

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEETING MANAGER

I. 2007 ANNUAL MEETING

I am pleased to report that 726 attendees have registered for the annual meeting. Attendance has not been this high since 1986 (672 attendees). Of those registered, 28 (4%) are exempt from paying meeting registration. Last year at this time, 591 attendees had registered.

We have 143 sessions scheduled with 585 papers, 29 panelists, 13 mentors, 13 critics, 6 workshop leaders, 4 authors and 1 plenary speaker. The International Coalition Against Sexual Harassment is sponsoring a conference on August 13. Last year, we had 127 sessions scheduled with 460 papers, 33 panelists, 13 mentors, 12 critics, 3 authors, 2 participants and 1 plenary speaker.

Michael Smyth, Program Committee, organized the film exhibit. Due to space limitations, the Program Committee decided to hold the film exhibit on one day instead of every day. Four films will be featured on August 12.

Attendees were 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. Program participants are not eligible for the guest registration fee. We have 67 guests registered. Last year, we had 42 guests registered. The guests are not included in the total number of 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. Unless an attendee uses a service or therapy dog or other credentialed assistance animal, we asked that they not bring their companion animals to areas where SSSP members are presenting.

Attendees were able to request accessibility services that will facilitate their full participation in the annual meeting. One attendee requested an accessible hotel room. I confirmed with the reservations department that this request will be granted.

III. ADVERTISING/EXHIBIT OPPORTUNITIES

I contacted 31 publishing companies and encouraged them to place an ad in the final program. Ads were placed by Oxford University Press, Temple University Press and the University Press of New England. Val Jenness wrote a letter to all Ph.D. Granting Departments urging them to advertise in the final program. Ads were placed by Arizona State University and the University of Michigan. As a result of our efforts, \$1,050 in advertising was sold. Last year, no ads were placed.

Two companies inquired about exhibiting at the annual meeting. A representative from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) asked to promote the National HIV Testing Mobilization Campaign. The campaign is a national effort to promote HIV testing. The HHS is mobilizing communities to encourage their members to be tested and to know their HIV status. Initially, they offered an exhibit booth, a pop-up display and to distribute materials to our attendees. After several conversations, they decide to wait and pursue this in 2008.

A representative from Women Make Movies asked if the Society would insert their 1 page flyer and 10 page catalog in each attendee's registration packet. After consulting with Val, we agreed to insert the flyer and display 200 catalogs in the registration area at no charge.

The Board may want to consider whether or not to allow companies to exhibit at the annual meeting for a fee. Additionally, the insertion of flyers/catalogs in registration packets and the displaying of materials in the registration area for a fee should be considered. These are ways the Society could generate additional revenue to help offset the cost of the annual meeting.

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 charge. A dessert reception, cash bar and karaoke machine will be available. During the evening, there will be a silent and a live auction. All proceeds will go to the After Hours Project, Inc.

V. AUDIO-VISUAL

An overhead projector and screen will be placed in every meeting room per the Board's 2003 recommendation. In 2004, SSSP purchased an LCD projector. In 2006, the Board approved the purchase of an additional LCD projector. Presenters who requested an LCD projector (before January 31) from JoAnn Miller, Program Committee Chair, and were approved will have an LCD projector in their session.

We received more requests than could be accommodated by two LCD projectors on August 10 and 11. Therefore, SSSP rented one LCD projector on August 10 and two LCD projectors on August 11. 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. Even though I was able to negotiate a 20% discount on audio-visual equipment with the in-house audio-visual company, total charges will be approximately \$8,300. Last year, charges were \$4,325.

Since purchasing an LCD projector (\$468) costs less than renting one (\$500 per day) from the in-house audio-visual company, the Society could save money by purchasing more LCD projectors. Issues regarding storage, set-up and securing of the equipment on-site would need to be addressed.

VI. BOOK EXHIBIT

The Scholar's Choice will organize and manage our book exhibit again this year without cost to the Society. In addition to obtaining books for the exhibit, they contacted the publishers of the C. Wright Mills finalists and obtained two complimentary copies of each book (one for the book exhibit and one for the AIDS fundraiser). They donated four books from their reserve to our fundraiser.

VII. CATERING

We all know that New York City is expensive and that hotel catering prices are inflated. This year, the Society will pay more than \$36,000 for food and beverage at The Roosevelt Hotel. This amount does not include the cost of the awards banquet (an additional \$15,000 - paid by those attending the banquet and the University of California, Irvine). Thankfully, the Society was granted an exemption from payment of the New York Sales tax and local sales and use tax. This will save the Society 8.375% on all catering and 13.625% on all hotel reservations billed to the master account.

From 2000-2006, the price of a banquet ticket was \$40. This year, the cost of a banquet ticket is \$100. Thanks to the generosity of the University of California, Irvine, a ticket will cost each attendee \$80. While Val and I were concerned that the high ticket price would decrease attendance, I am happy to report that 142 tickets have been sold to date (209 tickets were sold at this time last year).

