

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEETING MANAGER

### I. 2009 ANNUAL MEETING

I am pleased to report that 663 attendees have registered for the annual meeting. Of those registered, 370 (56%) are professionals; 249 (38%) are students/unemployed/emeritus; 21 (3%) are *Critical Sociology* registrants and 23 (3%) are exempt from paying meeting registration. Last year at this time, 731 attendees had registered. In 2007, 726 had registered.

We have 133 sessions scheduled with 478 papers, 27 panelists, 7 workshop facilitators, 3 film representatives, 7 critics, 3 authors, and 1 plenary speaker. Last year, we had 143 sessions scheduled with 523 papers, 12 panelists, 12 workshop facilitators, 10 film representatives, 7 critics, 2 authors, and 1 plenary speaker.

Michelle Harris, Program Committee member, organized the film exhibit. The Program Committee decided to hold the film exhibit on one day instead of every day to save money. Three films will be featured on August 8.

*Critical Sociology* is sponsoring a conference on August 10. They guaranteed the Society at least 25 registrants from the "outside," i.e. non-SSSP members or those not otherwise registered for the annual meeting. This effectively guarantees the SSSP a total of \$1,125 in additional registration fees from cross-over participants. Anyone registered for the SSSP annual meeting will be eligible to participate in this event at no additional charge.

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 non-member registration fee or the full membership dues and member registration fee. Program participants are not eligible for the guest registration fee. We have 58 guests registered. Last year at this time, 48 guests had 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. Two requests were made: wheelchair access in sessions and the need for an extra firm mattress and/or a bed board under the mattress. I followed up with the hotel on July 17 and was told that both requests would be honored.

Based on feedback from prior meetings, we decided to reinstate the comfort zone. Attendees coping with illness, meeting fatigue, or stress may use the hospitality suite set aside as a "safe haven" to escape briefly from the noise and bustle of meeting activities. Hospitality hours are: Friday: 8:00am – 6:00pm; Saturday: 8:00am – 6:00pm and Sunday: 8:00am – 6:00pm. The cost of the hospitality suite will be \$759.

An accessible gender-neutral (unisex/family) public restroom is located on the Lower Level of the Stanford Court Hotel.

### III. ADVERTISING/EXHIBIT OPPORTUNITIES

Twenty one publishing companies were contacted and encouraged to place an ad in the final program. Steve Barkan wrote a letter to all Ph.D. granting departments urging them to advertise in the final program. One ad was placed by Stanford University Press. This year we offered to put an insert in each registrant's tote bag for a fee. The Western Social Science Association and Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group placed an order. As a result of our efforts, \$550 in advertising was sold. Last year, three ads were sold, totaling \$500.

### IV. AIDS FUNDRAISER

Graduate students and new members will receive complimentary admission to the AIDS Fundraiser, but everyone else is charged \$15. A selection of tasty desserts will be available along with a cash bar. Music will be provided by Jazz Musician Denise Fraga. During the evening, there will be a silent auction. All proceeds will go to Asian Pacific Islander Wellness Center.

## **V. AUDIO-VISUAL**

An LCD projector (laptop/computer not included), overhead projector and a screen will be available in each session – except for roundtable sessions. After soliciting bids from three audio-visual companies (including the in-house company), we signed with Presentation Technology, who was our 2008 audio-visual provider. The total audio-visual charge will be \$10,288 (last year \$9,102).

I would like the Board to consider providing an LCD projector and screen only in each meeting room next year. This would save the Society approximately \$2,000. My rationale for the removal of the overhead projectors is because most presenters prefer to use an LCD projector.

## **VI. AWARDS BANQUET**

The buffet will feature Classic Caesar Salad; Roasted Chiogga Beets with Pt. Reyes Blue Cheese; Udon Noodles with Julienne of Cucumber, Roasted Red Peppers and Sesame Soy Dressing; Pan Seared Sea Bass on Lentils with Watercress Sauce; Whole Rosemary Chicken with Fingerling Potatoes; Wild Mushroom Risotto with Truffle Oil; Artisan Bread Presentation; Flourless Chocolate Cake; Lemon Cake with Berries; Dutch Apple Pie; Freshly Brewed Coffee; Selection of Specialty Teas and Iced Tea. To accommodate our vegan attendees, a special plated entree will be provided to those who requested one.

Attendees could purchase banquet tickets for graduate students, foreign scholars, and scholar-activists. Fifty-eight attendees requested a banquet ticket. Thanks to the following members who donated tickets: Kathleen Ferraro, Carol Brooks Gardner, William Gronfein, Kathleen Lowney, Robert Perrucci, Claire M. Renzetti, Charlotte Ryan, Teresa Linnea Scheid, and Roz Stooke. Based on their generosity, ten additional graduate students are able to attend.

## **VII. BOOK EXHIBIT**

The Scholar's Choice will organize and manage our book exhibit again this year without cost to the Society. Members interested in having their book displayed were instructed to contact their publisher. Please keep in mind that the publishers pay a fee to display with The Scholar's Choice and may not have the marketing budget necessary to honor all requests, particularly for older titles.

