

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEETING MANAGER

I. 2010 ANNUAL MEETING

I am pleased to report that 563 attendees have registered for the annual meeting. Of those registered, 313 (56%) are professionals; 239 (42%) are students/unemployed/emeritus; and 11 (2%) are exempt from paying meeting registration. Last year at this time, 663 attendees had registered. In 2008, 731 attendees had registered. In 2007, 726 had registered.

We have 114 sessions scheduled with 402 papers, 29 panelists, 5 workshop facilitators, 3 film representatives, 4 critics, 2 authors, and 1 plenary speaker. Last year, we had 133 sessions scheduled with 478 papers, 27 panelists, 7 workshop facilitators, 3 film representatives, 7 critics, 3 authors, and 1 plenary speaker.

Glenn Muschert, Program Committee Chair, 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 14.

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 21 guests registered. Last year at this time, 58 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: Dietary Request and an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter for five sessions and one committee meeting. I consulted with Kathleen Lowney, Accessibility Committee Chair and Héctor Delgado regarding the ASL request. SSSP does not have a policy on how to process such requests. I solicited bids from two interpreting companies. Sign Language Interpreting Specialists, Inc. will provide an interpreter for \$1,800.

Last year it was decided to reinstate the comfort zone. Due to lack of use and high cost (\$720), SSSP has elected to discontinue this service.

An accessible gender-neutral (unisex/family) public restroom is located on the third floor of the Sheraton Atlanta Hotel. The hotel will supply signage.

III. ADVERTISING/EXHIBIT OPPORTUNITIES

Twenty publishing companies were contacted and encouraged to place an ad in the final program. JoAnn Miller wrote a letter to all Ph.D. granting departments urging them to advertise in the final program. Ads were placed by Lynne Rienner Publishers, Stanford University Press, and the University of Texas Press. In addition, we offered to put an insert in each registrant's tote bag for a fee. Emerald Group Publishing Limited and Routledge Journals placed an order. As a result of our efforts, \$1,175 in advertising was sold. Last year, one ad was sold and two inserts were placed, totaling \$550.

IV. AIDS FUNDRAISER

Over the last few years, there has been a decline in attendance at the AIDS Fundraiser. JoAnn Miller decided that it was time for a change. This year, she will hold a private event to raise money. In addition, we are selling raffle tickets for a two-night hotel stay at the Sheraton Atlanta Hotel, courtesy of the hotel. All proceeds will go to Jerusalem House. They provide over 62% of Atlanta's permanent supportive housing designated for homeless and low-income individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS. On average, almost 40% of their residents are children.

V. AUDIO-VISUAL

An LCD projector (laptop/computer not included) and screen will be available in each session – except for roundtable and papers in the round sessions. After soliciting bids from six audio-visual companies (including the in-house company), we signed with MCRI. The hotel charges a \$1,200 fee for groups using a third-party supplier. MCRI has agreed to absorb this charge. The total audio-visual charge will be \$7,631 (last year in San Francisco it cost \$10,581).

I would like the Board to consider providing a laptop computer in each meeting room with an LCD projector package. This would alleviate the need for presenters to bring their own laptop and cut down on confusion. MCRI would have charged \$1,358 for the additional laptops.

VI. AWARDS BANQUET

The buffet will feature Spinach and Arugula Salad with Choice of Dressing; Grilled Vegetable Salad; Grilled Chicken Breast; Vegetable Lasagna; Pan Seared Salmon with Lemon Thyme Butter; Mashed Sweet Potatoes; Oven Roasted Potatoes; Vegetable Rice Pilaf; Selection of Seasonal Vegetables; Freshly Baked Rolls and Butter; Chef's Choice of Assorted Desserts, including Bread Pudding; Freshly Brewed Coffee 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. Forty-nine attendees requested a banquet ticket. Thanks to the following members who donated tickets: Susan M. Carlson, Mary Ellen Dunn, Kathleen S. Lowney, Claire M. Renzetti, Pamela Ann Roby, and Teresa Linnea Scheid. Based on their generosity, six 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, the Scholar's Choice contacted the publishers of the C. Wright Mills finalists and obtained a complimentary copy. These books will be displayed in the book exhibit.

VIII. CATERING

All catering will be provided by the Sheraton Atlanta Hotel. The Society will spend approximately \$33,500 on food and beverage (including 23% service charge and 8% sales tax). This amount includes the cost of the awards banquet (approximately \$9,300 paid by those attending the banquet). To date, 155 banquet tickets have been sold (148 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 attendees. This social hour will provide opportunities to renew past acquaintances, chat with old friends, and find a newcomer to befriend.

IX. DONATIONS

A special thanks to the Vice Provost for Engagement Office at Purdue University for their \$1,000 contribution to program activities and to the University of California Press for their \$1,500 financial contribution to the registration bags. A special thanks to Scott Frankenberger for designing the artwork for our poster, program cover, and registration bags.

X. THE SHERATON ATLANTA HOTEL

SSSP received a favorable sleeping room rate of \$149 (standard single/double/triple/quadruple) plus tax per night which is significantly lower than ASA's rate. On August 1, our room pickup was 641 rooms. The Society will receive 16 complimentary room nights. As long as we exceed 80% of our room block (650 rooms), the Society will not be charged meeting room rental.

XI. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

The Lee Student Support Fund Committee coordinated the Mentorship Programs. Fifty-seven attendees requested a meeting mentor and twenty-one members requested a mentor. Thanks to the hard work of Tracy L. Dietz, all requests were filled.

XII. PRE-REGISTRATION

We were very aggressive in encouraging program participants and members to pre-register. Twelve e-mail reminders were sent. As a result, the problem of collecting pre-registration fees from program participants was not as difficult this year. 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 seven non-paying participants, none were removed from the final program.

XIII. REGISTRATION WORKERS AND LOW INCOME ACCOMMODATIONS

Seven graduate student members and one underemployed member will work at the registration desk. In exchange for working 12 hours, seven will receive a complimentary shared hotel room for the nights of August 12-14 and one student will be paid an hourly wage. Due to Sharon Shumaker's resignation, we hired James Maples (University of Tennessee, Knoxville graduate student and the Southern Sociological Society Webmaster and Electronic Communication Coordinator) to work at registration.

Four attendees requested and received a reduced room rate of \$99 plus tax per night. Thirty-six attendees requested the roommate matching service. On June 29, an e-mail was sent to them listing the names, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of those willing to participate.

XIV. MEETING MANAGER'S COMMENTS

I worked closely with Esther Hunt, Director of Association Sales and Cynthia Hernandez, Convention Services Manager. I provided Cindy with our sleeping room list, details for VIP amenities, audio-visual requirements, catering for all food functions, meeting room set up, and signage.

I was **VERY FORTUNATE** to work with President JoAnn Miller, Program Chair Glenn Muschert, Local Arrangements Committee Wendy Simonds, Executive Officer Héctor Delgado, Former 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 Chicago.

Michele Koontz ~ August 1, 2010