

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEETING MANAGER

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July 27, 2013

### I. 2013 ANNUAL MEETING

I am pleased to report that 991 attendees have registered for the annual meeting. Of those registered, 528 (53%) are professionals, 424 (43%) are students/unemployed/emeritus, and 39 (4%) are exempt from paying meeting registration. Previous years' attendance (at the time of my report) was 698 in 2012, 696 in 2011, 563 in 2010, 663 in 2009, 731 in 2008, and 726 in 2007.

We have 183 sessions scheduled with: 766 papers, 56 panelists, 2 workshop facilitators, 5 films, 5 critics, 2 authors, and 1 plenary speaker. Last year, we had 145 sessions scheduled with 518 papers, 54 panelists, 5 workshop facilitators, 4 films, 10 critics, 4 authors, and 1 plenary speaker.

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 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 31 guests registered. Last year at this time, 25 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 attendees with disabilities. Written guidelines were distributed to all program participants to urge and assist them to be increasingly creative and conscious in their inclusiveness. We requested that all attendees refrain from wearing scented products. We have also requested that housekeeping use unscented products in the bathrooms on the meeting space levels. 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 conference attendees are presenting.

Attendees were able to request accessibility services to facilitate their full participation in the annual meeting. The following requests were made:

- Two wheelchair accessibility requests. I have confirmed with the hotel that all meeting space is accessible.
- American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter for six sessions, one committee meeting, and one divisional business meeting. Interpreting services will be provided by three interpreters for \$1,800.
- Nine attendees reserved an accessible guest room at the Westin New York at Times Square. I have confirmed with the hotel that all requests will be honored.

Since 2010, members and meeting registrants have been able to donate to the Accessibility Services Fund when they register. This year, contributions of \$566 have been received (\$225 in 2012).

An accessible gender-neutral (unisex/family) public restroom will be located on the fourth floor.

The Comfort Zone will be located in the Rodgers meeting room on the tenth floor. This space will provide a quiet environment for conference attendees to relax, reflect, and re-energize.

The Accessibility Committee requested that QR code be added to the final program. The code can be scanned with your device's QR Code Reader/Scanner for information on accessibility services and guidelines.



### III. ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

Seventy-eight publishing companies were contacted and encouraged to place an ad in the final program. An additional letter was sent to eighteen publishing companies participating in the book exhibit. President R.A. Dello Buono wrote a letter to all Ph.D. granting departments urging them to advertise. Finally, a congratulatory letter was sent to all publishers of the C. Wright Mills finalists encouraging them to advertise.

Ads were placed in the final program by the Association for Humanist Sociology, Indiana University Press, Oklahoma State University, Sociologists for Women in Society, Stanford University Press, The New Press and the University of California Press. In addition, we offered to put an insert in each registrant's conference bag for a fee. Routledge Journals placed an order. As a result of our efforts, \$1,925 in advertising was sold. Last year, five ads were sold and one insert was placed, totaling \$1,525.

### IV. ANNUAL MEETING EXEMPTION POLICY

The Program Committee can exempt up to twenty program participants, if they qualify. If additional exemptions are needed, they must be requested and approved.

#### **Current Exemption Policy:**

All participants (except for those listed under "b." below) must be current members (they may join upon acceptance of their presentation) and must pre-register (paying the guest registration fee will not be accepted for program participants) for the Annual Meeting by July 1. Persons failing to pre-register by July 1 will have their contribution(s) deleted from the final program.

In order to expedite pre-registration, the e-mail of acceptance specifies that participation is contingent on current SSSP membership and pre-registration for the Annual Meeting. Participants may pay membership dues and registration fees online or by mailing or faxing the paper membership and meeting registration forms along with payment information. Exemption from paying registration fees will be granted for:

- a. Non-students who are unemployed and/or receiving monthly financial assistance to meet living expenses may request a waiver of registration fees to participate on the program.
- b. Individuals from community, labor, and comparable organizations working on social problems or social justice issues who have been invited to serve on a panel or to make a presentation.
- c. Non U.S. and non Canadian scholars who are from less advantaged countries.
- d. Co-authors who will not be attending the meeting. One author is required to register for the meeting and all co-authors who expect to attend must register for the meeting.
- e. Persons excused by direct request of the Program Chair. Exemptions should be requested by May 31.

Héctor and I would like to propose the following addition to the existing policy:

**The Administrative Office will process all qualified exemption requests that fall under a-d in the order that they are received. In addition, the Program Chair will notify the Administrative Officer when he or she approves a direct request. All exemptions must be made by May 31.**

### V. AUDIO-VISUAL

An LCD projector package will be available in each session with the exception of roundtable and critical dialogue sessions. Program participants were instructed to bring their own laptop or arrange with someone else in their session to share.

After soliciting bids from five audio-visual companies, we signed with the in-house company PSAV. The total audio-visual charge will be \$14,515. In 2012 (Denver), it cost \$7,694; in 2011 (Las Vegas), it cost \$12,631; in 2010 (Atlanta), it cost \$7,631; and in 2009 (San Francisco), it cost \$10,581.

