architecture will allow scholars to use the texts and data for other projects. Thus the HBCE will not only provide a critically edited eclectic Hebrew text but also create electronic tools for a new generation of biblical scholars.

3. E-books

The past year has witnessed a significant expansion in the availability of SBL Press e-books, especially through the world's most visible online e-book seller: Amazon.com. Thanks to the development of the Print Replica service (Amazon's version of fixed layout, PDF e-books), we can now sell all of our titles in a Kindle-compatible format, including those with ancient languages and complex layouts. Prior to this, only a few SBL Press titles (those that did not contain Hebrew, Greek, tables, or other special formatting) were compatible with the Kindle format and thus available to be sold as e-books on Amazon. Now we are able to release new books in print and e-book formats simultaneously, giving our members greater flexibility in their buying decisions.

One of our biggest sellers in this new format has been the second edition of *The SBL Handbook of Style*. *SBLHS* appears on Amazon's Top 100 Sellers Bible Study and Reference category in the Handbooks and the Antiquities and Archaeology subcategories. Also available are Michael V. Fox's *Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition with Introduction and Textual Commentary*, editors James R. Harrison and L. L. Welborn's *The First Urban Churches 1: Methodological Foundations*, Lynne St. Clair Darden's *Scripturalizing Revelation: An African American Postcolonial Reading of Empire*, and over seventy other SBL Press titles.

Of course, Amazon is not our only e-book outlet, nor is Kindle the only available format. In fact, SBL Press now offers 279 titles for individuals to purchase via Google Play (<https://play.google.com/store>), and we are in the process of creating a dedicated e-book section on the SBL Press website and of adding the ability to sell e-books directly on the SBL Press online bookstore. Once this capability is added, a frequently requested option will become available to members: purchasing e-books at the Annual Meeting discounted price. Finally, in addition to these individual-customer options, hundreds of SBL titles remain available for libraries to purchase through EBSCO, ProQuest, and other library e-book vendors.

4. *Journal of Biblical Literature*

In 2015 *JBL* not only maintained but built upon its long tradition of excellence and its reputation as the flagship journal in the field. During this, the 134th, year of publication *JBL* continued to broaden its range of coverage in terms of content and methodology, publishing articles on the vision and task of biblical criticism (Fernando F. Segovia), Lukan interior monologues (Michal Beth Dinkler), the book of Job in ritual perspective (David A. Lambert), and the afterlives of New Testament apocrypha (Annette Yoshiko Reed), to mention just a few. In addition, the December issue of *JBL* will have a special *JBL* Forum on African biblical interpretation.

This year also saw the publication of General Editor Adele Reinhartz's editorial foreword entitled "The *Journal of Biblical Literature* and the Critical Investigation of the Bible." This fascinating piece wends its way through the historical record preserved in the pages of *JBL* itself to understand better how the *Jour-*



nal, and the critical investigation of the Bible, developed, evolved, and advanced in the distant and recent past—and what that might mean for the present. Those who wish to read the foreword may do so at http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/Reinhartz_JBL_134_3.pdf.

In light of *JBL*'s continued excellence and expanding coverage, it is no surprise that *JBL* is rated by one agency as the top biblical studies journal in the world. Scopus, a bibliographic database offering abstracts and citations for academic journals across all disciplines, maintains an independent journal ranking system named SCImago Journal and Country Rank (SJR). According to SJR, in 2014 *JBL* ranked number 20 among 358 Religious Studies journals worldwide (335 out of 3,318 Arts and Humanities journals). No other biblical studies journal ranked higher. In addition, *JBL* ranked 15 out of 358 in terms of the number of articles published in Religious Studies journals.

Thanks to General Editor Adele Reinhartz, Managing Editor Billie Jean Collins, Editorial Assistant Georgette Ledgister, and the forty-three international members of the editorial board for not only maintaining but also increasing *JBL*'s 134-year legacy of excellence.



5. Review of Biblical Literature

Last year's Society Report noted that *RBL* provided access to over 7,500 reviews of books across the entire expanse of biblical studies and its cognate disciplines; this year the number exceeds 8,000. The 500+ works reviewed during the past twelve months came from seventy-six different publishers from around the world. Although most of the 500+ were English-language books, volumes published in French, German, Italian, Modern Hebrew, and Spanish also were reviewed. As mentioned above (§1.1), 417 scholars from twenty different countries authored at least one review.

As grateful for and proud of all that we have been able to accomplish in the past, *RBL* continues to listen to our community of reviewers and readers, learn from our successes and mistakes, and press forward as we seek both to broaden and increase our output even as we raise our standards of performance.

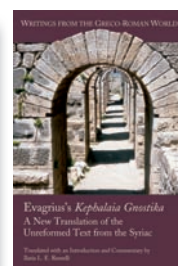
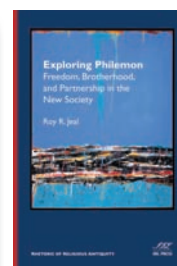
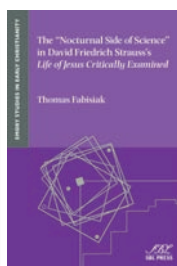
To that end, *RBL* is currently discussing and developing several significant changes in its structure and its online presence. Specifically, the *RBL* editorial board will expand so that more scholars are available not only to assign books for review but also to continue vetting reviews prior to publication. In addition, the *RBL* website, now twelve years old, is being completely redesigned from the ground up, in order to refine current capabilities and add new functionalities that will only enhance *RBL*'s standing as the premier source of scholarly reviews of biblical studies books.

6. *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*

Congratulations are due another SBL Press online journal, *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*, which just completed its twentieth year of publication. *TC* was one of the earliest born-digital academic journals, a pioneer in both its scholarly field and the open-access movement. Under the leadership of General Editor Jan Krans, Assistant Editors Tommy Wasserman and Juha Pakkala, Book Review Editors Thomas J. Kraus and Heike Höttinger, Technical Editor Tim Finney, and a seventeen-member editorial board, *TC* provides free access to peer-reviewed articles, critical notes, project reports, and reviews of works in the field of biblical textual criticism. To learn more about *TC* or to read any of its published works, see <http://purl.org/TC>.

2015 BOOK PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ Tzvi Abusch, *The Witchcraft Series Maqlû* (WAW)
- ◆ James P. Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (2nd ed., WAW)
- ◆ Paul N. Anderson, Felix Just, S.J., and Tom Thatcher, eds., *John, Jesus, and History, Volume 3: Glimpses of Jesus through the Johannine Lens* (ECL)
- ◆ Mark J. Boda, Frank Ritzel Ames, John Ahn, and Mark Leuchter, eds., *The Prophets Speak on Forced Migration* (AIL)
- ◆ Mark J. Boda, Michael H. Floyd, and Colin M. Toffelmire, eds., *The Book of the Twelve and the New Form Criticism* (ANEM)
- ◆ Eberhard Bons and Patrick Pouchelle, eds., *The Psalms of Solomon: Language, History, Theology* (EJL)
- ◆ Kari Elisabeth Børreson and Adriana Valerio, eds., *The High Middle Ages* (BW)
- ◆ Lynne St. Clair Darden, *Scripturalizing Revelation: An African American Postcolonial Reading of Empire* (SemeiaSt)
- ◆ Brian R. Doak, *Phoenician Aniconism in Its Mediterranean and Ancient Near Eastern Contexts* (ABS)
- ◆ Jonathan A. Draper and Clayton N. Jefford, eds., *The Didache: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle in Early Christianity* (ECL)
- ◆ David L. Eastman, *The Ancient Martyrdom Accounts of Peter and Paul* (WGRW)
- ◆ Thomas Fabisiak, *The "Nocturnal Side of Science" in David Friedrich Strauss's Life of Jesus Critically Examined* (ESEC)
- ◆ Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition with Introduction and Textual Commentary* (HBCE)
- ◆ Roy E. Gane and Ada Taggar-Cohen, eds., *Current Issues in Priestly and Related Literature: The Legacy of Jacob Milgrom and Beyond* (RBS)
- ◆ James R. Harrison and L. L. Welborn, eds., *The First Urban Churches 1: Methodological Foundations* (WGRWSup)
- ◆ Trine Bjørnung Hasselbalch, *Meaning and Context in the Thanksgiving Hymns: Linguistic and Rhetorical Perspectives on a Collection of Prayers from Qumran* (EJL)
- ◆ Jione Havea, Margaret Aymer, and Steed Vernyl Davidson, eds., *Islands, Islanders, and the Bible: RumInations* (SemeiaSt)
- ◆ Jione Havea and Peter H. W. Lau, eds., *Reading Ruth in Asia* (IVBS)
- ◆ Jeremy M. Hutton and Aaron D. Rubin, eds., *Epigraphy, Philology, and the Hebrew Bible: Methodological Perspectives on Philological and Comparative Study of the Hebrew Bible in Honor of Jo Ann Hackett* (ANEM)