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). In addition, they donated books from their inventory to our fundraiser.

## **VIII. CATERING**

All catering will be provided by the Stanford Court Hotel. The Society will spend approximately \$42,000 on food and beverage. This amount includes the cost of the awards banquet (approximately \$12,500 paid by those attending the banquet and the University of Maine). The Society was granted an exemption from payment of the California sales tax. This is a 9.5% savings on all catering and audio-visual equipment rental.

From 2000-2006, the price of a banquet ticket was \$40. In 2007, the cost of a banquet ticket was \$100 (University of California, Irvine subsidized each ticket by \$20). In 2008, the cost of a banquet ticket was \$74. (University of Connecticut subsidized each ticket by \$9). This year, the cost of a banquet ticket is \$73. Thanks to the generosity of the University of Maine, a ticket will cost \$68. To date, 148 tickets have been sold (182 tickets were sold at this time last year).

In lieu of the President's Private Party, we are holding a Welcome Reception for all meeting registrants. This social hour will provide opportunities to renew past acquaintances, chat with old friends, and find a newcomer to befriend.

In order to thank Tom for serving as our Executive Officer for the past 19 years, we are designating the reception preceding the awards banquet, which is normally entitled the Reception honoring our Past Presidents, as the reception to honor Tom with some formal and informal remarks and generally recognize his many contributions to SSSP over the years. A special thanks to the University of California Press for their \$2,000 financial contribution towards Tom's reception.

## **IX. THE STANFORD COURT HOTEL ~ CANCELLATION FEE & ROOM PICKUP**

When the hotel contract was renegotiated, one of the special considerations was that 25% of the cancellation fee from 2006 (\$6,558.75) would be applied to the 2009 meeting.

On July 20, our room pickup was 725 rooms. Since we exceeded our room block of 675 rooms, the Society will not be charged meeting room rental. In addition, we will receive 16 complimentary room nights.

## **X. THE STANFORD COURT HOTEL ~ MEETING SPACE**

During the hotel's \$35 million dollar renovation, the hotel lost 4 meeting rooms. These rooms could accommodate 20 people theater style. To accommodate our meeting needs, the hotel secured 4 meeting rooms at the University Club (adjacent to the hotel). During the January site visit, Steve Barkan and I were told that the University Club was ADA compliant and that a ramp could be added near the front door. Otherwise, an attendee in a wheelchair would have to enter thru the service entrance (back of the house). This was not acceptable.

I found out in early July that a ramp could not be added and one restroom was not ADA compliant. Based on this, we asked to cancel our board dinner contract and move the sessions that were to be held at the University Club to the Stanford Court Hotel. In order to accommodate this, the hotel has converted a sleeping room into meeting space on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, allowed us to use the Club Lounge on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor, converted a parlor suite into meeting space on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor and converted the Presidential Suite parlor into meeting space on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor. While this is not ideal meeting space, I appreciate the hotel's quick response in accommodating our needs.

## **XI. MENTORING PROGRAMS**

The Lee Student Support Fund Committee coordinated the Meeting Mentoring Program. Fifty-three attendees requested a mentor. Thanks to the hard work of Phoebe Morgan, all requests were filled.

Karen McCormack, Program Committee member, coordinated the Personal Mentoring Program. Fourteen members requested a personal mentor. Thanks to Karen's hard work, all requests were filled.

## **XII. PRE-REGISTRATION**

We were very aggressive in encouraging program participants and members to pre-register. Five email reminders were sent. As a result, the problem of collecting pre-registration fees from program participants was not as difficult. The 2000-01 Board of Directors passed the following motion, "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 the following 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." Of the twenty-seven non-paying participants, none were removed from the final program because they were delinquent in paying 2008 registration fees.

## **XIII. REGISTRATION BAGS**

A special thanks to the University of California Press for their \$1,500 financial contribution and to Cary Yang Costello for designing the artwork for our registration bags and the program cover.

## **XIV. REGISTRATION WORKERS AND LOW INCOME ACCOMMODATIONS**

Five student members and two underemployed members will work at the registration desk. In exchange for working 12 hours, six will receive a complimentary shared hotel room for the nights of August 6-8. A local student will be paid an hourly wage.

Six attendees requested and received a reduced room rate of \$119 plus tax per night. Thirty-four attendees requested the roommate matching service. On June 23, an email was sent to them listing the names, telephone numbers, and email addresses of those willing to participate.

## **XV. MEETING MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

I worked closely with Barry McCarthy, Senior Sales Manager and Amiee James, Event Manager. I provided Amiee with our sleeping room list, details for VIP amenities, 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 President Steve Barkan, Program Chair Javier Treviño, Local Arrangements Committee Chair Becky Ancheta, Executive Officer Tom Hood, Administrative Assistant & Webmaster Sharon Shumaker, and Graduate Research Associate Sarah Hendricks. I can't say enough about their hard work and dedication to the Society.

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 Atlanta.

**Michele Koontz ~ July 26, 2009**