## **VI. AWARDS RECEPTION, PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, AND AWARDS CEREMONY**

President R.A. Dello Buono chose not to hold an awards banquet. Instead, we will host an awards reception honoring our Past Presidents and 2013 major SSSP award winners on Saturday, August 10 from 6:30pm-7:30pm. The presidential plenary will follow from 7:30pm-8:45pm. The awards ceremony, conferring the 2013 major SSSP awards, will follow from 8:45pm-10:30pm. All registrants are invited to attend. Since there is no break for dinner, a pasta bar station, heavy hors d'oeuvres, and a cash bar will be available. The cost of this reception will be \$15,100.

## **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 complimentary copies. These books will be displayed in the book exhibit.

## **VIII. CATERING**

Catering costs are astronomical. The Society will spend approximately \$65,000 on food and beverage (including 23% service charge). Thankfully, we are exempt from paying 8.875% sales tax.

We will hold a Welcoming Reception for all meeting attendees and a New Member Breakfast for new members and hosts. President R.A. Dello Buono is hosting and covering the expense for the board reception.

I encouraged all 22 Special Problems Divisions to co-sponsor a joint reception instead of hosting their own. Twenty-one divisions agreed to contribute \$3,995 toward the cost of the \$14,475 reception.

## **IX. DONATIONS**

A special thanks to Manhattan College and the Sage journal *Critical Sociology* for their financial contributions to program activities and to the University of California Press for its financial contribution to the conference bags.

## **X. MEETING MENTOR PROGRAM**

The Lee Student Support Fund Committee coordinated the Meeting Mentor Program. Fifty-eight attendees requested a meeting mentor. Thanks to the hard work of Ruth Thompson-Miller and her committee, all requests were honored.

## **XI. PRE-REGISTRATION**

The 2011-12 Board of Directors approved the following policy, "Program participants will be dropped from the annual meeting program, if they do not register by July 1 of that year. The Board requests that program participants receive at least three notices prior to the July 1 deadline for registration."

The Administrative Office sent seven e-mail reminders. In addition, both R.A. Dello Buono and David Fasenfest sent numerous personalized e-mails urging program participants to register. Currently, all nineteen unpaid program participants remain on the program.

## **XII. REGISTRATION WORKERS AND ROOMMATE MATCHING SERVICE**

Six graduate student members will work at the registration desk. In exchange for working 12 hours, they will receive a complimentary shared hotel room for the nights of August 8-10.

Sixteen registrants requested the roommate matching service. On July 5, an e-mail was sent to them listing the names, affiliations, and e-mail addresses of those willing to participate in order to facilitate roommate matching.

### **XIII. SSSP SPONSORED WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES**

On August 8, the Teaching Social Problems division is holding a workshop from 2:00pm-4:30pm at the Westin New York at Times Square. Currently, 40 people have registered.

On August 12, the Institutional Ethnography division is holding a workshop from 9:00am-6:00pm at the Westin New York at Times Square. Currently, 51 people have registered (46 people registered at this time last year).

On August 12, the International Coalition against Sexual Harassment is holding a conference from 7:15am-7:15pm at the Westin New York at Times Square. There is no charge for SSSP registrants with a SSSP name badge.

On August 12, SSSP is co-sponsoring the Conference on Re-Imagining Human Rights from 8:30am-5:15pm at the Westin New York at Times Square. There is no fee to attend this conference.

On August 12, SSSP is co-sponsoring a Mini-Conference on Labor and Global Solidarity-The US, China and Beyond from 9:30am-6:30pm at the Joseph A. Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies, CUNY. There is no fee to attend this conference.

### **XIV. WESTIN NEW YORK AT TIMES SQUARE**

SSSP received a favorable sleeping room rate by NYC standards of \$230 (single/double), \$250 (triple) and \$270 (quadruple) plus tax per night. We exceeded our room block twice and were able to reserve additional rooms. On June 20, 57 rooms were added at the negotiated rate. On July 3, 55 rooms were added at the \$269 single/double rate (852 total rooms).

On July 26, our room pickup was 816 rooms. The Society will receive 20 complimentary room nights. As long as we exceed 85% of our 852 room block (724 rooms), the Society will not be charged meeting room rental.

The hotel is offering complimentary high-speed internet for SSSP hotel guests. The hotel charges \$750 per day for internet access in the registration area or \$750 per day for internet access in the registration area and meeting rooms. Based on this, our attendees will be able to access the internet at no charge in the registration area and meeting rooms by entering our access code (SSSP).

Due to high number of paper submissions, we did not have enough meeting space. I was able to negotiate additional meeting space at no cost to the Society.

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

I worked with Marcus Timmons, Meeting and Event Manager, and Jenny Ahn, Account Director. I provided Marcus with our sleeping room list, details for VIP amenities, audio-visual requirements, catering for all food functions, meeting room set up, and signage. I negotiated additional sleeping room nights with Jenny.

I was fortunate to work with President R.A. Dello Buono; Program Chair David Fasenfest; Local Arrangements Committee Chair Angie Beeman; Executive Officer Héctor L. Delgado; Information Technology Specialist Sharon Shumaker; Administrative Assistant Marisa Stone; and Graduate Research Associate and Webmaster Lisa East.

Finally, I would like to thank you, the Board of Directors, for giving me another opportunity to serve as meeting manager. On October 19, I will celebrate my twenty-first anniversary with SSSP. I have been privileged to witness the growth of the organization under the guidance of many outstanding leaders.