- ◆ Roy R. Jeal, *Exploring Philemon: Freedom, Brotherhood, and Partnership in the New Society* (RRA)
- ◆ Andrew Knapp, *Royal Apologetic in the Ancient Near East* (WAWSup)
- ◆ Siegfried Kreuzer, *The Bible in Greek: Translation, Transmission, and Theology of the Septuagint* (SCS)
- ◆ André LaCocque, *Jesus the Central Jew: His Times and His People* (ECL)
- ◆ Gwynned de Looijer, *The Qumran Paradigm: A Critical Evaluation of Some Foundational Hypotheses in the Construction of the Qumran Sect* (EJL)
- ◆ Joseph A. Marchal, ed., *The People beside Paul: The Philippian Assembly and History from Below* (ECL)
- ◆ Alicia D. Myers and Bruce G. Schuchard, eds., *Abiding Words: The Use of Scripture in the Gospel of John* (RBS)
- ◆ Mercedes Navarro Puerto and Marinella Perroni, eds., *Gospels: Narrative and History* (BW)
- ◆ Jane Lancaster Patterson, *Keeping the Feast: Metaphors of Sacrifice in 1 Corinthians and Philippians* (ECL)
- ◆ Ilaria L. E. Ramelli, *Evagrius's Kephalaia Gnostika: A New Translation of the Unreformed Text from the Syriac* (WGRW)
- ◆ Vernon K. Robbins and Jonathan M. Potter, eds., *Jesus and Mary Reimagined in Early Christian Literature* (WGRWSup)
- ◆ David T. Runia and Gregory E. Sterling, eds., *The Studia Philonica Annual XXVII, 2015: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism* (SPhiloA)
- ◆ Brian B. Schmidt, ed., *Contextualizing Israel's Sacred Writings: Ancient Literacy, Orality, and Literary Production* (AIL)
- ◆ Jason M. Silverman and Caroline Waerzeggers, eds., *Political Memory in and after the Persian Empire* (ANEM)
- ◆ Mark R. Sneed, ed., *Was There a Wisdom Tradition? New Prospects in Israelite Wisdom Studies* (AIL)
- ◆ Richard C. Steiner, *Disembodied Souls: The Nefesh in Israel and Kindred Spirits in the Ancient Near East, with an Appendix on the Katumuwa Inscription* (ANEM)
- ◆ Jan G. van der Watt, ed., *Review of Biblical Literature, 2015* (RBL)
- ◆ Hans de Wit and Janet Dyk, eds., *Bible and Transformation: The Promise of Intercultural Bible Reading* (SemeiaSt)
- ◆ Sami Yli-Karjanmaa, *Reincarnation in Philo of Alexandria* (SPhiloM)
- ◆ K. Lawson Younger, *A Political History of the Arameans: From Their Origins to the End of Their Politics* (ABS)

SBL BOOK SERIES

Ancient Israel and Its Literature
 Ancient Near Eastern Monographs
 Archaeology and Biblical Studies
 Bible and Women
 Biblical Encyclopedia
 Biblical Scholarship in North America
 Commentary on the Septuagint
 Early Christianity and Its Literature
 Early Judaism and Its Literature
 Emory Studies in Early Christianity
 Global Perspectives on Biblical Scholarship
 The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition
 History of Biblical Studies
 International Voices in Biblical Studies

The New Testament in the Greek Fathers
 Resources for Biblical Study
 Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity
 Semeia Studies
 Septuagint and Cognate Studies
 Studia Philonica Annual
 Studia Philonica Monographs
 Text-Critical Studies
 Wisdom Literature from the Ancient World
 Writings from the Ancient World
 Writings from the Ancient World Supplement Series
 Writings from the Greco-Roman World
 Writings from the Greco-Roman World Supplement Series
 Writings from the Islamic World

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting program continues to grow and diversify. The total number of program sessions peaked in 2014, and the average number of sessions per program unit decreased from 2014 to 2015. But the number of proposals and unique participants increased for the third consecutive year, indicating that more voices are participating.

	2015 Atlanta	2014 San Diego	2013 Baltimore	2012 Chicago	2011 San Francisco
Program Units	177	174	169	169	170
Affiliates	17	18	20	21	24
Program Unit Chairs	303	316	310	277	268
Total Program Sessions	521	523	449	488	505
Registrants	4,604*	4,651	4,950	5,106	4,503
Participants	2,252	2,133	2,013	1,731	1,957
Proposals	3,171	2,888	2,830	2,487	2,989
*As of 10/26/15					

In fact, the program has grown significantly over the past decade—and, some would argue, has fragmented into less helpful, meaningful, or productive pieces. This is true primarily prior to 2011. Since then growth via new program units has been limited. The number of sessions that units organize is at approximately the same level as it was in 2011. There is some concern with the number of program units that produce this number of sessions (169 units in 2011 producing 409 sessions [2.4 sessions per unit] and 177 units in 2015 producing 415 sessions [2.3]) and that more units producing about the same number of or fewer sessions equates to fragmentation. This has been a main item of discussion for the Annual Meeting Program Committee over the past few years, and the committee has started a process of comprehensively reviewing the program.

While the program continues to deliver what attendees want, a number of other issues need to be addressed, including how the meeting's reach might be extended through virtual means, how presenters (especially first-timers) might be supported with materials on presentations and mentoring, and how the meeting might more earnestly engage public interest in our field. Since last year we have launched "Retail Tuesday," during which we open the Exhibit Hall to the public on the last day of the Annual Meeting and organize public-focused events for that day. Events this year include a partnership with the Westar Institute featuring Dom Crossan and a session on national and political Identities. Member feedback will continue to be essential to decision making regarding these issues.

International Meeting

Fluctuations in the numbers of proposals, participants, and sessions on the International Meeting program are related more to the location of the meeting than the types of units at the meeting or any other factor. We anticipated a significant decrease in most of these numbers for the 2015 IM in Buenos Aires, Argentina, but were pleasantly surprised when they exceeded our expectations. Moreover, many program unit chairs remarked how wonderful an opportunity this was to meet new colleagues and establish new long-term research connections. Next year's meeting will provide further opportunities, and we are optimistic about the experiences attendees will have. Moreover, with ongoing conversations about locations such as Australia, Brazil, Finland, India, Ireland, and Israel, we anticipate a healthy mix of opportunities for scholars around the world.

