

**Notes from SSSP Retreat
(S. Cheldelin, scribe)**

**Agenda
Wednesday, August 8, 2007**

**SSSP Retreat
Nancy Naples, Chair, Ad Hoc Retreat Committee
Sandra Cheldelin, Facilitator**

- 8:00 Breakfast**
- 8:20 Introductions and Overview/Purpose of Meeting**
- 8:40 Historical Context: Memories**
- 10:15 Current Issues: What have we learned from the survey and interviews?
Format: roundtable discussion**
- 11:00 Report out from 4 roundtables results of discussion (spokesperson from group) and discussion of common themes.**
- 11:30 Reorganization of roundtable based on participants' interests
Appreciative Inquiry Exercise Assignment**
- 12:00 Lunch ~ Time to Socialize**
- 12:45 Ad-hoc groups meet to develop collective stories and create recommendations**
- 2:00 Reports from ad-hoc groups**
- 3:15 General discussion of reports; recommendations for changes**
- 4:00 Next steps: What does all this mean? What actions can be taken from these discussions?**
- 4:45 Wrap up and evaluation**
- 5:00 Cocktails and celebration**

Re: Historical Context: Memories -Notes from Newsprint

Individual

60s:

- War on Vietnam
- Poverty
- Ph.D./first job

70s:

- Birth control/abortion
- Promotion/tenure and children
- Collective behavior/social movements and transportation research – considering professional options

80s:

- Graduate school; early professional career (2)
- Breast cancer awareness
- School/education/insecurity/economic problems (2)
- Ph.D./first job/tenure and promotion
- Promoted, again

90s:

- Building my CV & got hitched!
- Professional and personal transitions (2)
- Becoming a parent and writing a dissertation
- Surviving graduate school

00s:

- Looking for work
- Deciding to do a Ph.D.
- Twins
- Tenure

Discipline (Sociology)

60s:

- Qualitative vs. quantitative research
- Theory challenges/attempts to build paradigms
- Activism
- “relevance”

70s:

- Spinoffs: Social Justice, Women’s Studies, Black Studies, etc.
- Continued draft of “grand theory”
- New intellectual currents
- Debunking culture of poverty

- Feminism begins to influence sociology; sociology begins to influence feminism
- Fragmenting into specializations
- Environmental sociology emerges
- No cohesive theoretical core
- 1976 Al Lee as ASA President
- “glut of Ph.D.s”

80s:

- Dominance of ASA
- Tight professional job market for sociologists
- Sociobiology: SWS/ASA
- Departure of subfields

90s:

- Shift in gender composition of the profession
- Growing focus on race/class/gender, emotions, the body, culture: “girly stuff”
- Don’t know: not a Sociologist
- Cultural/post modernist turn
- Value of qualitative methods
- Sociology of sexualities, focus on multiracial feminism
- Lack/loss of relevance

2000s:

- Buraway’s speech of Active Sociology at ASA
- Research matters – even for lefties
- Glut of retirement?

National/International

60s:

- Vietnam War
- Social Security Act
- Freedom Summer 1964 civil rights in deep south
- War on poverty
- Draft
- Summer of Love

70s:

- Northern Ireland; Middle East
- Urban unrest/riots
- Civil rights
- 1971 enf of war on poverty
- Energy crisis
- Title IX
- Feminism

- Carter presidency; hostages in Iran
- Watergate
- Nixon
- Abortion

80s:

- Trend towards disinvestment in cities/welfare state
- Aids
- Reagan years
- Anti-apartheid
- Recession
- Repression of labor and the poor
- SDI
- Stagflation
- Tiananmen Square

90s:

- Iraq War I
- Balkans
- Homelessness still...
- Poverty and welfare “reform”
- Bush/Clinton #1
- End of welfare as we know it
- Backlash
- Struggle to end racial profiling (ends with 9/11)
- LGBT activism/ “gayby boom”

00s:

- War on terror/elections and homeland security
- 9/11
- Border changes between Canada and US
- Conflict around Canada’s support re: US in Iraq
- Iraq
- Patriot Act
- Immigration issues

SSSP

60s:

- Freedom summer – racism
- Vietnam war
- War on drugs
- Legacy of C. Wright Mills

70s:

- Inclusiveness/diversity
- New divisions

- Environment/technology division
- Hospitable to social movement scholars
- Service on SSSP committees

80s:

- Exodus of prominent (Tier I) sociologists (good? Or bad?)
- Executive office moved to San Francisco
- Near bankruptcy of Society

90s:

- Recruiting/supporting graduate student members
- “sexy” division is very active and interesting
- Welcoming and accessible – had family and sexy divisions
- Tom Hood becomes executive officer 1990 (saves society)
- Warm and friendly

00s:

- Accessibility
- Professional development for graduate students
- Affirmative action move to increase diversity on board
- New questions about “minority”

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# Summary Report on the SSSP Board of Directors' Retreat

## Recommendations ~ narrowed to 3 issues:

1. **Membership**
2. **Outreach**
3. **SSSP Organization/Executive Office**

### 1. Membership Recommendations

- Re: international increase: establish correspondence with scholars of foreign countries; identify key people/division on website/receive referrals; expand social networks. Outcome: understanding of that country's problems – could use forum/newsletter. Possible organizing a related organization there (\$?). Will need “monitoring”
- Need to develop networks of correspondence within local communities (e.g. context of school) Grants for local efforts to address local problems; SSSP members could help meet needs
- Interdisciplinary colloquia
- Bring this to annual meeting: session of social action award winners – describing their work – inviting practitioners to “respond” to the work [Note: open to members of community to participate without \$]
- Re: retention & membership - students influx/out flux. Work hard on a retention plan to keep students
- User's guide – how SSSP works – on website; inviting; feel easily get involved
- Racial/ethnic diversity issues: how to increase...
- Consider thematic meetings at various times/years focusing on specific issues
- Expanding membership; group of colleagues talking with each other
- Reduced fee for partnership organizations
- Membership drive: who, how many, where, focus on specific issues?

