SSSP Membership Committee Report
Submitted to the Board of Directors
Annual Meeting - Atlanta, GA – August, 2003
By
Martha Hargraves, Chairperson

A. Membership as July, 2003

Overall, SSSP’s membership is down by approximately 9 percent over this time (July, 2003) (n=1500 vs. 1632). The largest single category membership continues to be among our student members (n=435 vs. 490) down from last year by 11 percent. While our largest category this year is among our dues paying members at the $135 level (n=173 vs. 158), this level experienced a slight increase of 9 percent over this past year and has experienced a steady increase over the past two years. In general, dues paying members at the $105 and $120 levels are slightly down but our greatest losses have occurred among dues categories of $65 to $90 (n=339 vs. 411) down by approximately 18 percent over last year.

Because Divisional memberships are not mutually exclusive, we would like to report that of the 18 Society Divisions the top three in membership continue to be:

- Poverty, Class and Inequality
- Racial and Ethnic Minorities
- Social Problems Theory

B. 2003 Life Memberships

At this report date, we have twenty-three (23) Life Members, up by three members over last year.
C. Committee focus for 2002 - 2003

We did not conduct a membership campaign this past year, which may have contributed to the drop in membership. However, the Committee felt that updating the Society’s Website to increase ease of location of areas of interest, including membership, would be an important effort. Feedback to date has been positive relative to our website. We congratulate the Executive Office’s response to our recommendation that this may be of benefit.

Nancy Jurik, current SSSP President, initiated through Deirdre Smythe, Membership Committee member, a strategy to perform the needed liaison work among targeted organizations related to the Atlanta meeting. An announcement of the conference with pertinent information related to special sessions of interest was provided to the selected organizations’ contacts requesting that the announcement be placed on each organization’s website. Many thanks go to Deirdre for her hard work and the vision of Nancy Jurik in the initiation of this effort.

Additionally, the committee is currently addressing how we may approach a more strategic membership promotion for 2003-2004 to ensure that we reach a more targeted audience. A target specific audience in previous years has yielded much better recruitment results than a more general campaign. Recommendations will be forthcoming from the committee during this Annual Meeting.

The Committee is studying methods to improve our brochure and will be providing member comments in writing to Michele Koontz.

Committee work has been less than adequate this year due to this Chairperson’s over extended schedule this past year. We anticipate a more active year to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Hargraves, Ph.D., M.P.H.