CONGRESSES

	2015 Buenos Aires	2014 Vienna	2013 St. Andrews	2012 Amsterdam	2011 London
Program Units	54	54	59	57	57
Affiliates	2	2	2	2	3
Program Unit Chairs	90	90	105	103	103
Total Program Sessions	134	198	154	184	148
Registrants	406	1052	849	837	972
Participants	375	830	573	732	665
Proposals	432	1,140	730	921	931

Despite the fluctuations it causes, varying the location of the International Meeting will continue. The variation reflects SBL's dedication to highlighting scholarship and contextual interests of significance throughout the world. One of the ways this happens is through partnerships, and we are excited to partner with the Society of Asian Biblical Studies, the Korean Old Testament Society, and the Korean New Testament Society for the 2016 International Meeting in Seoul, South Korea.

Another way we emphasize contextual interests is by setting themes for each meeting. With that in mind, the local programming committee has set the theme "Crossing Borders: Biblical Studies in Today's Multi-dimensional World," which intends to highlight the many (types of) borders on which Korea is situated and interrogate how important the tasks of connecting and relating different parts of our diverse world are for scholars today. These efforts serve as a medium for networking and a means to view the wider textual and contextual aspects that characterize the remarkable scope of biblical scholarship. The International Meeting is a rich mix of traditional and emerging scholarly methods, combining global and local interests in the historical interpretation and social impact of sacred texts. The meeting is one of cultures, and it broadens our horizons as well as makes more intimate our international membership. We hope you will join us in Seoul on July 3–7, 2016.

Regional Meetings

Regional Meetings throughout the U.S. also continue to offer important opportunities to SBL members, according to attendees from recent meetings. Over 90 percent described themselves as satisfied or very satisfied with the meetings they attend, 80 percent felt engaged by the meeting's content, and over 80 percent considered the meetings worthwhile investments of money and time. Program content was relevant to the career of 70 percent of attendees, and an equal percentage agreed that they were exposed to new, thought-provoking, or inspirational ideas. Most attendees do so regularly and in addition to attendance at larger national or international conferences. For those who attend only regional meetings, cost, travel time, and personal preference are major factors. Regardless of the type of meeting, feedback is clear about the top reasons members attend. The top two reasons are to attend presentations of scholarship in one's field and to meet and network with colleagues, but obtaining feedback about one's research and attending presentations of scholarship outside one's field are also broadly important. (See also the 2016 Regional Meeting Schedule on page 25.)

FUTURE SBL ANNUAL MEETINGS

San Antonio, TX November 19–22, 2016
 Boston, MA November 18–21, 2017
 Denver, CO November 17–20, 2018
 San Diego, CA November 23–26, 2019
 Boston, MA November 21–24, 2020
 San Antonio, TX November 20–23, 2021

FUTURE SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

Seoul, South Korea
 July 3–7, 2016

Berlin, Germany
 August 7–11, 2017

Over time, SBL has become synonymous with our Annual Meetings, often being referred to as one and the same. Similarly, many conjure little more than books and journals when they think of SBL, as if the organization were a members-only library. We are proud of the meeting and SBL Press and agree that they are uniquely important for many scholars, yet we would quickly point out how much more SBL represents. Just over 8,100 members, over 1,000 volunteers, and twenty-two full and part-time staff have built a whole with many pieces.

Internally, we talk about these pieces having three major goals: access, information, and opportunities. The pieces facilitate access to key professional resources, especially for underresourced individuals. They help us to develop an intimate knowledge of our members, create and distribute data and research about the profession, and inform the public about the relevance and value of biblical scholarship. They also cultivate opportunities for professional development and personal enrichment for career scholars and lifetime enthusiasts. The pieces are many: fonts; online access to critical editions; online books; membership-based discounts for print editions of *JBL*, *RBL*, and a host of other journals; analyses of hiring trends and issues of degree production and representation; mentoring events for students, women, and underrepresented minorities at Annual, International, and Regional meetings in the profession; and awards available to members that support the development of early career scholars, whether their work is in Hebrew Bible, New Testament, or reception history or was presented at a regional meeting. But we want to touch on just a few of these pieces and how, even when members cannot “go to SBL,” SBL goes to them, as it were, in many important ways.

Access

The Society’s International Cooperation Initiative (ICI) was launched in 2007, and each year SBL has seen growth in participation and interest from scholars and students from all over the globe. As of September 2015, we have a total of 374 ICI members from 62 countries, 314 of whom are Full members and 60 are Student members (8.5% more than last year). Next year (2016) will mark a milestone for ICI: its ten-year anniversary. In ten years, ICI has blossomed into more than a small program alongside others; it has become part of the essence and logic of the Society’s governance. This change has been at work for years. For the most part, ICI is known as a category of membership or a program that provides online access to books to the two-thirds world. It has developed, however, into a fundamental commitment to provide access in as broad and equitable a manner as possible.

Resources associated with ICI will continue to be important offerings for members. The online books repository will continue to grow. ANEM and IVBS will maintain their focuses on international scholarly exchange and attention to local, regional, and global contexts in scholarship. The liaison network will serve scholars outside of North America and Europe as it always has, just as the exchange and collaboration lists will. Events related to biblical scholarship will continue to populate the calendar on the SBL website. Each of these programs is a commitment to provide access to resources outside of traditional boundaries. The initiative as a whole, and the hard work of many members it represents, nurtures this commitment and leads to further expansion. Upcoming efforts motivated by this commitment will serve not just persons from the two-thirds world but will expand access for students, early-career professionals, contingent faculty, and others who may have limited personal or institutional means with which to obtain and/or maintain membership. We look forward to announcing these plans in the near future.

Information

In the past several years, the Society has steadily increased its efforts to publicize the relevance and value of biblical scholarship beyond the academy; Bible Odyssey is a prime example of this. The 2014–2015 academic year has been a good one for Bible Odyssey. We became active on Twitter (currently 600 followers) and saw our site visits increase from 500–900 per day to almost 1,700 per day. Bible Odyssey has bubbled up the results list for the search term “Bible” on Google, now appearing on the sixth page, ahead of related resources. The site also ranks highly relative to related resources, and we can take encouragement from the fact that it has been around only for a few years.

Comparing our numbers for 2015 to those for 2014 also shows how far we have come:

PROFESSIONS

Visits and total actions have risen significantly, indicating a dramatic increase in the size of our user pool. Average actions have decreased and our bounce rate has increased, which indicate that our users either know what they want, find it quickly, and leave or come to the site looking for something specific, do not find it, and then leave. The assumption that we are testing is whether outgoing information (e.g., tweets, emails) give potential visitors a chance to filter out links to the site that are not of interest and that they filter these out and navigate directly to the links that are of interest, spend an amount of time on the site that in web analytics is remarkable, and then continue on their merry worldwide way.

In addition, we've seen a measurable increase in the number of universities, colleges, and schools assigning Bible Odyssey content as part of a course curriculum. (These figures represent domains or networks affiliated with higher education institutions, not anyone with an academic affiliation using a personal computer not tied to such a network.) Anecdotal reports from members have led us to this conclusion, but a three-day snapshot comparing September 2014 to September 2015 also shows increased traffic from higher-education institutions.

As a representation of total traffic, visits from "edus" have decreased from 9.4% to 5.5%. This decrease has occurred, however, only because the overall number of non-edu visitors has skyrocketed. Clearly, we are disseminating information about the relevance and value of biblical scholarship to the academy for its use in instruction but also beyond the academy.

	Total Visits		Total Actions	
	2014	2015	2014	2015
Universities	64	156	866	519
Colleges	14	66	120	219
Schools (secondary)	2	54	9	96
All "edus"	80	276	995	834
All Visitors	852	5,000	3,582	8,525

we have started to develop modules for instruction at U.S. secondary schools on the history of sacred texts and their contemporary reception.

