

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEETING MANAGER

I. 2005 ANNUAL MEETING

I am pleased to report that 592 attendees have pre-registered for the annual meeting. Of these attendees, 28 (5%) are exempt from paying meeting registration. Last year at this time, 613 attendees had pre-registered. This is a decrease of 3%.

We have 128 sessions scheduled with 439 papers, 26 panelists, 6 workshop facilitators, 12 critics, 1 performer, 6 authors, and 2 plenary speakers. Last year, we had 127 sessions with 439 papers, 48 panelists, 11 workshop facilitators, 4 performers, 5 authors, 2 plenary speakers, 1 film commentator, 1 art exhibitor, and 1 photograph exhibitor.

This year, the Program Committee decided to expand the film exhibit to include a variety of independent films. The film exhibit is sponsored by AndersonGold Films, Bullfrog Films, California Newsreel, First Run/Icarus Films, Lost Heritage Productions, Media Education Foundation, New Day Films, TV2 Danmark and Women Make Movies. A total of 19 films will be featured.

Attendees are able to register one guest for a nominal fee. Each guest will receive a name badge (name only, no affiliation). Any guest wanting full access to sessions or special events and a program packet must register individually and pay the full registration fee and membership dues. We have 39 guests registered. Last year, we had 53 registered. The guests were not included in the total number of pre-registered attendees.

II. ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES

SSSP has taken proactive steps toward meeting the special needs of our disabled members. Written guidelines were distributed to all meeting participants to assist them in being increasingly creative in their inclusiveness. We requested that all attendees refrain from wearing scented products. Smoking is not permitted in the hotel's meeting space or public areas. Smoking is permitted in the hotel restaurant and outside only.

Due to lack of use at previous meetings and lack of meeting space this year, SSSP will not offer a comfort zone. To date, I have not received any complaints.

Attendees were able to request accessibility services that will facilitate their full participation in the annual meeting. One attendee requested that we tape the 10 sessions that she plans to attend. The other request was for an accessible hotel room. I confirmed with the reservation's department that this request will be granted.

III. ADVERTISING

Advertising of \$775 was sold to Cambridge University Press and University Press of America. This amount will help offset the cost of printing the final program.

IV. AIDS FUNDRAISER AND THE GRADUATE STUDENT AND NEW MEMBER RECEPTION

All graduate students and new members will receive a complimentary ticket. All others will pay a \$15 cover. Complimentary hors d'oeuvres, wine and beer will be available (alcohol courtesy of the Crowne Plaza Hotel.) Exit 5, promises to entertain us with music everyone will dance to. During the evening, there will be a silent and a live auction. All proceeds (after expenses) will go to MANNA. They provide nutritious meals and nutrition counseling, to all who are homebound and living with HIV/AIDS in Philadelphia and the surrounding area. For more information about MANNA, visit www.mannapa.org.

V. AUDIO-VISUAL

An overhead projector and screen will be placed in every meeting room per the Board's 2003 recommendation. Last year, SSSP purchased a LCD projector. Presenters who requested a LCD projector (before January 31) from PJ McGann, Program Committee Co-Chair, and were approved will have a LCD projector in their session. PJ received more requests than could be accommodated by one LCD projector on August 13; therefore, SSSP had to rent two LCD projectors. Presenters were told that late requests would not be considered and that roundtable presentations are not eligible for audio-visual support. The Board voted that the cost of additional equipment would be borne by the presenter. Our hotel contract allows presenters to bring their own equipment. I negotiated a 50% discount on audio-visual equipment with the in-house audio-visual company. California

Newsreel and the Media Education Foundation were asked to share the costs associated with the film exhibit. Both agreed to pay a \$100 fee.

VI. BOOK EXHIBIT

Based on attendees' feedback and problems we encountered last year, Tom and I decided not to renew our contract with the Library of Social Science. This year, Mental Health Resources (MHR) will organize and manage the book exhibit without cost to SSSP. The book exhibit will contain a comprehensive collection of the latest and most significant titles on social problems. Included will be many books authored by SSSP members, as well as titles selected by the SSSP membership. In addition, MHR is donating 10% of sales revenue generated at the conference to the Society.

VII. CATERING

According to our hotel contract, SSSP must guarantee \$9,600 in food and beverage revenue. This amount does not include a 20.5% service charge (total: \$11,568). The Society was granted an exemption on paying Philadelphia sales tax. This exemption will save the Society 7% on all catering and audio-visual equipment rental. The Board of Directors dinner will be held off-site at Sang Kee Peking Duck House.

VII. CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL

We have exceeded our room block. As of July 29, our room pickup was 984 rooms (room block: 770.) Based on our current room pickup, SSSP will not have to pay for meeting room rental.

SSSP held a contest to encourage attendees to pre-register for the annual meeting and stay at the conference hotel. Lindy Star Hern, University of Missouri, Columbia will receive a room upgrade and a welcome amenity.