In an effort to reduce catering costs, Val combined her Private Party with the Reception honoring our Past Presidents. Instead of serving hors d'oeuvres at the AIDS Fundraiser, we will have a dessert station. A cash bar will not be available at the awards banquet due to an exorbitant fee. For every 75 guests, the charge is \$420 (1 bartender and 1 cashier). In addition, if you host a two-hour reception for 100 guests, total alcohol sales must be \$1,800 (1 drink at \$9 per person, per hour) or the Society will be charged the difference. This is the first time that I have encountered this requirement.

The hotel was adamant that the catering guarantee be the same number as the room set number. For example, I wanted to order continental breakfast for 100 guests and have the room set with 140 chairs. I was told this was not possible. To get around this, I requested that 40 chairs be added at the conclusion of the Business Meeting. Otherwise, the Society would be charged an additional \$1,872 for food and beverage.

Below is a list of food and beverage prices that the Society will incur:

Coffee Service - \$18 per person

Soda and Bottled Water Service (must purchase Coffee Service) - \$6 per person

Continental Breakfast - \$39 per person

Boxed Lunch (sandwich, chips, pasta salad, fruit, cookie and soda) - \$60 per person

Butlered Passed Hors d'oeuvres - \$42 per person

VII. CSA SOCIOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS

Since 2001, we have encouraged program participants to submit their abstracts online. To date, 11 abstracts have been submitted. Last year, 17 abstracts were submitted. An email reminder will be sent after the annual meeting.

IX. THE ROOSEVELT HOTEL

We exceeded our room block (665 rooms) on May 24. As a result, sleeping rooms were no longer available at the \$185 conference rate. The hotel offered attendees a reduced rate of \$259 single/double occupancy (their rack rates ranged from \$299-\$329 over this period). On July 26, the hotel sold out of sleeping rooms for August 10-14.

On July 27, our room pickup was 913 rooms. According to our contract, SSSP will not be charged meeting room rental. In addition, the Society received 15 complimentary room nights.

X. MEETING MENTOR PROGRAM

The Lee Student Support Fund Committee coordinated the mentoring program. Thirty-eight attendees requested a mentor. Thanks to the hard work of Carolyn Perrucci and her committee, all requests were filled.

XI. PRE-REGISTRATION

The problem of collecting pre-registration fees from program participants was not as difficult this year thanks to the following motion 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." After the initial mailing requesting payment of pre-registration fees, 271 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 24. Eighty-four failed to respond. None of the non-paying participants were removed from the final program because they were not delinquent in paying 2006 registration fees.

XII. RECEPTION HONORING PAST PRESIDENTS AND AWARDS BANQUET

Both events will be held at The Roosevelt Hotel. The reception will feature butlered hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. The Italian banquet will be served buffet style. To accommodate our vegan attendees, a special entree will be available.

Attendees could purchase banquet tickets for graduate students, foreign scholars and scholar-activists. Forty-seven attendees requested a banquet ticket. Thanks to the following members who donated a ticket: Peter Conrad, Lora Bex Lempert, Kathleen Lowney, Robert Perrucci, Claire M. Renzetti and Suzanne Vaughan. As a result of their generous contribution, 6 additional graduate students will attend the awards banquet.

XIII. REGISTRATION BAGS

A special thanks to the University of California Press for their \$1,500 financial contribution and to Carrie Yang Costello for designing the logo. In addition, Carrie designed the program covers for the preliminary and final program.

XIV. REGISTRATION WORKERS AND LOW INCOME ACCOMMODATIONS

Seven student members, one underemployed member and Sarah Hendricks, incoming Graduate Research Associate, will work at the registration desk. In exchange for working 12 hours, 8 workers will receive a complimentary shared hotel room for the nights of August 9-11. Sarah will be paid an hourly rate.

Five attendees requested and received a reduced room rate of \$99 plus tax per night. Thirty attendees requested the roommate matching service. On June 28, an email was sent to them listing the names, telephone numbers and email addresses of those willing to participate.

XV. TRAVEL AND CAR RENTAL AGENCY

A contract was negotiated with Association Travel Concepts. Attendees could 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. This service has not been utilized for the past two years. In order for the Society to receive a complimentary airline ticket, 35 attendees must utilize this service. Since the Society does not pay a fee, I suggest we continue to offer this service.

XVI. MEETING MANAGER'S COMMENTS

I worked closely with Kevin Klein, Director of Association Sales, Raquel Arnold, Group Rooms Coordinator and Liza Lipstein, Convention Services Manager (January 25 - July 17). Liza left the hotel on July 20 and the Society was assigned to Gunay Bayrasli, Catering Conference Planner. I provided Raquel with our sleeping room list and details for our VIP amenities. I provided Gunay with our 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 available.

I was **VERY FORTUNATE** to work with Val Jenness, President; JoAnn Miller, Program Committee Chair; Susan Will, Local Arrangements Committee Chair; Tom Hood, Executive Officer and Mary Walker, Graduate Research Associate. I can't say enough about their hard work and dedication to the Society. It is always a privilege to work with them.

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 Boston.

Michele Koontz
July 28, 2007