Much as we created content for Bible Odyssey, we will enlist SBL members to use their subject-matter expertise for the benefit of nonspecialists. They will work with professional middle- and secondary-school educators to craft course modules—twenty to start during the 2015–2016 academic year and more to follow—that will help educators effectively teach about sacred texts and traditions, as well as their varied receptions throughout history. These modules will incorporate the methods and concepts of the comparative study of religions, biblical studies, literary studies, history, archaeology, and other humanistic disciplines and will be aligned with nationally recognized standards. (The first is already underway as a pilot for our process.) Our own Educational Resources and Review Committee (ERRC) will serve as the editorial board, reviewing all plans before they are published. The modules will leverage existing Bible Odyssey content, include rich multimedia, and connect teachers and students to more information via bibliographies and external resource links. Although they will be written for use at the high-school level, many modules will be adaptable in part or in whole for use in middle-school environments. Module topics will be chosen to correlate with content typically covered in courses across the country on the basis of the curricular standards of Advanced Placement, the National Council for History in the Schools, and several states, including California and Texas.

Creating modules for secondary schools is a no-brainer. We talk frequently about the relevance and value of biblical (and

	July–August 2014	July–August 2015
Visitors	6,914	72,865
Actions	27,425	128,285
Average actions	4.0	1.8
Average time per visit	6m 39s	3m 52s
Bounce rate	21%	27%

Opportunities

An opportunity is a set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something, and we are in the business of helping people do something to foster biblical scholarship. While we have created many opportunities to do such work at venues such as the Annual, International, and Regional meetings, we are excited about one of the newest opportunities that has developed. To help create a more religiously literate and culturally competent public,

humanities) scholarship for the wider public, claiming that the work we do does not cease to matter when one steps off a college campus. Dismal reports about literacy related to sacred texts and traditions underscore the importance of the work. These modules will extend the work the Society does to foster biblical scholarship through its members so as to promote a more religiously literate and civically competent public, one that understands sacred texts and traditions as sources of influence, wisdom, and importance.

These many pieces make up a vibrant whole in which a great number of scholars and others interested in sacred texts gain access, stay informed, and find opportunities. They indicate that the Society is on the move, fostering biblical scholarship and supporting its members in a variety of ways. They would not be possible, however, if SBL members themselves were not on the move—active in their institutions, rigorous in their scholarship, stalwart in their advocacy, creative in their problem solving, and generous in their interactions with others. Perhaps, then, when you hear members say “I’m going to SBL,” you can remind them of this variety and connect them with resources they might not know about. You can tell them that SBL—with and through its members—is on the go.

The screenshot shows the Bible Odyssey website interface. At the top, the logo "BIBLE ODYSSEY" is prominent, with navigation links for "About Us", "Browse A-Z", "Contact Us", and "Partners". A search bar is located to the right of the logo. Below the logo is a horizontal menu with tabs for "Home", "People", "Places", "Passages", "Bibles", and "Tools". The "People" tab is currently selected.

The main content area is titled "Video" and includes sub-links for "HOME", "VIDEO GALLERY", and "APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE". A social media sharing bar is visible. The featured video is "Apocalyptic Literature" by Bart D. Ehrman. The video player shows a man with glasses speaking, with a progress bar at 02:06. To the left of the video is a transcript section titled "Transcript" with text about apocalyptic books in the Bible. Below the transcript is a "Contributors" section featuring Bart D. Ehrman, Professor at the University of North Carolina, with a brief biography.

To the right of the video player is a "RELATED CONTENT (5)" section with three thumbnails: "Daniel", "John and Jesus: Mentor or Rival?", and "2 Peter". Each thumbnail includes a small image and a brief description. At the bottom of the page, there is a "Browse by subject" section with a letter index from A to Z. The footer includes logos for "Humanities" and "SBL SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE".

AWARDS

Awards Opening October 1

Many of the award programs available to members of SBL opened for submissions on October 1. Check out the webpages of the SBL–De Gruyter Prize for Biblical Studies and Reception History, the Paul J. Achtemeier Award for New Testament Scholarship, and the David Noel Freedman Award for Excellence and Creativity in Hebrew Bible Scholarship for more information. Information on opportunities to present at regional meetings and applying for a Regional Scholar Award is available on the webpages of individual regional meetings.

Andrew W. Pitts, Paul J. Achtemeier Award

Andrew, a member of SBL since 2005, recieved his PhD from McMaster Divinity College in 2014. He serves as an editor for *Early Christianity in Its Hellenistic Context* (Brill, 2013–), an ongoing series of edited volumes devoted to advancing understanding of Christian origins.

David Jorgensen, De Gruyter Award

David is a self-described “power adjunct,” currently teaching courses in religions of late antiquity at Colby College and the University of Maine, biblical studies at Meadville Lombard Theological School, and patristics at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. He plans to do future research on the role played by Valentinian biblical exegesis in the long parting of the ways between Judaism and Christianity.

Jonathan Kaplan, David Noel Freedman Award

Jonathan is the author of the forthcoming monograph *My Perfect One: Typology and Early Rabbinic Interpretation of Song of Songs* (Oxford University Press, 2015). He has published articles in *JBL*, *HUCA*, *HTR*, and *JNES*. He has been a member of SBL since 1999 and will attend the 2015 Annual Meeting in Atlanta.



From left to right: Andrew W. Pitts, David Jorgensen, and Jonathan Kaplan.

Regional Scholars

JAMES BARKER is currently Assistant Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee. His research focuses on the production and reception of the Gospels, and he received his PhD from Vanderbilt University in 2011. His dissertation was directed by Amy-Jill Levine and will be published in revised form as *John's Use of Matthew* (Fortress). In 2014 James received the Paul J. Achtemeier Award for New Testament Scholarship for “Ancient Compositional Practices and the Gospels: A Reassessment,” which is forthcoming in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*. He has also published “The Reconstruction of Kaige/Quinta Zechariah 9,9” in *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*.

TUCKER FERDA is a PhD candidate in the Cooperative Doctoral Program in Religion at the University of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. He earned his MTS degree from Duke in 2009. His research focuses on the Gospels, the historical Jesus, Second Temple Judaism, and the history of biblical interpretation. He has published articles on a wide range of topics in the *Journal of Theological Studies* (forthcoming), *Journal of Biblical Literature*, *Novum Testamentum*, *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, *Dead Sea Discoveries*, *Biblica*, *Biblical Interpretation*, and *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus*. He has also contributed numerous articles to the *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*. His dissertation, nearly finished, investigates the theory of a “Galilean crisis” in the ministry of the historical Jesus. He teaches undergraduate religion courses at the University of Pittsburgh and graduate-level Greek and other New Testament courses at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

IAN DOUGLAS WILSON is a PhD candidate at the University of Alberta. His dissertation, which he will defend in March 2015, is entitled “Kingship Remembered and Imagined: Monarchy in the Hebrew Bible and Postmonarchic Discourse in Ancient Judah.” In 2013 he received the Andrew Stewart Memorial Graduate Prize in recognition of his research at the University of Alberta and the Zita and John Rosen Teaching Award, the University’s top honor for graduate student instructors. His primary research interests are social remembering, identity formation, and sociopolitics in ancient Judah, especially in the early Second Temple era. Other interests include historical theory and historiography, theories of religion, and Near Eastern archaeology and the interpretation of material artifacts. His scholarly articles have appeared in publications such as *Harvard Theological Review*, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, and *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*.



From left to right: James Barker, Tucker Ferda, and Ian Douglas Wilson.