IX. CSA SOCIOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS

In 2001, online abstract submission became available to our program participants. Unfortunately, it has not been successful. In 2004, 59 program participants submitted an abstract. Unfortunately, only 37 program participants submitted an abstract this year. Another email reminder will be sent after the annual meeting. Perhaps the Board of Directors should consider other methods of collecting abstracts.

X. MEETING MENTOR PROGRAM

The Lee Student Support Fund Committee coordinated the mentoring program. Forty-four attendees requested a mentor and twenty-four attendees volunteered to serve in this capacity. Thanks to the hard work of Joya Misra and her committee, they were able to find a mentor for each mentee.

XI. PRE-REGISTRATION

Thanks to the motion that was passed by the 2000-01 Board of Directors, "the SSSP Office will identify, at the end of each annual meeting, those participants who failed to pay registration fees. Those non-paying participants will be notified next year, if they submit proposals for the program, that if they do not pay the pre-registration fees they definitely will not be placed on the program." the problem of collecting pre-registration fees from program participants was not as difficult. After the initial mailing requesting payment of pre-registration fees, 247 participants failed to pay. An email was sent stating that they would be deleted from the final program if payment was not received by July 18. Seventy-four failed to respond. None of the non-paying participants were removed from the final program because they were not delinquent in paying 2004 registration fees.

XII. RECEPTION HONORING PAST PRESIDENTS AND AWARDS BANQUET

Both events will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The reception will feature heavy hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. The banquet will be served buffet style. A special thanks to the Department of Sociology and the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences of Northwestern University for their \$2,500 financial contribution to the reception honoring our past presidents.

To accommodate our vegan attendees, a special entree will be available. The cost of a banquet ticket is \$40 per person. Currently, 180 tickets have been sold.

Attendees could purchase banquet tickets for graduate students, foreign scholars, and scholar-activists. Sixty

attendees requested a banquet ticket. Thanks to the following members who participated in the Donate-a-Banquet-Ticket Program: Joel Best, Kimberly Cook, Donald Cunnigen, Kelly Devers, Kathleen Ferraro, Glenn A. Goodwin, Valerie Leiter, Kathleen Lowney, JoAnn Miller, Robert Newby, Robert Perrucci, Claire Renzetti and Cattryn Somers. As a result of their generous contributions, thirteen additional graduate students will be attending the awards banquet.

Each attendee will receive a favor box containing two pieces of chocolate from John & Kira's Jubilee Chocolates. John and Kira rely on local and family farms to provide the freshest ingredients and also support the urban school garden program in West Philadelphia. Chocolates will be for sale in the registration area. In addition, Mr. Doyle will make a short presentation at the awards banquet.

XIII. REGISTRATION BAGS

A special thanks to the University of California Press for their \$1,500 financial contribution to our registration bags and to Carrie Yang Costello for designing the bag's logo.

XIV. REGISTRATION WORKERS AND LOW INCOME ACCOMMODATIONS

Ten student members and one underemployed member will work at the registration desk. In exchange for working 12 hours, nine student members will receive a complimentary shared hotel room for the nights of August 11, 12, and 13. The other two workers will be paid an hourly rate. Five attendees requested and received a reduced room rate of \$59.50 plus tax per night.

Twenty-eight attendees requested the roommate matching service. On June 30, an email was sent to them listing the names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses of those willing to participate.

XV. TRAVEL AND CAR RENTAL AGENCY

A contract was negotiated with Association Travel Concepts. They allow attendees to call the vendors directly or use their own travel agency when making airline reservations. SSSP receives credit when attendees provide the SSSP ID# before purchasing their ticket. Last year, six attendees utilized this service. In order for SSSP to receive a complimentary airline ticket, thirty-five attendees must utilize this service.

XVI. MEETING MANAGER'S COMMENTS

I worked closely with Wayne Miller, Crowne Meetings Director, in planning the annual meeting. I provided him with details for VIP amenities and sleeping rooms, audio-visual requirements, catering for all food functions, meeting room set up, and signage. I will review the master account before leaving the hotel if it is ready.

I have been very fortunate to work with Gary Alan Fine, President; Tim Diamond and PJ McGann, Program Committee Co-Chairs; Joshua Gamson, Omar M. McRoberts and Mindy Stombler, Program Committee; Claire M. Renzetti, Local Arrangements Committee Chair; Raquel Bergen and Shana Maier, Local Arrangements Committee; Thomas C. Hood, Executive Officer; Denise Knight, Graduate Associate and Darnell Presley, Convention Services Manager, Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Finally, I would like to thank you, the Board of Directors, for giving me another opportunity to serve SSSP as meeting manager. I welcome the opportunity to continue this service next year in San Francisco.

Michele Smith Koontz
July 29, 2005