### 2. Outreach Recommendations

#### *Things to do with website*

- Factsheets listing social scholarship in areas of interest to us
- Experts list – members find areas of expertise to get names out there and make connections
- Links to other groups, websites, users so post our website
- Include sample papers from annual meeting, organized by division
- Perhaps send these out/publicize they are available
- Get our membership to links with SSSP members' own websites

### *Things to do with goodies*

- Offer money/small grants to help practitioners to attend
- Offer these people visibility – on panels; media coverage
- Direct grants or released time payouts for social justice project – thematic or location based
- Bring minority scholarship winners back for reception/panel each year to increase their engagement (have them bring people)
- Additional minority scholar practice-based awards

### *Other*

- Focus on “collaboration” – facilitating opportunities to meet regularly
- Help getting ideas “out there”: public affairs officer at SSSP
- Community liaison – translating what we do into the language of various practice areas
- Coordinate with other organizations to jointly sponsor a marketing person
- Put together practitioner-based panels – find them and get them
- Commitment on part of our membership is outreach
- We have SSSP at other organizations to increase our awareness

## **3. SSSP Organization/Executive Office Recommendations**

### *Structure of the Office*

- Whatever we need to do to get Michele to stay...
- The office is understaffed and would need .5 FTE permanent position staff position dealing with: membership services, webpage, connections with newsletter, etc.
- Question: is it sufficient to have electronic skills vs. someone more proactive?
- May need more professional type person – minimalist position with another person out-sourced taking SSSP to the world
- Perhaps a fundraiser could be added & paid by extra resources
  - Note: now – too much work for 1 person
  - Issue: University of Tenn. has been generous with SSSP – they have waived the overhead.

### *Nominations process for elected positions and committees*

- Recommendation: 1 page form listing demographic information and why this person should be selected, etc.; improve the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier getting names; that form be on webpage and newsletter, etc. and ask each division chair to nominate people in their divisions

## Specific Recommendations from 3 groups for Next Steps

### Membership Ad-Hoc Group:

1. Create a way to respond to international contacts and inquiries by recruiting volunteers to be responsible for a specific country (issue?) and encourage continued contact.
2. Have a session for the social action award winner to fully discuss their program—have a practitioner respond; open to all the public; no registration required
3. Encourage all members to start continuing discussion groups on social problems in their local communities and/or schools; make these groups ethnically diverse
4. Develop system to track student and first time professional members specifically research the question of why they drop membership after one year
5. Ask the budget finance and audit committee to explore cost benefit of reduce dues for members of other related organizations; prepare needed legislation (by-laws) (diversity issue here)

What needs to be added/considered:

Diversity issues need to be addressed in implementing these.

### Outreach Ad-Hoc Group:

#### *Re: Website*

1. proposed .5 FTE should involve explicit web skills
2. website should be redesigned to be more interactive, more visual and more personal
3. experts list
4. factsheets and/or bulletins
5. links to other groups, websites and newsletter (and have them reciprocate)
6. divisional showcase (sample paper) from each annual meeting chosen by the chair of that division
7. users' guide to know how to have a SSSP career

#### *Re: incentives*

1. money for community activists travel
2. for government, NGO, policy, and private research practitioners visibility and their own panel at the conference: big names to launch this!
3. money for grants or released time grants for members to work on social justice issues; report at the annual meeting (via panel or something)
4. bring minority scholarship award winners back annually for a panel and reception; have them sponsor someone(s)
5. a minority practitioner award
6. the appointment of a public affairs officer (elected position?) or community liaison to publicize our public policy research
7. SSSP panels at other professional meetings (e.g. Sociologists without borders/SSSP)

**SSSP Organization/Executive Office Ad-Hoc Group:**

*Re: executive office and what it would look like*

1. Recommend the current meeting manager and administrative officer be given a significant increase to reflect the quality and quantity of work that she performs. In addition, this should be linked to hiring a .5 FTE to assist in the office
2. Recommend that the outreach to the executive officer stipend to be \$15,000 – negotiations for person's home (10% of time)
3. At this time a minimalist model but increases other ways: resources for travel to facilitate and organize SSSP venues/topics that may increase over time
4. Total: about \$70,000-\$90,000 increase
5. 1 year position up to 3...then revisit the new position and see if it is working

*Re: nominations*

1. We have a form available for elective positions by breakfast tomorrow! thank you Michele
2. Form to be distributed at this annual meeting
3. Form available at meeting and in the fall in the Newsletter

[Benchmark for Success: 10% of all of this]

*Issues for further discussion:*

May need to build in timeline for changes depending on income levels in budget