Regional Scholars

The SBL Travel Grants offer opportunities to current SBL members to attend the Annual Meeting, participate in the program, enhance their professional development, and build their network with fellow scholars. These grants help facilitate the work of Program Units, the International Cooperation Initiative, Status of Women in the Profession Committee, Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee, and other SBL Committees representing scholars in the field. These grants are intended to support underrepresented and underresourced scholars. As such, preference will be given to women, ethnic/racial minorities, and members from ICI-qualifying countries. A key criterion is an applicant’s demonstrable financial need. Congratulations to the 2015 SBL Travel Grant Recipients!

AWARDS

Annual Meeting Participant Grant Winners

Doris Udoka Enede, Kogi State University (Nigeria)
Inbar Graiver, Tel Aviv University (Israel)

Annual Meeting Attendee Grant Winners

Laurentiu Mot, Institutul Teologic Adventist (Romania)
Ruth Oluwakemi Oke, Federal College of Education, Abeokuta (Nigeria)

DORIS UDOKA ENEDE earned her BA in Religious Studies at Delta State University, Abraka and master's degree in Old Testament at Kogi State University, Anyigba. She is currently pursuing her PhD in Old Testament Studies at Kogi State and has published in the *Journal of Gender and Religion in Africa*. Doris has been a member of SBL since 2009.

INBAR GRAIVER, a Ph.D. candidate at The Zvi Yavetz School of Historical Studies in Tel Aviv University, was awarded the Rotenstreich Scholarship for Outstanding PhD Students and has received an award for academic excellence. With master's degrees in both comparative literature and general history, her research points to language as an important source of evidence for uncovering ancient conceptual systems. Her recent article is forthcoming in the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*.

LAURENȚIU FLORENTIN MOȚ earned his PhD at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Philippines (2014). His monograph, entitled *Morphological and Syntactical Irregularities in the Book of Revelation*, was published in April 2015 by Brill. He has been a SBL member since 2014 and will attend the 2015 Annual Meeting in Atlanta.

RUTH OLUWAKEMI OKE (pictured at right) holds a PhD in Religious Studies from the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria, and is a Senior Lecturer and Head of the Christian Religious Studies Department at the Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Nigeria. Oke is a member of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians. Her interest is in biblical studies and gender issues. She has contributions in both international and local journals of high repute. Among her publication is *Immigration as a Determinant Factor in the Spread of HIV and AIDS*, which she published with Lambert Academic Publishers, Germany.



From left to right: Doris Udoka Enede, Inbar Graiver, and Laurențiu Florentin Moț.

The Society has had roughly a year to employ data from its expanded member profile in service of its members and its mission to foster biblical scholarship. In letters encouraging them to fill out their profiles, members were told that the more the Society knows about its membership, the more effective it will be in its mission to support the field: advocacy, meetings, programs, publishing, grant writing, scholarships and awards, fundraising, and professional resources. The Society will also be better positioned to develop programs and services that strengthen the field and give new opportunities to biblical scholars, to see trends and respond to them, and to allocate SBL resources more effectively. Following are a number of ways that these claims are already starting to take shape.

- We have utilized member fields of study to identify Bible Odyssey contributors and chairs of new program units.
- Almost one-third of individuals with student membership claimed an occupation other than student, indicating perhaps that some are no longer students but likely also that many work in other capacities in addition to being a student. Such data is provided to committees such as the Student Advisory Board so that the Society might determine how best to serve these members.
- We have begun work on assessing the representation of fields of study among members. This work will become more dynamic with the tagging functionality that is under development for the Annual and International Meeting programs, which will enable members to more dynamically search and therefore navigate the meeting program, assist program units in their efforts to collaborate, and enable more granular tracking of the ebb and flow of our field in terms of specialization.
- Now being able to identify such members broadly, we have started working with members for whom impairments affect their participation in SBL activities to find ways to mitigate obstacles.

Profile data have also demonstrated various issues related to representation, which coupled with other staff reports have stimulated conversations with committees such as the Status of Women in the Profession and Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession and informed the reflections of others. These conversations continue to produce new insights about ways the Society can address the network of related issues. Indeed, these data are provided to Council and committees of Council to do the work specific to their responsibilities. Should you have a question about certain data or cross-tabulations (included below or not), please feel free to contact Charlie Haws, Director of Programs, at charles.haws@sbl-site.org. The data are at your service.

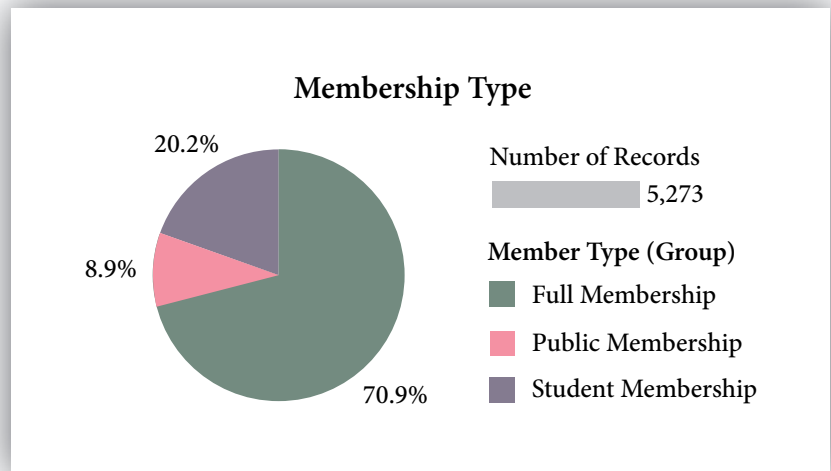
Data collection and analysis have also shown that some questions and/or answer options were inadequate. First, for example, the Society's Council debated the value of ethnicity/race data. It was decided that the value of such data was primarily limited to issues of diversity in higher education and grant making within the United States. Changes have therefore been made to limit the ethnicity/race question to respondents who mark the United States as their country of birth. Second, answer options for the question "What is your current employment status?" under the occupation Faculty were found to be subject to multiple interpretations. The option of "Full-time nontenured" could be interpreted to mean full-time tenure-track faculty who had not yet achieved tenure or perhaps full-time non-tenure-track faculty. The option "Full-time tenured" could be interpreted to mean full-time tenure-track faculty who had achieved tenure or perhaps full-time tenure-track faculty whether or not they had yet achieved tenure. Combined, moreover, the two questions might seem to limit faculty employment status concerns to tenure-track faculty—in the first option, those who had not yet achieved tenure; in the second option, those who had achieved tenure. To resolve these issues, the first option will be changed to "Full-time non-tenure-track faculty" and the second option to "Full-time tenure-track or tenured faculty." Third, questions related to graduate study will be revised to enable the Society to answer several more questions, including how much inactive time has elapsed since entry into a program (e.g., Do women have more inactive time than men?), and construct more dynamic cohorts based on entry and exit years.

PROFESSIONS: MEMBER PROFILE

As these revisions are made and data are regularly provided and updated, the promise to transform the data into member support will gain momentum and impact, especially because so many of these data will be most informative in longitudinal perspective.

