Resolution 1: Motion Regarding the Death of Connor Sparrowhawk While in Institutional Care
Submitted by Mark Sherry, University of Toledo.

Whereas Connor Sparrowhawk was an 18 year old English disabled man who drowned in the bath at Slade House in Oxfordshire, England, a National Health Service Assessment and Treatment unit on July 4th 2013;

Whereas he was having many seizures around that time, but was left in the bathtub alone and died;

Whereas Connor’s death was initially, incorrectly, presented to the family as death by “natural causes”;

Whereas an independent report¹ about his death came to the following conclusions:

1. That Connor’s death was preventable.
2. That there were significant failings in his care and treatment.
3. That the failure of staff to respond to and appropriately risk assess Connor’s epilepsy led to a series of poor decisions around his care.
4. That the level of observations in place at bath time was unsafe and failed to safeguard Connor.
5. That if a safe observation process had been put in place and Connor had been appropriately supervised in the bath, he would not have died on 4 July 2013.
6. That the STATT (Short Term Assessment and Treatment Team) unit lacked effective clinical leadership.
7. That there had been no comprehensive care plan in place for the management of Connor’s epilepsy and his epilepsy was not considered as part of Connor’s risk assessment, in breach of NICE epilepsy guidance.

Whereas Connor’s preventable death was a tragedy which has gained the attention of the disability community internationally, because disabled people are so often given inadequate and even life-threatening care.

Be it resolved that we express our sorrow and rage at the preventable death of Connor Sparrowhawk;

Be it resolved that we express our solidarity with his family, and with others internationally who are pushing for accountability in this case;

Be it resolved that we demand changes in the disability system more broadly, so that others are not subject to inadequate care and preventable death;

Be it resolved that we recommit ourselves to ensuring that all disabled people live in safety, with dignity and respect.

Be it resolved that SSSP send a letter about this issue to the #Justice For LB Campaign² and to Connor’s mother Sara Ryan, supporting the introduction of a Private Members’ Bill in the British Parliament,

¹ See this link for discussion of report and as reference for points 1-7 below: http://www.southernhealth.nhs.uk/news/report-into-death-sparrowhawk/.
² They can be contacted at http://107daysofaction.wordpress.com.
(which advocates have informally called “the LB Bill”), that will put the choices of disabled people and their families at the heart of the decision-making process. The letter should also indicate SSSP’s approval of wide distribution of the letter to policy makers, and among the disability community.

Be it resolved that the SSSP letter support the #Justice For LB Campaign as they seek the policy changes in the following structural areas:

- Policies that lead to the warehousing of disabled people
- Institutions which don’t provide appropriate care,
- Inadequate management of seizures in many health and disability institutions,
- The need for different responses regarding the death of inpatients,
- The need to overturn policies that make the family of the deceased pay for their own legal expenses when investigations and inquests occur into preventable deaths,
- The need to meaningfully involve the family in the inquest process for the purpose of transparency,
- The need for improved professional accountability, such as referral of staff to their relevant regulatory bodies where preventable deaths have occurred,
- The need for national mortality review systems for deaths in institutional care,
- The need for investigations and consequences in circumstances where a preventable death is wrongly presented to the family as death by “natural causes”.

Be it further resolved that SSSP add a special session at our next conference in honor of Connor Sparrowhawk. The session will ensure that the issue continues to be discussed, with scholars examining the social problem further.
Resolution 2: Expression of Gratitude

Our sincere appreciation is expressed to all of the officers, committee chairs, and members who have made this program possible and whose efforts maintain the vitality of the SSSP. First, we thank President Anna Maria Santiago for her outstanding leadership in developing the 64th Annual Meeting and its theme: Fifty Years Later: From a War on Poverty to a War on the Poor. We also thank this year’s Program Committee Co-Chairs Kelly L. Patterson and Robert M. Silverman and committee members Benigno E. Aguirre, Kathleen M. Blee, Filomena M. Critelli, Marlese Durr, Jennifer Shea, and Gregory D. Squires; and Local Arrangements Committee Chair Jennifer Shea and committee members Rebecca Wepsic Ancheta, J. Todd Ormsbee, and Geetan Virdi. We thank the staff of the San Francisco Marriott Marquis for fine accommodations, and we particularly want to recognize the efforts made by Nicole Espinosa, Senior Event Manager, and Kenzie Langston, Coordinator-Group Reservations.

The Society wishes to express its gratitude to Past President R.A. Dello Buono for his years of leadership; Vice-President Luis A. Fernandez for managing the resolutions process; Glenn W. Muschert for his service as Secretary; and Susan M. Carlson for her service as Treasurer. The Society also thanks Marlese Durr, President-Elect; Nancy J. Mezey, Vice-President Elect; Board of Directors: Antwan Jones, Phoebe Morgan, Raymond J. Michalowski, John G. Dale, Heather Dalmage, outgoing members Stephani Williams, Cheryl A. Boudreaux, Sarah Hendricks (outgoing) and Margaret R. Austin Smith, student representatives of the Board; Shannon M. Monnat, Chairperson of the Council of the Special Problems Divisions; and Becky Pettit, outgoing Editor of Social Problems; Paul D. Steele, outgoing Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee Chair and committee members Claire M. Renzetti, Tracy L. Dietz, and Susan M. Carlson; Nancy C. Jurik, Editorial and Publications Committee Chair and committee members John F. Galliher, Mary C. Bernstein, Paul C. Luken, David Fasenfest, Nancy Naples, Paul D. Steele, Ted Chiricos, and Becky Pettit; and the University of Tennessee and the Department of Sociology for hosting the SSSP Administrative Office. A special thanks to President Anna Maria Santiago for her financial contributions to program activities and to the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University, Oxford University Press, and the University of California Press for their financial contributions.

We are extremely pleased to announce that the Board of Directors has selected Dr. Pamela Anne Quiroz and Dr. Nilda M. Flores-Gonzalez of the University of Illinois-Chicago as the 2014-2017 Editors of Social Problems. We are as excited to have Pam and Nilda as our new editors, as they are to take on this critical responsibility for the SSSP. As we welcome them, we want to thank our current editor, Dr. Becky Pettit, and the Social Problems editorial staff for their hard work over the past three years. In addition to selecting Pam and Nilda as our new editors, the Board also selected Oxford University Press as the Society’s new publisher from January 1, 2015–December 31, 2019. As one of the oldest and most respected publishers in the world, OUP is especially well positioned to give the journal the increased international exposure that the Society has desired for some time. As we begin our new relationship with OUP, we want to thank the University of California Press for serving as our publisher and to wish them well.

The Society wishes to thank Executive Officer Héctor L. Delgado, Administrative Officer & Meeting Manager Michele Smith Koontz, Information Technology Specialist Sharon Shumaker, Administrative Assistant Marisa Stone, Graduate Research Associate & Webmaster Lisa East, and the chairpersons and co-chairpersons of the 22 Special Problems Divisions for continuing to make the organization run and do all that it does year in and year out. We especially want to thank Lisa for her exceptional service over the past three years.