An Overview of 2014 Data

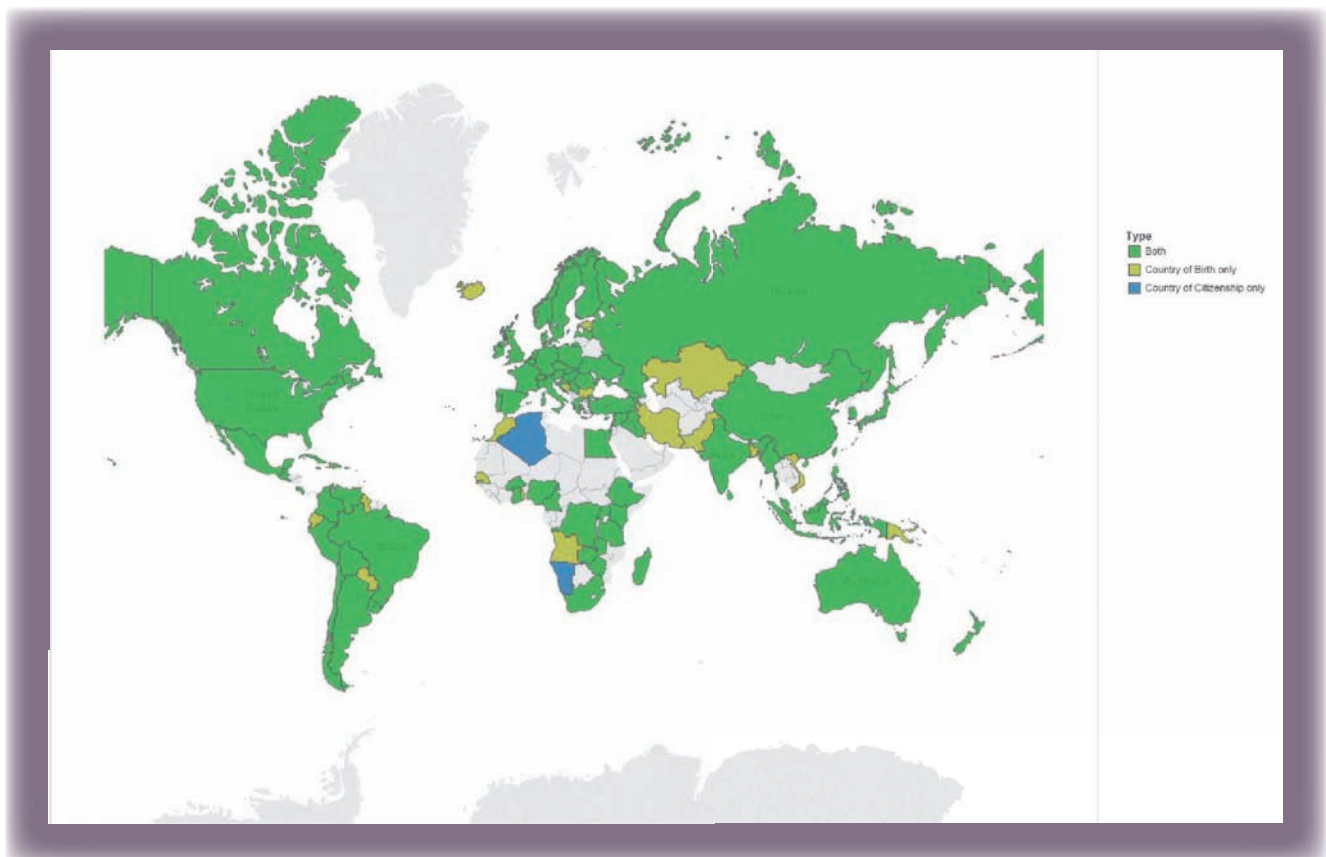
By January 8, 2015, a total of 5,273 members responded to at least one member profile question. Respondents were mostly full members. Response rates by membership type varied: 61.9% of public members, 55.1% of student members, and 68.8% of full members. The chart to the right shows the distribution of respondents by membership type.



Locality

Members remain concentrated in North America and northwestern Europe, but the Society continues to grow in terms of the number of countries represented among its members. Last year's member profile report noted that the Society's members represent 94 countries; the 8,129 members with current membership on January 8 represented 97 countries. These countries represent countries of residence or employment. Those 8,129 members also claimed 105 countries of birth and 85 countries of citizenship, which collectively total 108 unique countries.

Using designations from the United Nations, we classified countries of birth and citizenship by region and subregion. In terms of country of birth, Africa represents almost 4% of members across 16 countries. The Americas represent 71.2% of



members' countries of birth across 23 countries: Canada and the United States account for the vast majority here (68.3%), while the Caribbean and Central and South America account for 2.9%. Asia represents 6.1% of members across 24 countries. Europe represents 15.5% of members across 29 countries. Oceania represents 3.3% of members across 4 countries.

The distribution of members across the globe can be visualized based on country of birth and country of citizenship data. The 108 unique countries that members represent between the two categories of data account for over half of the nearly 200 countries that currently exist.

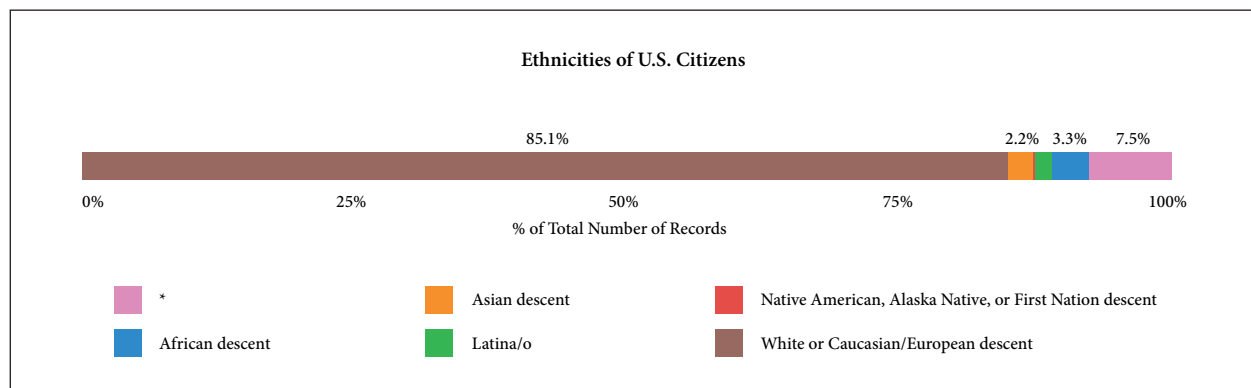
Demographics

A plurality of members is 31–50 years of age. Fewer than one in ten members is 30 years of age or younger, likely indicating that most individuals who obtain membership do so well into their pursuit of a professional career in the field. About one in six members is over 65 years of age. While individuals may not obtain membership early in life, a great many continue it late in life.

Nearly one-fourth of members are female, while 76.2% of members are male. Transgender records number 3 and account for 0.1% of membership.

The representation of gender by age group varies significantly between female and male. Over half (51.4%) of males are aged 51 or older, while only 45.6% of females are of similar age. Conversely, a larger majority of females (54.4%) are 50 years or younger, while 48.6% of males are of similar age.

As mentioned above, upcoming changes to the member profile will limit ethnicity/race questions to members who select the United States as their country of citizenship. Presently, 85% of members who claim to be United States citizens are of European descent, 3.8% are multiethnic, and 3.4% are of African descent. Members of Asian descent account for 2.3%, Latina/o descent totals 1.7%, and Native American, Alaska Native, or First Nation descent is 0.2%.



Occupation-Related Information

A majority of members is employed as faculty (54.7%), while nearly one in six members is a student (14.9%). Nearly 10% of members claim an occupation that is not listed. The write-in field for many of these records indicates an occupation that could be identified as one of the listed occupations, but it also includes health-care professionals, IT professionals, lawyers, translators, and other business professionals.

Employment Status

Currently employed faculty account for 91.4% of members who are faculty. The remaining 8.6% of faculty are either retired (8.1%) or unemployed (0.4%). Of faculty who are currently employed, 1.6% are in postdoctoral research and/or teaching positions, 6.9% are employed part-time, 54.1% are full-time tenured, 30.8% are full-time nontenured, and 6.6% are in adjunct positions. As indicated in last year's report and above, the options for determining faculty tenure status are unclear. These ambiguities have been addressed in recent changes to the member profile but should be considered with any employment-status variables in this year's

PROFESSIONS: MEMBER PROFILE

report, especially since they would potentially mean a 30 percent swing in our reporting on contingent positions relative to tenure-track positions.

What seems clear from the data is that both gender and ethnicity play a role in tenure status. If we consider only the unambiguous category of contingent (adjunct), for example, we find a significantly higher percentage of females (8.1%) than males (5.3%) with this employment status.

Regarding ethnicity, members of African descent have the highest representation of contingent faculty at 9.5% and the lowest representation of full-time tenured faculty at 47.4%, while those of Latina/o descent have the lowest representation of contingent faculty at 3.4% and the highest representation of full-time tenured faculty at 53.4%. Of those of Caucasian/Euro-pean descent, 5.9% are contingently employed, and 49.4% are employed as full-time tenured.

At 1.5%, members of Asian descent have the highest representation of unemployed faculty. Data are also available for members of African descent, 1.1% of whom are unemployed, and members of European/Caucasian descent, 0.4% of whom are unemployed. No Latina/o members or members of multiple ethnicities claim to be unemployed.

Department

Positions in Biblical Studies departments remain the most common among members, accounting for 30.2% of departments identified. Department of Religion or Religious Studies account for 14.3% and Theology or Theological Studies 13.8%. Area studies departments are among the least common.

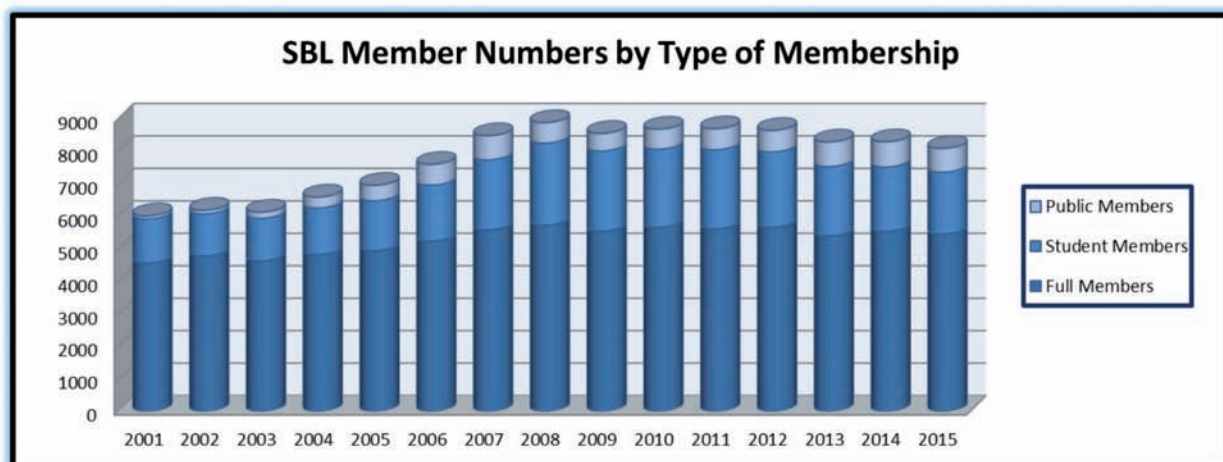
Of the ten most represented departments for which student-level data were available, all indicated that at least two levels of students were taught in the department (e.g., undergraduate and master's students or master's and doctoral students). The highest representation of its kind, 52.1% of members in departments of Religion or Religious Studies indicated that they taught only undergraduate students, while members in departments of Divinity reported the lowest representation of such instruction at 6.0%. Departments of Divinity also had the lowest representation of doctoral-only students (2.2%), the highest representation of multiple levels of students (61.5%), and the highest representation of master's students (30.2%). Departments of Near Eastern Studies (Ancient or Modern) showed the highest representation of doctoral-only students (10.6%).

Course Load

Course load varies across a number of factors. Employment status impacts course load significantly. Full-time nontenured faculty report the highest median annual course load of six courses. Contingent and part-time faculty report a median annual course load of four. Women report a lower median annual course load (four) than men (five). Faculty in departments of Biblical Studies, Religion or Religious Studies, Theology or Theological Studies, and multiple departments report the highest median annual course load of five. Departments with the lowest course load of four include Classics and/or Classical Civilizations, Divinity, Early Christian Studies, Hebrew, History, Jewish (Judaic) Studies, Near Eastern Studies (Ancient or Modern), and Other. Only departments with at least ten records were included in these calculations.

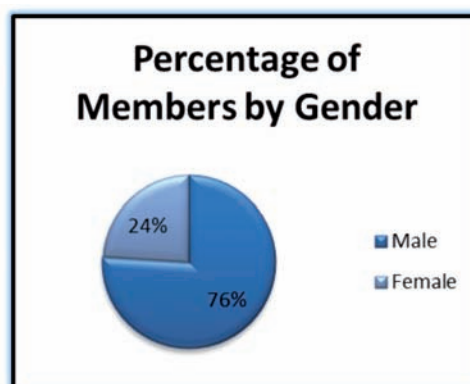
Department	Number of Records	% of Total Number of Records
Biblical Studies	1,637	30.2%
Religion or Religious Studies	777	14.3%
Theology or Theological Studies	748	13.8%
Hebrew	355	6.5%
Greek	295	5.4%
Early Christian Studies	194	3.6%
Divinity	185	3.4%
Jewish (Judaic) Studies	171	3.1%
Other	148	2.7%
Classics and/or Classical Civilizations	123	2.3%
Humanities	121	2.2%
Near Eastern Studies (Ancient or Modern)	117	2.2%
History	112	2.1%
Philosophy	85	1.6%
Interdisciplinary Studies	69	1.3%
Archaeology	57	1.1%
Women's Studies	44	0.8%
Linguistics	44	0.8%
Literature/Comparative Literature	40	0.7%
Pastoral Counseling	26	0.5%
African Studies	20	0.4%
Arab/ic Studies and/or Islamic Studies	18	0.3%
Anthropology	17	0.3%
Asian Studies	9	0.2%
Sacred Music	4	0.1%
Latin American Studies	4	0.1%
Total	5,420	100.0%

The Society membership remains relatively stable this year. We currently have 8,105 members from around the world. This number will likely increase as we approach the end of November 2015 and the Annual Meeting. Overall membership decreased by 2.37% from last year.



The majority of our members, 5,462, enjoy Full membership in the Society. This is a decrease of 1.5% over last year's number. Our Public members now number 735, a decrease of 5.6%. The Society continues to nurture student biblical scholars; our Student membership now numbers 1,908, which is a decrease of 3.6% from last year's figure.

The membership of the SBL remains diverse in 2015. The percentage of International members has been slowly increasing over the last ten years and has remained stable this year. In 2001, International members made up only 23% of our total membership; today the percentage is 31%. Women make up 24% of our membership today, a figure that has remained stable since last year. Of our members who identify ethnicity, almost 13% identify themselves as Asian, Hispanic, Black, Native American, or Pacific Islander. This percentage has remained relatively stable since last year.



The majority of our members (40%) fall in the age range of 31–50 years of age, closely followed by the group between the ages of 51 and 65 (33%). This has not changed significantly from last year's demographic figures. Of the remaining members, 18% is above the age of 65, while 9% is below the age of 30.

PROFESSIONS: MEMBERSHIP REPORT



The number of International Cooperative Initiative members in the Society of Biblical Literature has gone up over the last several years. Currently we have a total of 374 ICI members. Of those, 314 are Full members and 60 are Student members. Our ICI members come from 61 countries around the world. Nigeria and South Africa have the most ICI members. Nigeria has a total of 54 ICI members, and South Africa has a total of 69 ICI members. These two countries account for over 35% of the ICI membership.

We also continue the process of building a network of ICI Liaisons; thus far over 70 people have volunteered. We also have over 50 members who have volunteered as ICI Scholars.



2016 REGIONAL MEETING SCHEDULE

Region	Dates	Host Institution	Location
Central States	March 13–14	St. Louis Marriott, West	St. Louis, MO
Eastern Great Lakes	March 10–11	Mohican Lodge	Perrysville, OH
Mid-Atlantic	March 10–12	Hyatt Regency New Brunswick	New Brunswick, NJ
Midwest	February 5–7	Olivet Nazarene University	Bourbonnais, IL
New England/E Canada	April 15	Andover Newton Theological School	Newton Centre, MA
Pacific Coast	March 13–14	Claremont Graduate University	Claremont, CA
Pacific Northwest	May 20–22	University of Idaho	Moscow, ID
Rocky Mountains – Great Plains	April 1–2	University of Denver, Iliff School of Theology	Denver, CO
Southeastern	March 4–6	Atlanta Marriott Perimeter Center	Atlanta, GA
Southwestern	March 11–13	Marriott Hotel DFW Airport North	Irving, TX
Upper Midwest	April 1–2	Luther Seminary	St. Paul, MN

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION JUNE 30, 2015 AND 2014

	<u>FY 2015</u>	<u>FY 2014</u>
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$1,376,646	\$1,524,048
Marketable securities	2,397,368	2,091,981
Accounts receivable	304,205	160,036
Pledges receivable, net	4,100	4,400
Prepaid expenses and other assets	43,407	47,217
Book inventories, net of valuation reserve	80,780	78,999
Furniture and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	38,250	60,071
Net share of Luce Center assets	<u>1,975,871</u>	<u>2,005,178</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$6,220,627</u>	<u>\$5,971,930</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$188,997	\$227,050
Deferred revenue		
Memberships and subscriptions	529,269	537,888
Annual meetings	861,518	747,226
International meeting	53,252	145,276
Other	<u>9,313</u>	<u>65,425</u>
Total Deferred Revenues	<u>1,453,352</u>	<u>1,495,815</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>1,642,349</u>	<u>1,722,865</u>
Net Assets		
Unrestricted net assets	3,925,898	3,619,742
Temporarily restricted net assets	357,750	334,693
Permanently restricted net assets	<u>294,630</u>	<u>294,630</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>4,578,278</u>	<u>4,249,065</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$6,220,627</u>	<u>\$5,971,930</u>

Comments:

1. SBL continues to grow, with six consecutive years of increases in net assets. The increase for FY 2015 was \$329,213 as shown on the Statements of Activities and Changes in Net Assets.
2. SBL transferred \$100,000 from cash flow to investments in calendar year 2015. SBL continues to increase the investment account to provide for organizational stability and a Net Operating Reserve.
3. SBL staff continue to manage operations within Budget. FY2015 revenues exceeded budget by \$250,329 while expenses exceeded budget by only \$442.

FINANCES

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

BUDGET 2015–2016

	<u>FY 2015</u>	<u>FY 2014</u>
REVENUES AND GAINS		
Congresses	\$1,465,898	\$1,342,579
Membership		
Membership fees	585,805	572,572
Marketing	38,835	37,327
Professions		
Employment Center	94,682	100,464
Grant Revenue	55,430	172,062
Fonts	4,500	150
Publications		
Book Sales	552,365	542,019
Subscriptions	278,663	315,249
Royalties	128,099	129,294
Marketing	33,550	45,375
Permissions	11,991	14,886
Membership	103,377	101,042
Contract Income	8,333	0
Fees	10,303	16,908
Development and fundraising	42,123	44,220
Investment income, net	119,916	421,563
Rental income, net	12,352	6,924
Total Revenues and Gains	\$3,546,222	\$3,862,634
EXPENSES		
Program expenses		
Congresses	\$1,129,998	\$1,141,076
Membership	164,421	174,726
Professions	349,416	376,179
Publications	1,105,105	1,149,911
Regions	106,212	116,261
Research and Technology	122,122	141,219
Total Program Expenses	2,977,274	3,099,372
Development and fundraising	57,184	58,721
General and administration	182,551	165,631
Total Expenses	\$3,217,009	\$3,323,724
Increase in Net Assets	329,213	538,910
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	<u>4,249,065</u>	<u>3,710,155</u>
Net Assets at End of Year	<u>\$4,578,278</u>	<u>\$4,249,065</u>

Revenues	
Congresses	\$1,340,095
Development	45,000
Membership	606,690
Professions	90,000
Publications	1,140,110
Total Revenue	\$3,221,895
Expenses	
Administration	\$104,012
Congresses	1,011,291
Development	73,435
Membership	180,261
Professions	415,883
Publications	1,169,193
Regions	102,440
Technology	151,919
Total Expense	\$3,208,434
Budgeted Increase	
in Net Assets	\$13,461

* The financial information summarized here was derived from the Society's audited financial statements. The independent auditor's report by Mauldin & Jenkins states that the financial statements present fairly the financial position of the Society. Please see the full audit report at the SBL website.

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Thank you for your contributions to the Society of Biblical Literature. Your support continues to enhance the lives of biblical scholars, students, and researchers nationally and internationally. Your commitment to fostering biblical scholarship as a friend of SBL strengthens our values of critical inquiry, scholarly integrity, and collegiality.

Your gifts to the Paul J. Achtemeier Award, David Noel Freedman Award, and the Richards fund for Bible in the Public Square provide global opportunities to those underresourced in current biblical scholarship. The impact of your support is immeasurable.

This year, Bible Odyssey received the first contribution in ongoing funding from The Philip G. and Lois F. Roets Endowment for the Bible and the Public Good (see further on page 5). This gift, along with your support, helps us to continue to expand Bible Odyssey content and audiences, and ultimately provide ongoing engaging biblical research tools for all. Again, thank you for your support of the SBL.

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Pam Kennemore

With thirty-four years of nonprofit experience, Pam Kennemore brings her accounting and auditing expertise to SBL as our new Director of Finance and Administration. Pam comes to us as a previous member of the SBL family, having served in an accounting consultant capacity for SBL for twelve years. Pam is the owner of Kennemore Consulting Services, has served as Sr. Advisor for 1st Choice Advisors, and is a certified Abila MIP Fund Accounting Consultant.



Chris O'Connor

After ten years with SBL as the Manager of Technology, Chris brings his software and database development expertise into a new role, as he transitions with ease into SBL's new Director of Technology position. We are proud to welcome Chris, who was already a member of the SBL family, into this position, in which his technology leadership and business planning experience and education will continue to prove him an invaluable asset to the SBL team.

Nicole Tilford

With a strong background in biblical studies and solid copyediting experience, Nicole Tilford joins SBL as SBL Press's new Production Manager. Prior to this Nicole served as Religious Studies Lecturer with Georgia State University and copy-editor for various clients. Nicole's research background in Jewish and Christian communities and traditions, as well as her previous education and experience, make her an unequivocal and welcomed addition to the SBL team.



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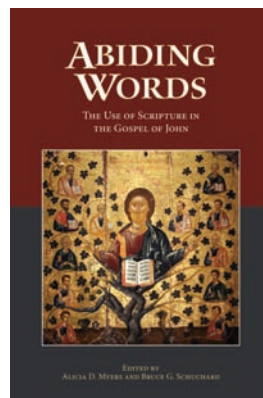
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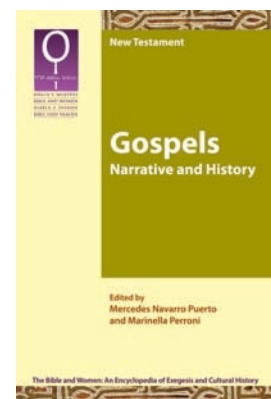
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